

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

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This assignment will intrinsically discuss and critique important literature relating to two key areas of education and pedagogy, using an observed critical incident as a specific case study. Observation techniques will be explored and scrutinised, and justification will be given for the observation method selected. Additionally, links will be made between the chosen critical incident and the Four Purposes of the incoming national curriculum, as outlined in Professor Graham Donaldson's *Successful Futures*. The critical incident will then be reflected upon and recommendations will be suggested for how to improve my own professional and personal development as a consequence of this study.

The use of a critical incident is an extremely beneficial way of providing a specific focus for relevant literature and individual investigation. A critical incident is not strictly positive or negative, rather it is often a 'commonplace' event that provides us with an indication of 'underlying trends, motives and structures' (Tripp, 1993). Moreover, David Tripp highlights the two clear stages to the 'creation of a critical incident:' the production and then the explanation of an experience (Tripp, 1993). The initial observation and production of the chosen critical incident was undertaken at *School X* [See *Appendix 1*], and the consequent explanation and analysis of the observation can be found in *Appendix 2*. The use of the Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model was especially useful in allowing for high quality reflection upon the critical incident, and thus such incidents are particularly helpful in the context of reflective practice in teaching.

Throughout this assignment, anonymity of the school and persons involved will be fully maintained, as per the British Educational Research Association's *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* (2018, p. 21). As such, the privacy of all participants has been recognised and confidentiality will be accorded where necessary. The critical incident observation took place in an English medium primary school - *School X* - containing nursery, infant, and junior students. The class was a mixed year group class, consisting of 11 Reception and 14 Year One students; no students held an official ALN statement. In 2018, *School X* comprised 411 students, with an overall attendance record of 94.3%. Furthermore, the quota of students receiving free school meals (FSM) stood at 24.5%: there has been a sharp decline in the percentage of students receiving FSM over the last five years, however *School X* is still

above the national average in this domain and this would suggest it is situated in an area of relative deprivation. The school is also well above the national average for its number of students with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and for its percentage of Minority Ethnic students (Welsh Government, 2018). The most recent *Estyn* report was very positive, describing the school's current performance and prospects for improvement as 'Good', and the school was graded highest for its efforts in 'Partnership working' within the community (Estyn, 2014).

There are a wide variety of approaches that could have been taken for this observation, and this next section will discuss and identify the most appropriate method. For the purpose of this observation, the critical incident was classed as being within a case study, and therefore case study methodology will firstly be analysed. One possible method could have been the use of a sociogram: a visual representation used to catalogue social movements and relationships within the classroom. An advantage of this method would be that it allows the observer to identify any children in need of additional support and that it provides a greater sense of the 'self-efficacy and ultimately classroom achievement and motivation' of the students (Leung & Silberling, 2006, p. 61). Nevertheless, since infant children tend to have more ephemeral relationships and would not have been as equipped to answer individualised questions as junior students would, for example, it could be argued that a sociogram would have worked better in an older setting. Accordingly, this observation model was not chosen for use.

Other types of observation include participant and non-participant, as put forward by Ranjit Kumar (2014). The main difference is essentially that in participant observations, the observer plays an active role within the environment, whereas non-participant observations produce passive researchers. In the former, participating 'in the same manner' as the children may have led them to detach themselves from the lesson and the activities they were undertaking. Consequently, this case study was observed in a non-participant manner, as I felt that it would decrease the possibility of the Hawthorne effect or any observer bias coming into operation, and thus natural observation conditions were created (Kumar, 2014). In terms of the actual recording of the observation, data collection was 'unstructured' and a 'narrative' recording method was used; note-taking was done keenly, but not at the expense of observing as many different aspects of the lesson as possible (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

For the methodology of a critical incident more specifically, a method that allows for in-depth analysis and reflection was required. According to *Welsh Government*, 'data and information gathered when observing children is an important tool in developing a complete picture of the children' and gaining an understanding of the mechanics of the classroom in its entirety was arguably the most important facet of the observation (2018, p. 4). In order to thoroughly analyse the critical incident in the way it has been done in *Appendix 2*, an

overarching notion of the classroom scenario had to be grasped. As Tripp suggests, 'the simplest technique available for analysing incidents is to ask a series of different kinds of questions' (Tripp, 1993). These questions were answered and reflected upon [See *Appendix 2*] a few days after the initial observation [See *Appendix 1*] and therefore a simple methodology was chosen with regards to the investigation of the critical incident. A non-participant observation was carried out using a narrative style of information recording, and later a variety of thinking and reflecting strategies - such as taking another point of view, thinking about teacher omissions, and debating alternatives, possibilities and choices – provided the rationale for the overall critical incident methodology.

