

**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.**

This essay examines a case study on individuals, who have been involved within an observed critical incident. There will be an identification of the potential next teaching and learning steps, alongside a personal reflection of the incident in question.

A critical incident is often something unexpected, and out of place within a daily routine (Department of Education, 2019). It opens up an opportunity for the practitioner to reflect, and note any possible next steps (Tripp, 1993). The definition shall be further explored within the methodology section, alongside a detailed review into observations.

The observations took place on the 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019 within a rural primary school, with approximately two hundred pupils (Estyn, 2017). There are 3% of pupils within the school who are entitled to Free School Meals, and approximately 20% with Additional Learning Needs (Estyn, 2017). The observations took place within a year two class of fifteen pupils, who were supported by a class teacher and two Learning Support Assistants (LSAs). The relevant lesson observation sheet and ARC model are included underneath appendices 1 and 2.

Notably, there has been an emphasis upon protecting participants who are seen as more vulnerable (BERA, 2019; Economic and Social Research Council, 2019). Children are seen as vulnerable as they may not possess the capability to fully understand the potential risks associated with research (Presidential Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues, 2016). Due to their vulnerability, a strict level of confidentiality must be maintained throughout. Confidentiality has been defined by Ary et al (2019) as when the researcher is aware of details regarding the participants but will not make them public knowledge.

In addition, article sixteen in the United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child (UNCRC) states that children and young people have the right to privacy (UNICEF, 2019, pg.1). In accordance with the advice taken from BERA and the UNCRC, the pupil in question shall be referred to as 'Pupil X' to protect their privacy. The school shall also not be named, in order to safeguard all those who are associated.

As this case study is focusing upon an observed critical incident, it is important that the definition is firstly clarified.

McGarr and McCormack (2016) argues that a critical incident does not mean an event that is serious or pressing in nature. On the other hand, Tripp (1993, p.8) claims that a critical incident is created by how an individual perceives an event, and the judgements that they attach to it. Whereas Joshi (2018) has highlighted the fact that a critical incident is something that is unplanned and can often be personal to the teacher. Richards and Farrell (2010, *cited in* Joshi, 2018 p.83) leads on this, by suggesting that a critical incident provides teachers with an awareness of teaching and learning aspects.

This unique insight allows teachers to critically reflect upon the incident that has taken place, and to determine if there are other alternative actions that could possibly be taken (Cranton, 1996 *cited in* Shandomo, 2010 p.101). Furthermore, according to Dewey (*cited in* Grigg, 2010), the act of reflection encourages the growth of an individual.

Critical reflection encourages a teacher to become a reflective practitioner, a notion introduced by Schön (1983, *cited in* Barnes and Price, 2015 p.109; Manti, Henderson and Watkinson, 2011, p.1). It is important for teachers to take part in relevant and purposeful critical reflection (MacBlain, 2014), as it helps them to identify and undertake any improvements in their practice (Menter, 2012). Paterson and Chapman (2013) has also stated that reflection is a critical aspect of creating and maintaining a sense of capability, across a teacher's professional lifetime.

Two kinds of data can be produced during research. Quantitative research focuses upon producing numerical and quantifiable data (Almaki, 2016; Bryman, 2016). On the other hand, qualitative research is concerned with strengthening an understanding surrounding a topic (Queirós, Faria and Almedia, 2017). This research project will be focusing upon collecting qualitative data through the means of observations.

Marshall and Rossman (1995, *cited in* Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2014, pg. 456) have emphasised that observations in research involve taking note of events, behaviours, settings and routines that are taking place. It provides researchers with an opportunity to improve their understanding upon real-life situations, just by observing the behaviours of those around them (Wilkinson and Birmingham, 2003, *cited in* Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010).

There are two different ways in which researchers can conduct an observation. They can either choose to be a participant or a non-participant observer (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010; Dawson, 2009). A participant observation is when a researcher fully immerses themselves as part of the participant group, whilst a non-participant is one who focuses solely on observing what is taking place (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2014).

Whilst a participant observation can provide the researcher with a greater understanding into the participants (Lopez-Dicastillo and Belintxon, 2014 *cited in* Takyi, 2015), there is also the risk of bias if the researcher becomes too involved within the group (McLeod, 2015). Participant observation can also be seen as discriminating, focusing too heavily upon the agenda of the researcher (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2014, pg. 468).

Alternatively, non-participant observation is typically done on a smaller scale, which means the results will not be able to be replicated or generalised across society (McLeod, 2015). Despite this, it has been seen as a normal and increasingly popular method of observation (Angrosino, 2016), perhaps due to the simplicity in its execution.

However, both participant and non-participant observation can carry the risk of participants altering their behaviour, through the influence of an observer (Berthelot, 2011). This is known as the Hawthorne Effect, and is defined as when the participants change their behaviour, as they are aware, they are being observed (Paradis and Sutkin, 2017; McCambridge, Witton and Elbourne, 2014; Sedgwick, 2012). Some have argued that there is little evidence to suggest the existence of the Hawthorne Effect (Paradis and Sutkin, 2017; Draper et al, 1996) and that it is perhaps an overly simple way of generalising the vast effects of observations (Paradis and Sutkin, 2017). On the other hand, Gass and Mackey (2007, *cited in* Baker and Lee, 2011) have argued that the changes in behaviour do happen, and that these are positive.

