

5 Minutes, 5 Inspirations

Teaching and Learning Newsletter

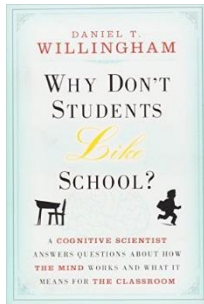


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Recommended Reading:

Why Don't Students Like School?



Dan Willingham's book makes fascinating but complicated research from cognitive science accessible to teachers. It is jam packed with ideas that teachers will find both intellectually rich and useful in their classroom work."

ISBN: 978-0470591963

Cost: £10.51

A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination and instil a love of learning.

(Brad Henry)

Takeaway Homework

Louise Toach

Take away homework is a differentiated and personalized homework which inspires students to take ownership for their own learning. If utilized well and followed with targeted feedback, this can lead to improved levels of progress. Takeaway homeworks are designed in the format of a takeaway menu, each one offering a choice of challenges from 'extra mild' up to 'extra hot!'. Students can choose which level they want to tackle, working their way up the scale as they become more confident and able. Depending on the tasks and the year group, a suggested expectation of accomplishment will be indicated on the menu. For example, a menu might state that at least two 'medium difficulty' tasks are to be attempted. Another might say that each student should attempt at least one difficult ('extra hot') challenge task or one from each column.

Take away homeworks can also be effectively adapted for use with Yr 11, in the sense it can be utilized to revise and recap prior key learning through a range of engaging tasks.



Kahoot- Game based learning in the classroom

Claire Keay

Game based learning is considered an effective tool for educators to use in the classroom because it engages students in problem solving, critical thinking and a review of content (Dellos 2015). Kahoot! is a game-based platform that utilises smart phone technology in an interactive and competitive way. Teachers simply create a Kahoot! quiz on line and share the game pin with pupils in the classroom for them to access using a mobile phone. Students do not need a Kahoot! account to participate and in lessons where not all pupils have access to mobile phones, small groups can be made so that the whole class can participate in the activity. This tool provides immediate feedback on each question and generates a summary of results at the end so that the teacher can see clearly the questions that pupils found most challenging. One area this tool has been particularly useful is in reviewing content and the practice of defining key words for GCSE.

So far, students have enjoyed using this tool in lessons across both KS3 and KS4 and often ask for new Kahoot! quizzes to be created.



Great people to follow
on

twitter 

@coolcatteacher- Co-
founder of the Flat
Classroom project.

@TheJLV- A master of
data analysis focusing
on diversity in the
classroom

@OTeaching- Sharing
T&L ideas from all over
the world

Upcoming events:

9th March- Year 9 parents
evening

13th March- Spring 2 data
window

13th March- Year 8 reports

20th March- Middle Leader
Training

Independent Learning Wall

Ami Sharrock

This year I have made a concerted effort to encourage students to take more ownership of their learning. The dream is that they can develop the ability to work on their own and the confidence to overcome difficulties or challenges. To work out how to do this, I made a list of students' FAQs. When I came to think about this, it wasn't the deep and probing questions that topped the list (although they do happen in geography from time to time) it was 'is this good?', 'have I done this right?' and 'what do I need to do next?'. So, to give students the opportunity to have these questions answered and to take greater ownership of their learning I created a 'help point' in my classroom that had resources that would answer most of their FAQs.

I started by creating clear success criteria, model answers and writing frames for our most common command words and skills. When faced with 'have I described the graph well?' I can simply send them to the help point for the relevant success criteria and model answer. Overtime, I've added other resources that will help students with new FAQs, such as, 'how do I SWAN self-assess?'. I have found that I can direct students to the 'help point' for the majority of their questions which leaves me free to help students who really need support. For students that feel they need the security of a writing frame, sentence starters or a check list, these are all readily available.

The Whole School Focus- Do Now

Aimee Williams

The first step to a great lesson is a "Do Now" – a short activity which is waiting for the students as they enter the classroom.

The vast majority of lessons here at The King's have adopted this activity as a method to not only promote immediate engagement but to also encourage students' independence.

An effective 'Do Now' should conform to four critical criteria to ensure that it remains focused, efficient, and effective:

1. The Do Now should be in the same place every day so taking it and getting started is the habit of all students.
2. Students should be able to complete the 'Do Now' without any direction from the teacher.
3. The activity should take three to five minutes to complete.
4. The activity should
 - 1) preview the day's
 - 2) review a recent lesson



Faculty Feedback- Science Bright Spots

Lorna Sykes

The science faculty is focused on driving forward independent learning. To achieve this, the faculty have been developing and engaging students on entry into the classroom through 'Do Now Tasks'. The most recent learning walks and pupil voice has evidence that 100% lessons are utilising this strategy, which has resulted in prompt lesson starts and increased learning time. Feedback from the pupil voice was extremely positive as students really enjoyed the range of tasks they were expected to complete, these included cryptograms, scrabble and last man standing.

Y11 successes

Year 11 are a prime focus within the faculty. Not only is there an extremely strong exam focus in all year 11 lessons, but additional Y11 intervention and booster sessions are taking place across the faculty. Each booster sessions has a specific area of focus, where students are required to complete exam style questions and use the exam board mark scheme. One to one intervention sessions are personalized to the individual learner and support them towards achieving at least expected progress.