The observation took place in a Reception/Year One mixed classroom during the third lesson of the day, which came immediately after lunchtime. Although the students were excitable and disengaged towards the start of the lesson, the lesson overall was successful in providing a wide range of challenges and activities for students of all abilities [See *Appendix 1*]. The critical incident directly surrounds the behaviour of *Pupil A*, and for the purpose of this section, the criticality of the incident will be split into two components. Firstly, *Pupil A* immediately began to draw on the classroom floor using chalk, upon re-entry after lunch. It appeared that they had not heard initial teacher instructions to go and sit on the carpet to prepare for a whole-class introduction. Secondly, upon noticing the incident, the teacher used facial expressions as a constructive behaviour management technique and then vocalised consequences to *Pupil A*'s actions. These consequences, which were not actually enforced, were that *Pupil A* would "have to clean that up when everybody else goes to their play activities."

Both of the components to the observed critical incident is directly relatable to at least one of the Four Purposes of the Curriculum for Wales 2022. *Pupil A* drawing on the floor does not yet demonstrate all of the characteristics required to become an 'ethical, informed citizen' as they did not fully 'consider the impact of their actions when making choices' (Donaldson, 2015). They entered the classroom and immediately began to misbehave, without thinking of the direct consequences upon their peers, teacher, and the learning environment. In the new curriculum, one of the wider skills that will be developed is 'personal effectiveness' and in order to improve this, *Pupil A* would have benefitted from the opportunity to privately reflect upon and understand the result of their decision (Welsh Government, 2019a).

The teacher's initial response upon identifying *Pupil A*'s misbehaviour was extremely proactive; they used facial expressions and tone of voice to convey sincere disappointment towards the student's actions and this immediately changed *Pupil A*'s conduct. The teacher is therefore already displaying one of the 'priorities for professional learning,' as outlined by the 2022 curriculum's action plan, encouraging 'positive behaviour dispositions' in the classroom (Welsh Government, 2017). *Pupil A* promptly returned the chalk as a direct reaction to the

teacher's facial expressions and therefore a negative behaviour disposition had been recognised and dealt with effectively. Afterwards, the teacher's vocalised response – that *Pupil A* would have to clean up their mess later in the lesson – only recognised the negative behaviour displayed by the child and did not immediately consider why they acted in this way. It could be argued that *Pupil A*, because they had not received any direct instructions upon returning to the classroom after lunchtime, began to 'express ideas and emotions' through their chalk drawing. As part of the new curriculum for 2022, one of the proposed Four Purposes is to develop children as 'enterprising, creative contributors,' and in this situation, although *Pupil A* had evidently misbehaved, they nevertheless displayed many positive characteristics in areas of Donaldson's Four Purposes (Donaldson, 2015).

The observed critical incident can be linked to a number of areas of research within the field of education, and as such, the use of operant conditioning – including the use of consequences and rewards systems - and classroom management strategies will be discussed in relation to the critical incident. The idea of operant conditioning, developed by B. F. Skinner (1968), is a method of learning where a connection is made between a particular type of behaviour and a corresponding reward or consequence. The theory suggests that positive behaviour which is reinforced is more likely to be repeated, and that if poor behaviour is followed by consequences, it is less likely to occur in the future (Iversen, 1992, pp. 1326-7). In this critical incident [See *Appendix 1: Specifics/Critical Incidents*], the teacher vocalised consequences as a reaction to *Pupil A's* misbehaviour, providing a good example of the process of operant conditioning. It is uncertain whether or not this specific misbehaviour had occurred previously, but the teacher's response would certainly have increased the chances of this incident not occurring again. Skinner (1968) notes that 'punished behaviour almost always has strong positively reinforcing consequences,' and therefore in this situation a negative behaviour disposition was, to a certain extent, dealt with through the use of Skinner's formula.

Skinner also suggests that, through operant conditioning, the change in students' behaviour 'could be practically instantaneous' – a particular aspect of the theory that helped distance itself from the philosophies of Edward Thorndike and Ivan Pavlov, amongst others (Iversen, 1992). Such an immediate change in behavioural attitude would be extremely beneficial in teaching, but it could be argued that an instantaneous adjustment made by the child is quite unlikely; there are multiple 'emotional states and complex motives that account for human behaviour' and one single instance of positive reinforcement may not go very far in attempting to eradicate certain behaviour (Pound, 2006). During this critical incident in particular, where the teacher's vocalised consequences were not actually enforced later in the lesson, it could be suggested that the reinforcement had very little impact upon altering *Pupil A's* behaviour in the future. Moreover, this misbehaviour was relatively atypical and therefore

the teacher could not have been expected to have a generic response prepared for this incident, which probably explains the eventual non-existence of the proposed consequences.