As the main concern surrounding the Hawthorne Effect is regarding a change in behaviour, Paradis and Sutkin (2017) have suggested restricting the participants awareness of the research question or topic. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2014) are of the viewpoint that notifying the participants of what is being researched, would result in the undesired change of behaviour. The researcher has chosen to undertake non-participant observation, with the pupils being unaware of the purposes of the observation.

The critical incident in question, took place during a Read, Write, Inc. session. Read, Write, Inc. aims to teach children to gain confidence in reading accurately and confidently (Ruth Miskin Training, 2019). One of the four purposes, as stated by Donaldson (2015), is to ensure that children can become 'ambitious, capable learners' (pg. 29). He expands on this, by explaining that they should be able to build up their knowledge and have the correct skills in place to be able to apply their knowledge in a range of different scenarios (Donaldson, 2019). Read, Write, Inc enables children to create and build upon their knowledge, at a pace that is suitable for them (Ruth Miskin Training, 2019).

During this lesson, pupils were split into three groups and were supported by either the teacher or one of the class LSAs. Pupil X was in an LSA supported group, with seven other pupils. The pupils were asked a question about the book they had recently been

reading together during that session. Questioning plays a large role in allowing children to achieve the previously mentioned purpose (Donaldson, 2015). In order to become an ambitious, capable learner, children should be given opportunities to ask and answer questions (Donaldson, 2015).

However, once Pupil X had noticed their peers having different answers than the one, they had given, their answer quickly changed. This can be suggested that perhaps Pupil X is not able to achieve one of the four purposes, of being a healthy confident individual (Donaldson, 2015). It is believed that to accomplish this purpose, children must be confident enough to take part in group activities and be able to confidently triumph in adversities they may face (Donaldson, 2015). Pupil X was not given an opportunity to discuss their opinion, therefore they would have also been unable to fulfil the purpose of being an 'ambitious, capable learner' (Donaldson, 2015).

The critical incident can be viewed through the eyes of a behaviourist. Behaviourism learning theories are centred around behaviour which has been derived from a stimulus or a response (Grigg, 2010). One of the main behaviourists, is B.F. Skinner, who created the operant conditioning theory (Keenan, Evans and Crowley, 2016)

Skinner believed that behaviour was a result of a response towards a stimulus, which can be shaped through either positive or negative reinforcement (Denby, 2015). Positive reinforcement, such as verbally praising a child, is seen to strengthen the behaviour that has been displayed (MacBlain, 2014). On the other hand, negative reinforcement, such as giving a consequence for poor behaviour, decreases the likelihood of the behaviour being repeated (Keenan, Evans and Crowley, 2016). McLeod (2018) has also noted that if the behaviour is to be ignored, then this has no effect upon the behaviour being repeated again.

Another behaviourist, J.B. Watson, stated that if the reinforcement was performed regularly enough, then the behaviour would become more of a stronger mannerism (McLeod, 2018; Grigg, 2010). Skinner also agreed with this, noting how important the frequency of reinforcements is to increase or decrease behaviour (MacBlain, 2014). Although, if positive reinforcement is used too often, then it loses its effectiveness in shaping behaviour (Gray and MacBlain, 2015). Similarly, if there is a lack of positive reinforcement, then this could result in the child feeling unappreciated (McLeod, 2018; Gray and MacBlain, 2015).

Skinner and his operant conditioning theory have come under scrutiny and been a subject of debate. Firstly, his experiments took place within laboratories, using animals' behaviour to form his theories (MacBlain, 2015). Noah Chomsky (1959) argued that the conditioned responses of a child, could not fully explain their understanding surrounding

their behaviour. Such criticisms of the theory can lead to the worry surrounding its relevance within a classroom environment.

Despite this, McLeod (2018) has pointed out the relevance operant conditioning theory has in shaping and improving performance in the classroom. Skinner was of the belief that for teaching to be effective, that relevant positive reinforcement must be included (Holland and Skinner, 1961). The operant conditioning theory can be witnessed in modern day classrooms, through the use of behaviour management or the provision of feedback (McLeod, 2018), such as Assessment for Learning.

Assessment for learning has been summarised as being 'formative assessment' (Brown, 2019; Hargreaves, 2010; Black and Wiliam, 1998). It is a way of gathering information about where a pupil is in their learning, what they would need to achieve next, and the most suitable way to get there (Assessment Reform Group, 2002 *cited in* Hargreaves, 2005). Black and Wiliam (1998) have further defined this as a form of assessment that provides feedback, allowing for relevant changes to be made in teaching and learning. The use of assessment for learning, to move children forward in their education, has also been highlighted by Donaldson (2015) as one of his twelve pedagogical principles.

It differs to that of summative assessment, which is assessment that takes place at the end of a period of learning, using methods such as exams to collect the information (National Foundation for Educational Research, 2019). Summative assessment has been seen as having a harmful influence upon children (Assessment Reform Group, 2002 *cited in* Black et al, 2003). It has been suggested that the high focus it has upon achieving certain grades and abilities, has an impact upon pupil's self-esteem (Black et al, 2003). Therefore, the active involvement of pupils within Assessment for Learning has been shown to reinforce and improve learning (Trauth-Nare and Buck, 2011; Black et al, 2003).

There are several techniques to ensure that formative assessment is taking place. The use of quality feedback, as suggested by Brown (2019) and Wiliam and Black (1998), will be discussed in further detail within the context of the critical incident.

The use of feedback has been recognised as a vital part of assessment for learning (Brown, 2019; Swaffield, 2008; Black et al, 2003; Black and Wiliam, 1998). Hattie (2009) has defined feedback as being the most influential towards improving pupil's attainment. It allows pupils to understand their next steps in learning, and what they need to do to achieve this (Assessment Reform Group, 1999 *cited in* Hargreaves, 2005).

Black and Wiliam (1998) have stressed the importance surrounding the contents of feedback. They stated that feedback should 'be about particular qualities of his/her work, with advice on what he/she can do to improve' (Black and Wiliam, 1998, pg. 9). The

information that has been provided should then be used, to close the gap between current and desired knowledge (Sadler, 1989 *cited in* Swaffield, 2008).

Although feedback has been noted to positively impact upon learning, it can also hinder a child if not used correctly. Black et al (2003) have noted that numerical feedback, such as a test percentage, does not provide a child with enough information on how to move forward in their learning. Hattie and Timperley (2007) also agree with this, stating that the numbers or grades are irrelevant, and it's the feedback provided that is important. This method of feedback only encourages children to compare themselves with peers, ignoring the potential for improvement (Black et al, 2003).

Time is also an issue surrounding feedback. If feedback isn't given instantly, then children would have forgotten the detail and the task surrounding it, rendering it ineffective towards learning (Swaffield, 2008). Therefore, the feedback would need to be relevant and provided almost instantaneously. This can also be linked in with Skinners operant conditioning theory and rewards. The positive or negative reinforcers used to shape behaviour can be a form of feedback, which needed to be given immediately (McLeod, 2018; Omomia and Omomia, 2014).

During the Read Write Ink session, pupil X was working within a group of their peers. The literature suggests that students are more likely to seriously accept constructive criticism, or feedback, from their peers over their teachers (Black et al, 2003). Swaffield (2008) has noted that because feedback should be part of a consistent dialogue, it is more likely to occur between peers. Donaldson (2015) has also expressed the power that peer feedback has, highlighting it's potential to allow the testing of ideas.

Due to the social nature of group feedback, then the children would need to feel comfortable with the environment that they are in. Hattie (2009) stressed the importance of creating a safe environment, where mistakes are welcomed and not judged by others. The research undertaken by Carol Dweck (2006, *cited in* Swaffield, 2008) suggested that the idea one possesses about themselves, is massively influenced by feedback. This can lead to the worry of negative feedback, and the implications this may have upon a child. Brown (2019) stressed the importance for a child to be psychologically sound enough to deal with peer feedback.

Alternatively, it was witnessed that Pupil X changed their mind once they have viewed the opinions of others within their group. According to Albert Banduras Social Learning Theory, children learn by observing the actions of those around them (McLeod, 2016). This can be through either the physical or verbal behaviours displayed and can include the expectations their peers have created about them (Linden, 2005 *cited in* Gray and MacBlain, 2015). Bandura also believed in the concept of self-efficacy, which involved the beliefs the child had about their own abilities and potential to succeed (Bandura, 1994).

Gray and MacBlain (2015) noted how on one hand children can be self-confident, and therefore have a good sense of self-efficacy. On the other hand, they may also have weak self-efficacy, and may struggle with their confidence during complicated tasks (Gray and MacBlain, 2015). It is suggested that to enable a strong sense of self-efficacy, children receive positive comments from those around them (Gray and MacBlain, 2015; Bandura, 1994). In regard to receiving feedback, Swaffield (2008) has suggested that it is not the existence or lack of feedback that would make a difference to the pupils learning, it is the standard of the feedback received that would have an impact. Therefore, it can be implied that if Pupil X was to receive good quality feedback, then their self-efficacy would improve.

To allow reflection, an ARC reflection model format has been used. It gave the researcher a chance to analyse the critical incident, allowing the suggestion of further actions to be taken. As Tripp (1993) highlighted, an incident becomes critical once deeper reflection has taken place. Indeed, this then allows a judgement to develop with suggested next steps forming from the analysis (Tripp, 2011). This next section will be reflecting upon the critical incident in question, suggesting the potential next steps that could be taken in the future. The ARC reflection model that refers back to this critical incident, is included underneath appendices 2.

The first suggested way forward, is to incorporate the use of think-pair-share within the classroom. It was first developed in 1981 by Frank Lyman, for the use of additional learning needs classrooms (Cooper, 2018; Kaddoura, 2013). It poses a question to the students, who then go onto discuss their opinions with a peer before stating their answers to the group (Cooper, 2018; Kaddoura, 2013; McTighe and Lyman, 1998 *cited in* Carss, 2007).

It could be suggested that Pupil X felt pressured to change their answer, due to the question being posed toward the group, with their peers having different answers. Think-pair-share removes the aspect of peer pressure, that is an aspect of responding to a large group (McKeachie and Svinicki, 2010 *cited in* Kaddoura, 2013). Children are given time to discuss their opinions, and to rehearse their answers before discussing it with their class (Carss, 2007). It supports children of all abilities to contribute to the discussions and answers, therefore supporting the communication and thinking skills of a wide range of learners (Azlina, 2010; Welsh Assembly Government, 2010; Carss, 2007).