There has been much debate surrounding the use of consequences: more specifically, which type of consequences to use, and whether or not consequences are always effective. Skinner (1968) proposes that 'punishing contingencies are no doubt effective,' but overall he places more stress on a constructive method of rewarding students. Rudolf Dreikurs (Dreikurs, Grunwald & Pepper, 1998) organises consequences into three main types: natural, applied logical, and logical. He proposes that students must experience logical consequences as ramifications of their own behaviour, but these consequences must be discussed with the students and decided upon beforehand. This idea is also recognised by Sue Cowley (2010), who notes that the children must be 'aware of what the rules are in the first place' and of 'what the punishment is for breaking them.' In the classroom of the critical incident, there was no clear consequence system in place and therefore it would have been difficult to administer logical consequences in that environment. Using logical consequences 'requires an understanding of the child and of the situation' and thus it could be argued that commanding a five-year-old to clean up masses of chalk drawings, without understanding his motive, did not take into account all aspects of the incident (Dreikurs, Grunwald & Pepper, 1998). Moreover, I would agree with a notion put forward by Lee and Marlene Canter (1992) that it is not always 'in a student's best interest to provide a consequence.' Some theorists, such as David Jeffery and Sandra Newell (2002), have suggested that the students must 'make amends for what they have done' but during this particular incident, it could be argued that a punishment was not required.

The use of rewards or a reward system, on the other hand, are quite widely recognised as powerful behaviour management techniques. Giving rewards has many advantages, such as providing motivation, boosting self-esteem, or simply supplying recognition for positive behaviour dispositions (Wright, 2005). There are also multiple ways in which rewards can be given out, such as praise, a house points system, or the 'freedom to choose an activity' (Pritchard, 2009). Skinnerian behaviourism chooses to emphasise reward more than punishment; reinforcing and rewarding steps as they are learned can be an extremely compelling way to promote positive behaviour, but in the classroom where the critical incident took place, there were no visual signs of any class-wide reward systems (Pound, 2006). Having spent further time in *School X* since the observation, I am now aware of the digital and verbal reward systems that are in place, however it could be suggested that some kind of visual aid would serve as a constant reminder to the students of the established reward systems. Thus, positive behaviour dispositions would be more likely to be inherent within the classroom environment.

There is a vast number of classroom management strategies that may be used in education, but the most pertinent in this situation are ones surrounding routines, transitions, and accessibility. Getting the students into sustained routines is an integral part of classroom management: it is about 'making a habit of what's efficient, productive and scholarly' and it thus induces good behaviour and alertness from the students (Lemov, 2010). Entry routines can be particularly effective in ensuring that there is no misbehaviour upon arrival into the classroom at various points of the school day. During the critical incident, there was no apparent entry routine and this was arguably the first manifestation of the event; the students who first entered the classroom had received clear instructions on what to do [See Appendix 2], but this information never reached the students who entered last. Consequently, *Pupil A* and some other students lingered by the door for some time, unsure of what actions to take and eventually *Pupil A* sought to occupy themselves by misbehaving. Without doubt, it takes time to get children into successfully functional routines but devoting some classroom attention to embedding certain routines would help to avoid situations like the critical incident (Cowley, 2010).

Routines at school are closely linked with transitions both inside and outside of the classroom, of which there are numerous throughout the school day. During the observed lesson, there were many large-scale transitions either from one classroom to another, from the class introduction to activities, or from one activity to another. According to Doug Lemov (2010), transitions 'take less than thirty seconds, and often far less' in an effective classroom environment, and throughout the observation all transitions were largely systematic and efficient. Nevertheless, it would be inflexible to suggest that the duration of all classroom transitions should be short, since certain whole-class movements require plenty of time to work effectively and in a structured manner. Teacher instructions were clear throughout the lesson and it was evident that these kinds of movements had been implemented and practised regularly. Additionally, by handling the class in small groups and directing the children using the pre-assigned methods seen during the observation, 'conditions conducive to learning can be created' (Roberts, 1983). Overall, class transitions and group management methods should encourage students to engage with the activities presented, 'promote the development of student social skills and self-regulation...and use appropriate interventions to assist students' if they happen to misbehave, and the transitions observed at *School X* contained all of these key attributes.

The final research area of contention surrounding the critical incident is that of accessibility. Upon initial viewing, it appeared illogical that a material such as chalk had been made so easily accessible for a Reception/Year 1 class, as this only encouraged the kind of behaviour that eventually transpired. However, many theorists take on the view that greater accessibility to stationery and other materials within the classroom not only promotes student

independence, but also results in fewer instances of permission seeking questions posed to the teacher (Roberts, 1983). Moreover, Skinner (1968) suggests that 'eliminating the conditions which give rise to unwanted behaviour' – in this case, removing potentially messy materials from easy access – creates a learning environment where 'wanted' behaviour is also lacking. Consequently, a compromise could possibly be formulated where less chaotic materials are made readily available to the students and other, more underutilised and obscure pieces of equipment are concealed until required, particularly in the Foundation Phase.