Alternatively, perhaps Pupil X felt as if they did not have enough time to answer the question and did not feel confident with their initial answer, hence the change. Time to think and discuss is an important aspect of think-pair-share (Robertson, 2006 *cited in* Kaddoura, 2013). Azlina (2010) notes how this leads to an improvement in the students thinking, with the Welsh Assembly Government (2010) noting how this makes room for the development of more advanced answers.

The second suggested way forward, as mentioned within the Arc Reflection model (appendices 2) is the use of concept cartoons. Concept cartoons were developed by Stuart Naylor and Brenda Keogh, and were initially used to explore misconceptions children had about science (Celik and Gundogdu, 2016; Welsh Assembly Government, 2010; STEM Learning, 2009). It has since proven a useful method, to support learners during the teaching and learning process (Celik and Gundogdu, 2016).

Concept cartoons have been described as being cartoon images or characters, which each represent a different point of view or idea (Celik and Gundogdu, 2016; Naylor and Keogh, 2012; Welsh Assembly Government, 2010). In terms of the critical incident, it can be assumed that Pupil X did not feel completely confident in their answer. The fact that they also quickly changed it after observing their peers, also suggests this. It is noted how those pupils who are less confident than their peers, are often reluctant to disclose their ideas in fear that they are incorrect (Naylor and Keogh, 2012). Both the Welsh Assembly Government (2010) and STEM Learning (2009) have noted how concept cartoons demolishes this fear. This is perhaps due to the pupils believing that the cartoons are the ones who hold the opinion, so the blame can easily be placed upon them if they are wrong.

Keogh and Naylor (1999, *cited in* Naylor and Keogh, 2012) have also explained how concept cartoons are easily able to be included as a method of assessment for learning. The ease at which pupils are able to express their thoughts and feelings through concept cartoons, supports them in developing their understanding (Wotjaszczyk and Smith, 2006 *cited in* Celik and Gundogdu, 2016). This could have provided the LSA supporting Pupil X, with an opportunity to assess their understanding surrounding the topic, which would have also allowed the correct feedback to be delivered.

In conclusion, think-pair-share easily allows peer feedback to take place (Carss, 2007) whereas concept cartoons remove the fear of responding, supporting children in their learning (Celik and Gundogdu, 2016). Both methods easily allow assessment for learning to take place, enabling the teacher to provide formative feedback.

Assessment for learning and formative feedback is essential, to ensure that pupils are on the right track of their learning and that teaching is kept relevant. These are important aspects, to guarantee that the professional standards of teaching and leadership are being met. Welsh Assembly Government (2018) explains that these values encourage teachers to be the best that they can possibly be, ensuring the best outcomes for their pupils. A

Alongside this, being a reflective practitioner is vital for ensuring that teaching practices are consistently kept up to date, ensuring the best for all pupils. This again, comes underneath the professional standards of teaching and leadership. According to the Welsh

Government (2019) reflection encourages the development of professional learning, allowing the pedagogy to consistently develop.

Both think-pair-share and concept cartoons, refines and support learning for children, ensuring that the standard of teaching and learning being paramount, is met (Welsh Assembly Government, 2018). Through critical reflection teaching practices can be consistently refined, enabling practices are kept up to date, ensuring the best possible outcomes for learners.

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## **Appendices 1.**

### **OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Date:</b><br>26 <sup>th</sup> September 2019.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Lesson details:</b><br>Year 2 class, one teacher and 2 LSAs.<br>Read Write Ink.<br>Children were placed into three groups, overseen by either the teacher or an LSA. There were 8-9 pupils in each group.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Classroom culture</b><br>(Are the students focused on learning?) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher encouraged children to remove distractions- pencils in pots, books in the middle of the table.</li> <li>• Boy A- laying head on desk, not participating.</li> <li>• Boy B- disengaged from task and fidgeting, teacher spoke and brought focus back.</li> <li>• Girl A- LSA informed pupil that she will be staying in at break, if work not completed.</li> <li>• Teacher informed pupil that they had no idea where they were, because they had not been listening.</li> <li>• Teacher- asked pupils why they were turning around, and not paying attention. Brought focus back.</li> <li>• Girl D- turning around and fiddling with objects in classroom. Began to distract friend who was working. LSA reprimanded friend and not Girl C.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

(Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?)

- Purpose of lesson- introduce new words, Read Write Ink.
- Flash cards used to sound out words- often modelled by teacher.
- Write sentences using certain sounding words.
- Teacher connecting learning to real life past experiences within the school- a talent contest.
- Teacher- asked pupils to write out sentence.

### **Direction**

(Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)

- Teacher and LSAs modelled how to sound words. Children copied. 'My turn, your turn'.
- Teacher informing pupils that she will only ask the children, who are sitting beautifully- reminded what expected of them, peer modelling, behaviour.
- Teacher- repeated task instructions, when asked pupils to write sentence.
- Teacher- praised Girl B for getting capital letter and full stop at the end of a sentence, repeated the success criteria.
- Teacher- praised girl C for hitting the previously mentioned success criteria, but then informed pupil that she got letter wrong way around. This wasn't initially shared with pupils as part of success criteria.

### **Access and challenge**

(Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?)

- LSA Group 3- children took part in a game. All stood up, went around the circle and if they got the question wrong then they had to sit down.
- Teacher- during one part of the lesson, asked for hands up to answer question.
- Children paired up, helping peers with the words. Little teacher input.
- Lollypop sticks with children's names on used, to ensure random selection.

- LSA Group 3- LSA modelled sentence, then asked children to repeat it (went round in a circle). She then asked them to repeat again, using a funny voice. Children became engaged, and happily took part in the activity.

### **Assessment**

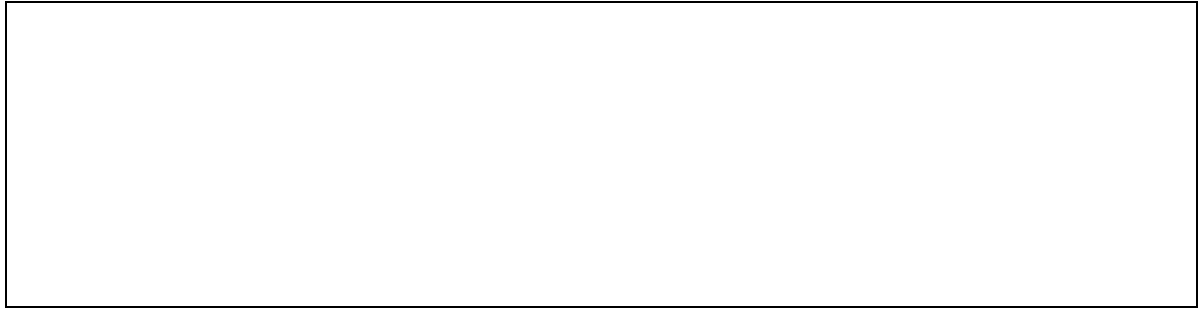
How does the teacher assess student understanding before, during and after the lesson? How is this used in their teaching?

- LSA Group 3- if children got question wrong, they had to sit down. LSA then explained where they had gone wrong.
- Reminding pupils of what they had learned during previous lessons.
- Teacher- asked question, but informed children there would be no hands up. Asked random pupils.
- Lollypop sticks with children's names on are used, to ensure random selection and allows teacher to check each child's understanding.
- LSA Group 2- asked pupils what they need to start a sentence. Reminded of previous learning, checked understanding.
- Children were asked to test each other on spellings. Peer assessment.

### **Specifics / Critical Incidents**

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

- Students playing game with LSA. Informed that because a child had spoilt it, that they would have to start again. Other pupils appeared to be frustrated at this.
- LSA Group 3- asked pupils' opinion on a topic. They were to put their hands on their heads if they agreed, hands on shoulders if they disagreed. Boy C instantly put his hands on his head, but when he looked around his group and saw the majority of his peers had a different answer. He then changed his answer (one hand on head, one hand on shoulder).
- Teacher asked pupils to put their hands up to answer a question. Only Pupil A did. The teacher then went onto ask Pupil B, who had not put their hand up. Pupil A looked disappointed at this. Pupil B then went onto get the question wrong, and Pupil A then got an opportunity to answer.



## **Appendices 2.**

### *Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model*

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**Date: 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

**Critical incident (focus): Boy C changing opinion, when noticed what peers thought.**

| <i>Experience</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><i>Feelings</i></p> <p><i>“What are your feelings regarding the experience?”</i></p>                                                                                                                              | <p>I believe that once the pupil in question, witnessed the pupils around him having a different opinion to him, he changed his mind to avoid being singled out. Perhaps because of the size of the group, Boy C changed his answer to avoid being seen as ‘the odd one out’.</p>                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <p><i>Remember and Understand</i></p> <p><i>“Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?”</i></p> <p><i>“What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?”</i></p> | <p>The child was part of a small group of children, led by an LSA. The LSA asked the children for their opinion about a topic. The majority of pupils had a different answer, to the pupil in question. When the pupil realised this, he then went onto change his answer. There was no opportunity for pupils to explain their reasoning.</p>                                                                                                      |
| <p><i>Evaluate and analyse</i></p> <p><i>“What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?”</i></p>                                                                              | <p>Pupils can be influenced by different peer groups (Welsh Government, 2019, p.7) and perhaps the pupil in question felt obliged to change their answer, to satisfy his standing within the group. It may also be implied that the student perhaps did not feel they were in an environment at the time, that provided genuineness or acceptance- two factors that Carl Rogers felt was important for a person to fully ‘grow’ (McLeod, 2014).</p> |

|                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><i>“What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?”</i></p>                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p><i>Conclusions and actions</i></p> <p><i>“What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?”</i></p> <p><i>“What will you do next?”</i></p> | <p>Bandura was of the opinion that children learn from witnessing others (Denby, 2015). Although this is true, for this situation in particular it may have hindered the child’s ability to comfortably express themselves. A way forward from this, is the use of concept cartoons, which was introduced by Stuart Naylor and Brenda Cough (Welsh Assembly Government, 2018). It can be used in a variety of ways and encourages children to debate opinions and allows room for discussion (Stem Learning, 2009). Although it is initially used to discuss science concepts (Welsh Assembly Government, 2018) it can be adapted to suit this situation in particular. As the pupils would be encouraged to think that it is the cartoon who holds that opinion, it then removes the worry that they would be wrong (Welsh Assembly Government, 2018).</p> |
| <p><i>Transformed experience</i></p>                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

**Appendices 3.****OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019

**Lesson details:**

Year 2 class. One teacher, 2 LSAs. The children were focusing on number bonds to 20 and revising their two times tables. Children grouped together on carpet at the start, then split into three groups, supervised by either the teacher or an LSA.