Overall, it could be suggested that issues with classroom management can be overcome by following a few simple steps: be fully prepared for each lesson, motivate the students whenever possible, incentivise learning, build self-esteem, and be endlessly creative and imaginative (Chandra, 2015, p. 14). Establishing routines and managing structured transitions are key to preventing unwanted behaviour in the classroom and, had such a routine or transition been in place in the observation classroom, I would contend that the critical incident may well have been avoided.

It has proved extremely beneficial for my future teaching practice to have been able to reflect upon and evaluate the critical incident in great detail. The use of the ARC model [See *Appendix 2*] has allowed for greater recall and understanding of the incident, and consequently a deeper analysis of the observation and relevant literature. The Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership proposes that teachers should consistently expand their knowledge and understanding through 'reflection and openness to challenge' and consequently their pedagogy is able to develop progressively (Welsh Government, 2019b). Tripp (1993) suggests that reflective judgement involves no obvious 'right answers' about how to act when teaching and learning, rather it is more important to constantly attempt to 'update and improve' professional knowledge where possible. Moreover, this observation of a critical incident has allowed for a profound reflection of a specific area of teaching and as such, knowledge and understanding of the profession has been greatly augmented.

In terms of my own teaching, I have learned a great deal from the observation of this critical incident. Regarding behaviour management, I have seen how useful facial expressions and body language can be in conveying emotions to the students and will endeavour to use this as an effective behaviour management tool in the future. I have been able to consider the positives and negatives of using consequences, and which kinds of consequences are most suitable for promoting positive behaviour dispositions; consequences must be logical and they must take into account both the student and the situation in order to be productive. Based on the learning outcomes of the critical incident, I will also set an exhaustive method of applying consequences in place that the students are well aware of, as well as visual rewards systems. The observed classroom setting displayed a lack of visual reminders regarding consequences or rewards; after evaluating the critical incident in great detail, I believe it is imperative to

supply students with information surrounding consequences and rewards not only verbally and digitally, but also visually, thus ensuring accessibility and equal understanding for all.

The critical incident also demonstrated to me the importance of embedding routines into the classroom. An orderly entry routine into the classroom would arguably have prevented any misbehaviour from taking place. Routines teach students about certain fundamental skills needed for future life post-education, such as patience and organisation, in order to be 'ethical, informed citizens of Wales and the world' (Donaldson, 2015). Although the observed entry routine was effectively non-existent, the classroom transitions were exemplary. After the initial teacher introduction, the carousel of activities ran significantly smoothly with all students fully aware of what was expected of them. Thus, this observation has helped to set a precedent for my future teaching of how well organised transitions should be – regular practice and clear teacher instructions will certainly assist in creating such efficient whole-class movements. In addition, the critical incident and subsequent reflection and investigation has changed my mind somewhat regarding the accessibility of class materials. Having since spoken with colleagues and read further about the subject, the general consensus is that easily accessible materials promote student independence within the classroom and allow for smoother lessons without the need for constant interruption. Albeit having contemplated the critical incident within the context of wider literature, I will aspire to make a broader range of classroom materials readily accessible for all students in the classroom as it stimulates high-quality attribute development for the future. Nonetheless, students must be taught when and how they are able to use such materials in order to prevent instances akin to the critical incident.

In conclusion, two key areas of education and pedagogy – operant conditioning and classroom management strategies – have been considered and critiqued in relation to the observed critical incident case study. A non-participant observation strategy was elected in order to prevent any observer bias or atypical student behaviour. Links have been made between the critical incident and two of Donaldson's Four Purposes from the new curriculum for 2022 and later reflection has allowed these specific purposes to be analysed in greater detail, so that my future pedagogy will be better equipped to engender these concepts. Analysis of this critical incident and use of the ARC model has also taught me the importance of the role of the reflective practitioner in Wales and how this will not only help to shape my teaching in years to come, but will also enable me to expand upon my own personal development and skillset. Moreover, many of the skills that have evolved throughout this case study inquiry feature in the 'Professional Learning' section of the new Professional Standards for Teaching and Leadership, such as committing to wider reading and determining research findings, continually developing professional learning, and exploring the role of the teacher within professional networks and local communities (Welsh Government, 2019b). Overall, my methods of pedagogical reflection have been refined, my designs for certain aspects of my

own future teaching have been adjusted, and my knowledge of behaviour and classroom management strategies has been broadened.