**Classroom culture**

(Are the students focused on learning?)

- Children entered the classroom, sitting quietly on carpet as teacher began the lesson.
- Boy A- not focused upon teacher explanation. When teacher asked, discovered not very well.
- Teacher encouraged two pupils to sit by each other, as long as they were sensible.
- Girl B- became unfocused upon the task. Teacher encouraged to remain on-task.
- Boy B- became distracted. Teacher pointed out how friend had already finished the task. She praised him and mentioned that she knew he was able to finish it. Became back on task and completed work sheet.

**Objectives**

(Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?)

- Revising two times tables- children sat on carpet and sat two times tables song. Made learning more interesting, providing a sensory experience.
- Starter game on interactive whiteboard, introducing number bonds to 10.
- Number bonds challenge on worksheets.

- Number games on carpet for those who had finished worksheet. Unifix used to keep track of points.

### **Direction**

(Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)

- Success criteria on interactive whiteboard.
- Teacher went through lesson objectives, and how to complete activities.
- If child stuck on question during interactive game, teacher would speak through steps on how to achieve answer.
- Teacher explained purposes of worksheet activity to her group.
- LSA 2- explained activity using numicons.
- Number games- teacher explained what to do to one group, who were then able to pass on knowledge to another.
- Number game- Boy D asked friend why they had to use unifix cubes, friend explained.

### **Access and challenge**

(Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?)

- Game on interactive whiteboard.
- Time given to allow pupils to answer questions.
- Variation of worksheets given, to suit pupil's ability.
- Children given choice of what equipment to use to help them in the worksheet task (one hundred square, numicons). Encouraged independent working.
- Boy C- seemed to get confused towards end of worksheet and copied friends' answers.
- Number games available for those who had finished worksheet. Made learning interesting, but only for a select few.
- Girl C- went up to teacher to ask question as was struggling with the work. Teacher dismissed her without answering question. Pupil then disengaged from work.

**Assessment**

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

- No hands up rule at start of lesson. Lollypops with children's names on used, to ensure random selection. Allowed teacher to assess all children's learning.
- Interactive game at start of lesson.
- Use of worksheets, which were then marked once completed.

**Specifics / Critical Incidents**

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

- Children singing a two times tables song, to help them revise their learning.
- Boy B and Girl A, working together on worksheet as a pair. Girl explained activity to boy. Boy had lost his 'eight' numicon and was very confused. Girl explained that he could create eight using different numicons.
- Boy B explained that he thought  $1 + 18 = 19$ . Girl explained that she thought  $1 + 18 = 20$ . Girl used numicons to show her answer. Boy explained where she had gone wrong, using the one hundred square.

## **Appendices 4.**

### *Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model*

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**Date: 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

**Critical incident (focus):** This ARC reflection will be referring back to the critical incident mentioned within the second observation sheet. It involves Boy B and Girl A, who were working together as a pair during a maths lesson, using different forms of apparatus to 'prove' their answer. Boy B explained where Girl A had gone wrong, using his chosen apparatus.

| <i>Experience</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <p><i>Feelings</i></p> <p><i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i></p>                                                                                                                              | <p>As an outside observer, it was evident that Girl A had got the answer wrong, and that she was using too many numicons to try and get her answer across. It was difficult, as someone in the teaching profession, not to intervene and help. I'm pleased that I didn't, as it was incredible watching Boy B demonstrate where she had gone wrong, using his one hundred square</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <p><i>Remember and Understand</i></p> <p><i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i></p> <p><i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i></p> | <p>The class where taking part in a maths lesson, where they were revising number bonds to ten. They were initially grouped together on the carpet at the start, before being separated into three groups. Girl A and Boy B where initially placed within the teachers focus group, before they were allowed to work together as a pair on a separate table. Girl A thought that <math>1+18=20</math>, whereas Boy B thought it equalled 19. Girl A was using numicons to demonstrate her answer, and Boy B was using the one hundred square. Once Boy B had voiced his opinion, Girl A realised where she had gone wrong.</p> |

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| <p><i>Evaluate and analyse</i></p> <p><i>“What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?”</i></p> <p><i>“What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?”</i></p> | <p>This critical incident coincides with Lev Vygotsky’s theory of the Zone of Proximal Development, and the More Knowledgeable Other. According to Vygotsky, the Zone of Proximal Development is the gap between what a child is able to achieve by themselves, and what they are potentially able to accomplish with help from another (Payler and Scanlan, 2018; Grigg, 2010). It is vital that the one individual, has more knowledge than the other (Grey and MacBlain, 2015), therefore making them the ‘More Knowledgeable Other’. It can be assumed that Boy B either had more knowledge surrounding the topic or was more able in using his chosen apparatus.</p> |
| <p><i>Conclusions and actions</i></p> <p><i>“What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?”</i></p> <p><i>“What will you do next?”</i></p>                                                   | <p>Peer learning and teaching can be an influential aspect of a child’s learning experience (Kimbrough, McGee and Shigeoka, 2017), but it may not always work if the children are in the same pair constantly. To avoid this from happening, the ‘lolly-pop’ stick approach could be implemented. Although this is originally used as a method for allowing a teacher to formatively assess a child (Goodrich, 2012), it could also enable them to alter peer working groups and therefore enhance student development (Gest and Rodkin, 2011 cited in Hendrickx et al, 2016).</p>                                                                                        |

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| <i>Transformed experience</i> |  |

**Appendices 5.****OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Lesson details:

Year 2 class. One teacher and one LSA. The children took part in singing practice, circle time, pupil voice and independent learning

**Classroom culture**

(Are the students focused on learning?)