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APPENDIX 1**OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016)

Date: 25/09/2019
Lesson details: Reception/Year 1 Class, 3 rd lesson of the day (1-2pm, post-lunchtime), 25 students (11 Reception, 14 Year 1)
Classroom culture As the lesson was immediately after lunch, all students were quite excitable upon entering the classroom. Songs and videos were used to immediately engage the students, and this worked well. Most students remained focused on learning for the remainder of the lesson and practical behaviour management was mostly deployed.
Objectives The first ten minutes of the lesson involved a half-class swap and therefore the objectives of the lesson became difficult to clarify. However, the students were encouraged to continue the previous lessons' work on learning basic fruit in Welsh and they competently and efficiently completed the tasks. Multifarious lesson activities had been introduced for the students and these sufficiently captured the attention of the class.
Direction Immediately upon starting tasks, all students knew what was expected of them and where they needed to be within the classroom.
Access and challenge All students were engaged and challenged cross-curricularly, and externally supervised activities were also offered. There was ample choice for all.
Assessment Teacher-led provision involved summative assessment in the form of testing students' written and oral knowledge of how to write and say fruit in Welsh.
Specifics / Critical Incidents <i>Pupil A</i>, upon re-entering the classroom after lunch, immediately began to draw on the floor using chalk. Teacher used facial expressions and vocalised consequences as behaviour management, however these consequences were not followed through. Pupil voice - <i>Pupil B</i> suggested that the teacher introduce the observers in Welsh. Teacher acknowledged this as a positive suggestion and used the opportunity to practice the students' Welsh skills. Effective behaviour control - Teacher used hand movements to engage the students; quiet or loud questions were used to regain full class attention; individualised feedback given on behaviour to encourage positive reactions from the rest of the class. Different TAs often interrupted the introduction to the lesson, with contrasting effects. A mixture of open and closed questions was used powerfully by the teacher, in order to introduce the topic and encourage higher level thinking.

APPENDIX 2*Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model***Date:** 25/09/2019**Critical incident (focus):** *Pupil A*, upon re-entering the classroom after lunch, immediately began to draw on the floor using chalk.

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	My initial feeling towards the critical incident was that it was an extreme act of misbehaviour as all students had been instructed to come in from lunchtime and sit on the carpet. Moreover, I was anxious that it had taken almost a minute for the teacher or TAs to recognise what had transpired and it had consequently created quite a mess. During later reflection, I remembered that <i>Pupil A</i> was one of the final students to return to the classroom and therefore the teacher's instruction for everyone to sit on the carpet may not have been heard as far back as them. Additionally, the teacher and TAs were rather busy organising the classroom for the large variety of activities that were to be on offer during the session and that was probably why it had taken a long amount of time for any of them to have reacted to the situation.
Remember and Understand <i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i> <i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i>	The teacher began by using some visual stimuli in the form of songs and videos and this immediately captured the attention of most students upon their return to the classroom. Multifarious lesson activities (at least 5) had been prepared and after the introduction, every class member was appropriately occupied for the duration of the session. All students knew where to go when they were set on-task and thus engagement levels were extremely high throughout the classroom. With regards to the critical incident, there were both positives and negatives to be found. The teacher used facial expressions to good effect in order to convey her dismay; <i>Pupil A</i> immediately knew that they had misbehaved, subsequently returned the chalk and sat on the carpet. However, the teacher's vocalised consequences were that <i>Pupil A</i> would "have to clean that up when everybody else goes to their play activities." It was disappointing to hear such unrealistic consequences, and these were not followed through with later in the lesson.
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 vast array of classroom activities that had been put on offer by the teacher, including a TA-led outdoor project, meant that students of all abilities were thoroughly engaged and challenged cross-curricularly. Having seen how successful this lesson was, I will consequently endeavour to incorporate as wide a variety of activities in my teaching where necessary or possible. The use of facial expressions to convey disappointment in <i>Pupil A</i> was also something that I felt was an extremely powerful behaviour management tool. However, the utilisation of consequences towards <i>Pupil A</i> was unsuitable for the situation. The teacher had become somewhat distressed by the vast amount of preparation needed for the lesson and I would suggest that the consequences expressed by the teacher were unrealistic and impractical. It would have been a lot to ask of a Reception pupil to have cleaned up such a mess and therefore other, less harsh consequences could have been used.

<i>Conclusions and actions</i> <i>“What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?”</i> <i>“What will you do next?”</i>	A solution to prevent any distractions upon student return to the classroom would be to install a classroom entry routine very early on in the year, such as lining up outside or ensuring that every student knows where they need to go upon arrival to the classroom. The teacher’s instructions in this situation had not filtered down to the whole class and therefore a system should be installed to guarantee that all students receive the same directives. In my own practice, I will aim to use facial expressions and body language, as this teacher did, as an effective behaviour management technique. Furthermore, the main thing I have learned from this critical incident is that a solution to ensuring that consequences are carried out is to keep them as logical and prompt as possible. It is important to take time to consider how severe the ill-behaviour is and whether the designated consequences are going to have a positive effect on future student behaviour before verbalising what actions are to be taken.
<i>Transformed Experience</i>	

APPENDIX 3**OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016)

Date: 26/09/2019
Lesson details: Year 1 Class, 2 nd lesson of the day (11am-12pm, pre-lunchtime), RE/Music lesson, 25 students (1 ALN)
Classroom culture Most students were focused throughout the lesson and many were eager to provide competent answers, particularly during the introduction of new content.
Objectives There was a clear overarching purpose to the lesson, which had been written on the whiteboard before the students entered the classroom: "To write a tune to a Psalm." The objective was also discussed at the start of the lesson and children were challenged to determine what a Psalm was.
Direction The direction of the lesson was clearly explained at the start of the lesson, in that the students would first learn the psalm, and then create a tune to match it. Think, Pair, Share and thumbs up/down were techniques used to determine that the students knew the task at hand.
Access and challenge Almost all students were fully engaged, particularly during pair and group work when creating the tune. TAs ensured that all students remained on-task during group work and encouraged everyone to get involved in the creative process.
Assessment When introducing the lesson topic, the teacher used certain children with prior subject-specific knowledge to elicit information for the rest of the class. Wait-time was sufficient during questioning (> 3 secs), but the same child was often asked for answers. Answers were often taken from the first child to raise their hand, and most questions were open, yet never specifically directed. The song written by the teacher and students co-operatively was then videoed, which encouraged the students to be more pro-active and willing to participate.
Specifics / Critical Incidents Instruments had been laid out prior to the start of the lesson and this distracted a few children from participating in class discussions. <i>Pupil A</i> got upset when they thought they were being deliberately left out by the rest of their group and the allocated TA. <i>Pupil B</i> was caught pinching and throwing items at <i>Pupil C</i> during a videoed singing performance and was singled out for this, in front of the rest of the class, by a TA. The teacher and TA subsequently identified that this was not appropriate behaviour, and such behaviour could be seen on the video shown to the whole class.

APPENDIX 4*Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model***Date:** 26/09/2019**Critical incident (focus):** *Pupil B was caught pinching and throwing items at Pupil C during a videoed singing performance.*

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	I had watched the incident occur but felt it would be inappropriate to intervene when the students were being videoed. It appeared that many students did not know that an iPad was being used to video their Psalm singing and I felt that they consequently did not engage with the activity as much as they could have. <i>Pupil B</i> appeared to be extremely agitated and consequently lashed out at <i>Pupil C</i>. Upon later reflection, I wondered whether the students had been sat on the carpet for too long prior to this performance (approx. 40mins) and therefore many had lost interest in the project.
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>	In the wider lesson, AfL was called upon regularly to monitor student progression, and the two TAs were especially diligent in keeping everyone on task. Additionally, the lesson activities had been creatively planned to provide students with a variety of learning mechanisms. The teacher was able to incorporate cross-curricular subjects (R.E. and Music) and this was a really positive attribute of the session. The most disappointing element of the lesson was essentially the learning environment. The lesson took place in the school's 'Learning Pod', which for a class of 25 students was a rather small room. The transition from the usual classroom to the 'Pod' had taken place immediately after morning break time and this led to students being both excitable and bemused. Musical instruments were laid out in close vicinity to where the main teaching took place and this only served to further distract some students.
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>	A number of good AfL techniques were interwoven throughout this session, including 'Think, Pair, Share', thumbs up/down, and KWL Grids, and I will endeavour to seamlessly include these assessment methods in my own teaching. The teacher was initially able to engage the class using a combination of visual interactivity, independent instrument playing, and open questioning, and this provided the learners with a variety of ways in which to grasp the new content being taught. In any case, I would argue that the critical incident came about as a direct consequence of the classroom environment's inability to allow for a greater amount of movement. Some students became increasingly unsettled as the lesson went on because they had been sat in the same place for a lengthy period of time. <i>Pupil B</i> had been identified by the teacher as being off-task on two occasions prior to the critical incident, but seeing as no change was able to be made to the students' seating arrangements, it was relatively unsurprising that <i>Pupil B</i> eventually became so agitated that it had negative consequences for their surrounding peers.

<i>Conclusions and actions</i> <i>“What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?”</i> <i>“What will you do next?”</i>	In the normal classroom environment, there would have been a number of simple solutions to the problem, such as: removing <i>Pupil B</i> from nearby peers and allowing them some breathing space, getting the whole class to move around during a short interval, or providing another activity that would have allowed the students to move away from their carpet positions. However, in this setting, it was more difficult to identify a quick solution. I would argue that having the instruments already set out before the students entered the classroom caused initial behavioural problems; therefore, they should have remained hidden until it was time for them to be used. The best solution would have been to have allowed the students to be able to stand up and move around for a short period, so that their learning environment did not stagnate and so that they could let off some steam. In my own practice, I will make every effort to prepare for sessions that take place in unusual settings. The classroom environment should always be taken into account when planning lessons, and students should be given the chance not just to have a variety of activities planned, but also the option to move freely at certain points.
<i>Transformed Experience</i>	

APPENDIX 5**OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016)

Date: 02/10/2019
Lesson details: Year 1 Class, 45 mins lesson after break and P.E. the lesson before, Oracy & Listening skills, 26 students (2 ALN, one of which EAL)
Classroom culture Considering the students had experienced a lively morning, they were considerably focused and involved in the lesson. The teacher was very attentive to any misbehaving or non-attentive students and this resulted in a content-full session. There was great use of incidental Welsh, to which the students responded well and understood. All students remained on the carpet together for the duration of the lesson.
Objectives Although not written down, the teacher orally made the lesson objectives apparent to the students. They were to discuss body parts using a prompt picture and had to listen well to each other's opinions. The teacher often asked the students "What makes a good listener" to develop higher order thinking skills and reaffirm the objective.
Direction Teacher instructions were extremely clear and as a consequence students carried out their work very competently, using the structure provided. The concept of "Talking Partners" was introduced and this allowed the teacher to use AfL on a regular basis, by assessing what each pair had discussed and paid attention to.
Access and challenge Pairs were generated randomly and consequently students of all abilities were quite engaged and eager to contribute. The teacher prompted higher ability students to lengthen their sentences by adding adjectives or additional nouns. Wait-time was rather short, however, and this eventually led to higher ability students responding to the majority of teacher questions.
Assessment Although there was no clear assessment in the introduction or final section of the lesson, the "Talking Partners" system provided sustained formative assessment throughout. The teacher consistently used open questions to explore more abstract ideas, such as "What makes a good listener?" or "What do you think about the picture?" The teacher also explained that there were no right or wrong answers.
Specifics / Critical Incidents <i>Pupil A</i> , with ALN, raised their hand to answer questions and continually repeated the answer that had been submitted immediately beforehand. The teacher always accepted their answer as valid and praised the pupil for their contribution. <i>Pupil B</i> repeatedly asked to go to the toilet during the lesson; this is a common daily occurrence and they often swiftly return to the classroom. The <i>pupil</i> , after being told no by the teacher, later asked a TA in order to gain permission to leave the room.

APPENDIX 6*Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model***Date:** 02/10/2019

Critical incident (focus): Some students in the class raised their hand to answer questions and often repeated the answer that had been submitted beforehand. *Pupil A*, with ALN, did so each time.

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	My initial feelings regarding the incident were that the teacher was considerate in accepting all answers received from all students. Every answer was greeted with gratification and positivity and this engendered a positive classroom environment. Although <i>Pupil A</i> consistently responded with other students' previous ideas, the teacher encouraged him to continue to contribute where possible. At the time, I thought that this was a futile exercise as <i>Pupil A</i> was not answering with his own thoughts, but upon later reflection I considered that allowing this pupil with Global Developmental Delay to feel that his responses were valued was more important than correcting him on each occasion.
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 introduction of "Talking Partners" meant that the teacher could regularly use AfL to assess the students' progression, and open questions were later used to challenge those able to use higher level thinking. The Interactive Whiteboard was used to good effect as all students were able to clearly see the pictures they had to discuss. Although partner allocation was distributed randomly, based on students' positions on the carpet, multiple contributions from students of all abilities still ensued. <i>Pupil A</i> was not alone in repeating previous answers and it was somewhat surprising that individual answers were not encouraged by the teacher, particularly from students who were able to develop higher level thinking.
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 use of a picture stimulus proved extremely effective in provoking student discussion and cooperation. The students were able to call upon their prior knowledge of body parts and this knowledge was managed constructively by the teacher so that adjectives and more complex nouns could be explored by the class. 'Think, Pair, Share' was also used as an effective AfL technique and this is a learning style that I will often use as part of my teaching. The cause of the most disappointing element of the session was the fact that the teacher failed to indicate when answers had been repeated. Although this allowed the lesson to flow better, it may have been beneficial to have directed the class' attention to any repetition; one could argue that this may have prevented as many future occurrences.
Conclusions and actions <i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i> <i>"What will you do next?"</i>	To conclude, by the end of the session, <i>Pupil A</i> and some other students had had their repetitive answers indulged by the teacher. Had the teacher explained to the class that they were looking for a variety of responses, or merely pointed out when an answer had been repeated, this may have reduced the instances of <i>Pupil A</i>'s actions. Nonetheless, <i>Pupil A</i>'s additional learning needs may have played a large role in causing the repetitive answers and thus teacher action may have had no impact on their behaviour. In my own practice I will ensure, as this teacher did, to make every student feel valued in their responses, as I believe this gives rise to a very positive classroom culture and encourages many students to engage and

	participate. Moreover, it is always crucial to consider any additional learning needs in the classroom and I will endeavour to take these into account, particularly when trying to encourage engagement from the student.
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APPENDIX 7**OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