- Children can't enter classroom until given permission. Line up quietly outside class. Come in, relaxing music playing in the background.
- Boy A- dancing to music. Teacher asked to stop. Child continued. Teacher asked again. Child stopped.
- Harvest song- Boy B sat on a table and did not do dance moves with partner. Teacher picked up on this and gave him a warning.
- During happy and you know it, some pupils did not take part. Teacher stopped and warned class that they will keep on starting again until everyone participates.
- Children put up their hands when they wanted to give their opinion during pupil voice.

**Objectives**

(Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?)

- Harvest song- pupils were introduced to a harvest song, which they will be performing at the schools' harvest festival.
- Teacher read a poem, asked children what they thought about it and how it made them feel. Asked them what they thought the theme was.
- Pass on a smile- children smiled at person next to them, passing the smile around the group.
- Sing Happy and You Know it.

- Independent learning- children have choice between roleplay vet, create own book on cats, complete previous work etc..). all choices reinforcing previous learning.

### **Direction**

(Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)

- Teacher explained purposes of afternoon, and reasoning behind each activity.
- Teacher- sang a line of the song and demonstrated the dance move associated with the words. Children then mimicked. 'My turn, your turn'.
- Reminded children what behaviour she wanted to see. Reprimanded pupil for talking when she was talking.
- Teacher explained range of activities that were available for children during independent learning.
- 5 minute and 1-minute warning of when to pack away.
- Welsh background playing in song when packing away, used as a timer.

### **Access and challenge**

(Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?)

- Harvest song- dance moves involved, which children were placed into pairs for.
- All children took part in the 'pass on a smile' activity.
- Sing Happy and you know it- teacher asked pupils what actions they thought would match the feelings.
- Teacher read story to pupils, asked them what they wanted to learn about it. Pupil voice.

### **Assessment**

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

- Harvest song- teacher sang a line, and asked children to copy her. 'My turn, your turn'.
- Show me, tell me- pupils had option to show class what they had been doing during independent time.

**Specifics / Critical Incidents**

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

- At the end of 'Pass on a Smile' activity, teacher told children to stop. Not everyone did, which resulted in the teacher again attempting to quiet the class.
- Teacher praised and thanked those who gave their opinions during pupil voice.
- In Vets roleplay, Girl A stated that the dog would be having a blood test and stitches. Boy B replied that it would need to have its arm frozen first.
- No teacher input during independent learning, apart from behavioural management.
- Girl B decided to make her own book. Opted to copy out a book. Sat in group, but very quiet with little peer interaction. Very focused upon task.
- Girl C- created own book, using knowledge already gained, no reminders, all from memory.

## **Appendices 6.**

### *Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model*

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**Date: 26<sup>th</sup> September 2019**

**Critical incident (focus):** The children were allowed to choose their own activities, during an independent learning session.

| <i>Experience</i>                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Feelings</i><br><i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>                                                                                                                              | Initially, I was confused as to why the pupils were given such a large amount of independence. Speaking from past experience from my own time in primary school, independent time was only given as a treat. After witnessing how engaged the children were in their chosen activities, my feelings changed.                   |
| <i>Remember and Understand</i><br><i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i><br><br><i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i> | It was the last lesson of the day. The teacher provided a list of pre-planned activities, which the children were allowed to choose from. They included time at a veterinary roleplay station, quiet reading, or board games. There were two pupils who were completing unfinished maths work, supported by the class teacher. |
| <i>Evaluate and analyse</i><br><i>"What will you keep the same to ensure</i>                                                                                                                              | Independent learning has been described as learners being given responsibility for their own learning (Pritchard, 2005 cited in Lakin, 2013). The ability to both think and act independently, is an important skill for a                                                                                                     |

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| <p><i>effective teaching and learning in the future?"</i></p> <p><i>"What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?"</i></p>                         | <p>child to learn (TES, 2016). The potential success can be hindered by the lack of motivation the students have (American Chemical Society, 1998). Although those such as Meyer et al (2008) have argued that it in fact increases pupil's motivation, alongside making it easier for the teacher to differentiate activities.</p>                                                            |
| <p><i>Conclusions and actions</i></p> <p><i>"What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?"</i></p> <p><i>"What will you do next?"</i></p> | <p>Independent learning provides opportunities for children to learn from their peers. Lev Vygotsky believed that the more important aspects of learning, takes place through interacting with more their peers (McLeod, 2019). Scaffolding can be incorporated into the independent learning, moving the responsibility of teaching from the teacher onto the pupils (Meyer et al, 2008).</p> |
| <p><i>Transformed experience</i></p>                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