Questions adapted from Fletcher Wood (2016)

Date: 02/10/2019
Lesson details: Year 1 Class, 3 rd lesson of the day (1-2:30pm, post-lunchtime), Mixed literacy/numeracy lesson, 26 students (2 ALN, 1 of which EAL)
Classroom culture This lesson contained high levels of provision and supervision and thus most students were extremely focused throughout the duration of the lesson.
Objectives The teacher clearly explained from the outset that the class would be split in half but proceeded to introduce the lesson for both sets of students together. A video recapped body parts for the literacy students and the teacher re-introduced the concept of number bonds to 10 for the rest of the class. The class then dispersed into separate rooms to continue the rest of the session.
Direction Students split into groups based on ability, with Group 1 being the highest ability and Group 4 the lowest. After the initial teacher introduction on the carpet, Groups 1 & 4 undertook number bonds led by the teacher, and Groups 2 & 3 labelled body parts under the supervision of two TAs. The direction of the lesson was explained well to the students, but it may have been confusing that there was a literacy/numeracy mix.
Access and challenge At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher often asked questions to the whole class and this led to the same students repeatedly responding. However, during the supervised activities, all students had equal access to learning opportunities.
Assessment Initially, the teacher extracted prior knowledge surrounding body parts and number bonds in order to assess their initial levels, but this was not done discretely. During the teacher and TA-led activities, each student was able to receive more individual feedback and therefore assessment was much more tailored and effective.
Specifics / Critical Incidents In Group 1, some students were totally unwilling to work together as part of a group to explore number bonds to 20. Instead, they preferred to exhibit their own talents. In Groups 2 and 3, the students were supposed to label pictures of themselves using lines and arrows. However, they instead copied down the labelling words in circles, as this was how the TA set out the examples on the board. Consequently, there had been a disparity between the TA's verbal instructions and visual modelling. Towards the end of the lesson, a variety of numeracy games were available on the Interactive Whiteboard. The students struggled with the content they had been learning in the session (number bonds), yet were extremely competent when playing games that involved doubling numbers to 10.

APPENDIX 8*Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model***Date:** 02/10/2019**Critical incident (focus):** A handful of students were totally unwilling to work together as part of a group to explore number bonds to 20.

<i>Experience</i>	
Feelings <i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>	My initial feeling towards the incident was that the students found it difficult to commit to working with each other. As soon as the teacher instructed the students to split into pairs, there was little discussion of the work and most just focused on their own Multilink and whiteboard. The teacher actively encouraged discussion and collaboration, but this was rarely observable.
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>	It was a rather unusual lesson, in that the class were split based on two separate areas of the curriculum: literacy and numeracy. Although the differentiation within the lesson allowed teaching to be catered to individual learners' needs, it resulted in a disconnected introduction and plenary. Some learners found it demanding to recognise cross-curricular links and therefore keeping the two groups apart at the beginning and end of the lesson may have been advantageous.
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 division of the students into groups based on ability worked well because the teacher was able to appropriately differentiate the learning. The lower ability numeracy group responded well to the use of Multilink, mini whiteboards and teacher modelling in order to explore number bonds to 10, and this is a technique that I would be confident in using in the future. The higher ability numeracy group worked equally as well individually, but with number bonds to 20. The most disappointing element of the session was when a large proportion of the students in the higher ability group had difficulty in working together when investigating harder number bonds. It was clear that particular students contested to be the first to finish or answer a question, and it would not be desirable to have such a culture to exist within 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 possible solution to the main critical incident would be to give the students clear instructions and foundations on how to work in pairs or groups, starting with less academic activities and slowly building towards cooperative productive learning. Another straightforward solution would be to explain to the higher ability group that all students would have equal opportunity to contribute to sessions, and that competition between them is unproductive. In order to avoid situations like this in my own practice, I will aim to continuously advocate to my classes the advantages of working in pairs/groups so that there is a greater understanding of why this should be done. Examples of this could include: a rewards system for good cooperation and communication, using higher level thinking questions to promote the benefits of teamwork in a wider sense, or using the concept of 'thinking partners' so that the children become more accustomed to working with one another.
<i>Transformed Experience</i>	