## **Appendices 7**

### **OBSERVATION / FIELD NOTES**

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| Date: 2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2019                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| <p>Lesson details:</p> <p>Year 1 Class, of 29 pupils. There was one class teacher and two Learning Support Assistants (LSAs).</p> <p>Revision of timetables, number bonds to ten and Read Write Ink.</p> <p>Children were separated into three groups, by ability. They were then supported by either one of the LSAs or the class teacher.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <p><b>Classroom culture</b></p> <p>(Are the students focused on learning?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relaxing music playing as the children enter classroom.</li> <li>• Clap hands and do hand gestures to gain attention- children respond.</li> <li>• Morning greeting song sang in Welsh.</li> <li>• Using different voices when stating sounds. All children engaged.</li> <li>• LSA Group 1- initially children very loud and unfocused. Then LSA reminded that she would choose the best learner to receive a sticker.</li> <li>• Boy A and Boy B talking to each other across the table, not listening to LSA and other pupils reading. Boy A kept turning pages prematurely. Was not reading along with group.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Objectives</b></p> <p>(Is there a clear purpose to the lesson? How do the lesson activities promote that purpose?)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Times tables songs- sang a song for the two- and ten-times tables. Repeated three times each.</li> <li>• Practiced number bonds to ten, using hands to demonstrate each sum.</li> <li>• Number bond rap- went through all number bonds and used hand gestures.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |

- Teacher group- went over new sound they had learned previous day. Children repeated.
- Guided reading- book associated with previous sound.

### **Direction**

(Are the students clear about what they are doing and how to do it well?)

- 'Show me smiles, show me sitting'- teacher encouraged pupils to enter room positively. Praised those who did well and reminded pupils what she didn't want to see.
- Visual timetable- teacher went through with pupils. They repeated after her and used sign language.
- 'My turn, your turn'- teacher used when sounding out words.

### **Access and challenge**

(Are all students able to engage in the lesson? Are all students challenged?)

- Visual timetable.
- Assigned classroom helpers using lollypop sticks.
- Number bonds to ten- when children were asked, they were given time to answer. Teacher prompts were given if needed.
- LSA Group 1- Asked pupils' opinion regarding aspects of the guided reading book.

### **Assessment**

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

- Number bonds to ten- teacher randomly would ask each pupil randomly. Used questions such as; "How many fingers have I got up now?" and "How many more

do I need to hold up to get 10?”. Children would use hands to demonstrate answer.

- Teacher group- went around in circle, taking turns to sound out words on laminate sheet.
- LSA Group 2- asked questions surrounding book. Asked pupils if they could think of a different way to travel.

**Specifics / Critical Incidents**

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

- A lot of sign language used when children were singing songs and reciting visual timetable.
- During the morning register, children answered in Welsh and stated how they were feeling. Emotional check in. Allowed teacher to discuss if they stated that they felt negative.
- Number bond rap- see Objectives section.
- Pupil A- upon being told their book is associated with previous learning, pupil stated 'we have to repeat, or we will forget'.

## **Appendices 8**

### *Assisted Reflective Conclusions (ARC) Model*

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**Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2019**

**Critical incident (focus):** Year 1 children singing a 'number bond' rap, about number bonds up to ten, and the use of hand gestures.

| <i>Experience</i>                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Feelings</i><br><i>"What are your feelings regarding the experience?"</i>                                                                                                                              | <p>I felt amazed watching the pupils confidently recite the number bonds to ten, through the use of a rap. It gave me the impression, that it would really solidify their learning.</p>                                                                                |
| <i>Remember and Understand</i><br><i>"Can you list the aspects of the learning experience that went well?"</i><br><br><i>"What were the elements of the learning experience that were disappointing?"</i> | <p>It was a morning session, where the pupils were focusing upon revising their number bonds to ten. They had previously sung a song that they were familiar with prior to the number bond rap, which they had also gained familiarity with prior to this session.</p> |
| <i>Evaluate and analyse</i>                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

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| <p><i>“What will you keep the same to ensure effective teaching and learning in the future?”</i></p> <p><i>“What was the cause of the most important disappointing element?”</i></p> | <p>This can be viewed as a method of learning by rote, which has been described as memorizing pieces of information through consistent repetition (Oxford Learning, 2017). The issue with learning by rote is that it takes away the context from the learning, deeming it meaningless (Sonawat and Kothari, 2013). There is also the argument that perhaps it leaves the pupils lacking in understanding surrounding the topic (Haylock, 2008).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <p><i>Conclusions and actions</i></p> <p><i>“What are your possible solutions to the disappointing issues identified?”</i></p> <p><i>“What will you do next?”</i></p>                | <p>As rote learning can be seen as a form of summative assessment, the alternative can be formative assessment, otherwise known as assessment for learning. Assessment for learning is the act of finding out where a child is in their learning, what they need to achieve next and how to do this (Assessment Reform Group, 2002, <i>cited in</i> Education Services Australia, 2019). This would allow the teacher to evaluate if the pupils truly understand the topic being taught.</p> <p>It is also important that the teacher checks that pupils are engaged in their learning, as well as having a grasp of what is being taught. Lollypop sticks are a tool which once drawn, allows the teacher to discover the extent of pupils understanding (The Teacher Toolkit, 2019).</p> |
| <p><i>Transformed experience</i></p>                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |