ECT Mentor session
Module 3: Developing quality pedagogy
Week 11: Meeting individual needs and balancing workload

Session Elements

analyse artefacts

sharing of practice

Learning Intentions for this session

Your ECT will learn how to:

5h. make use of well-designed resources (e.g. textbooks)

5i. plan to connect new context with pupils' existing knowledge or provide additional pre-teaching if pupils lack critical knowledge

5j. build in additional practice or remove unnecessary expositions

Introduction

In their self-directed study session earlier this week, your mentee extended their knowledge of meeting the individual needs of their pupils whilst balancing their workload. They should have annotated a scheme of learning for the next three lessons, applying their understanding of expositions, foundational concepts and efficiency.

In this session, you will reflect on the notes they have made on the scheme of learning and consider how what is learned can be applied to your mentee's teaching in the future.

Research and Practice Summary

High Quality Expositions and Efficiency – Year 9 English

Mrs Turner has found that her Year 9 English class is struggling to grasp some foundational concepts in the current scheme of learning on War Poetry. They produce a lot of written work, but when she has marked their books, she has found that there are misconceptions and misunderstandings. She has spent a lot of time during the lesson explaining background information for the concepts, but the pupils' knowledge hasn't improved.

What strategies could Mrs Turner employ to tackle these problems?

Efficiency can be thought of as 'the reduction of waste'. The most common resource that can be wasted in teaching is time, leading to an overall increase in teachers' workload. Reducing wasted time is a key priority for teachers and school leaders.

It can be helpful to think of efficiency as the relationship between time taken and quality of outcome because it doesn't always follow that reducing time spent on an activity is a good thing *per se*. Teaching is intellectual labour, and some parts of a teacher's work take time because they are hard to do well. For example, when planning to introduce a new, foundational concept, rushing the planning of a lesson may mean that pupils do not learn that concept well, affecting many future lessons.

Schools and multi-academy trusts develop their own policies and practices around assessment, marking and feedback. They are encouraged to be mindful of the impact upon teacher workload of assessment practices, which can be onerous. Teachers need to be aware of their school's expectations of marking and should also seek ways of minimising the potentially negative impacts of doing it excessively. Self-assessment and peer-assessment both have pedagogical advantages and can help reduce marking workload.

To help you save time without significantly impacting the quality of outcomes, you could make marking manageable and effective by:

- recording data only when it is useful for improving pupil outcomes
- working with colleagues to identify efficient approaches to marking and alternative approaches to providing feedback (e.g. using whole-class feedback via a visualiser or well supported peer- and self-assessments)
- using verbal feedback during lessons in place of written feedback after lessons where possible (some schools may encourage using verbal feedback stamps but remember this also uses up time and may not help improve outcomes for your pupils)
- using departmental or phase team time to moderate and standardise assessment (this is also a great form of subject-specific professional development)

And you can make planning manageable by:

- making use of existing, well-designed resources (e.g. textbooks, exam board-approved exemplars, online stores of graphics and animations, carefully selected commercial schemes of work)
- doing it collaboratively with colleagues (e.g. during shared PPA time or during time set aside for department/phase development)

Which strategies might be effective in reducing wasted time both in and out of lessons?

It is important that the curriculum is carefully sequenced, so that pupils learn **foundational concepts** first – concepts that are needed in order to understand more complex information. Examples of foundational concepts include learning the alphabet and phonetic sounds in literacy; learning to count, add and subtract in mathematics; and learning about cells and atoms in science. Over time, building up foundational understanding can help pupils develop confidence in their ability to recall relevant information while their knowledge gradually becomes more complex, and external support (or scaffolding) is gradually withdrawn.

To help your pupils to master foundational concepts, you should:

▪ with your colleagues, identify what these are and ensure they are prioritised in your curriculum

▪ with your colleagues, identify the likely common misconceptions that can hamper understanding of the important concepts

▪ give concrete examples and metaphors, as these are often useful in helping pupils understand abstract concepts (e.g. stories and narratives, sayings, rules, mnemonics, equations and models.)

Mrs Turner decided to take a look at the scheme of learning and identify where there may be misconceptions and misunderstandings in future lessons. A key problem pupils had was understanding historical context in relation to the themes of the text they were studying. She identified potential pitfalls in future lessons and found time to sit with her class's history teacher, who helped her locate a five-minute video which depicted conditions in trenches on the Western Front. He also gave her a history textbook from which she was able to compile a glossary of key terms, such as 'trench-foot', 'morning hate' and 'no man's land'. Collaborating with this teacher saved them both time, as he now has a better idea of the war poetry they study. Mrs Turner was able to create resources to support and challenge her pupils.

Exposition refers to the process of explaining concepts, ideas and information with great clarity. It requires the teacher to have sound knowledge of the curriculum area and involves ensuring that pupils are able to understand new information in the context of their prior knowledge and understanding. Exposition is about more than simply telling pupils information. It also involves providing examples to illustrate and illuminate the material to be learned. Examples can include visual and conceptual models, application of rules and contextual information. Good exposition may also involve modelling. Exposition does not require pupils to make discoveries themselves: by moving from the general to the specific, it allows pupils to understand increasingly detailed explanations of the material to be learned and link those explanations to information presented previously as part of a general overview.

To help your pupils learn through more effective exposition:

- plan what you are going to say and how you are going to model to your pupils (e.g. by rehearsing how you will explain foundational concepts)
- think about the visuals and examples you can use that will help your pupils connect this new learning with that they already know
- be prepared to break down your expositions further for those pupils who may need it
- allow time also for pupils to practise: don't simply rely upon exposition (in your plan, allot a time limit to your expositions: this will help you to keep to your point)

What Mrs Turner did

Mrs Turner showed the five-minute video she had borrowed from her history colleague to her class at the end of the previous lesson. She said she would be quizzing them on it in the next lesson. She also gave them the glossary of terms connected with trench warfare for them to learn at home.

She started her next lesson with the promised quiz on the video. She rearranged the pupils' seating plan as a result, creating a 'support table' for those who had done less well on the quiz. She showed the video to the whole class again because she believed that would ease the load on their working memories. In her plan, she scripted her main exposition to the class, being careful to include several of the terms from the glossary and to connect these to the concepts she wanted them to grapple with in two poems by Wilfred Owen and Siegfried Sassoon. This all took 15 minutes, and she was able to allow her pupils to spend most of the remainder of the lesson on independent practice, first in groups of four to generate and refine ideas, then individually. Mrs Turner was able to use the independent practice time to target her support on the 'support table' of pupils who had done less well on the video quiz. With them, she reused her quiz questions and glossary as the main resources to re-teach them.

Mrs Turner recognised that her class's hard work was not the same as effective learning: they were still stumbling over foundational concepts, even though they were producing a lot of writing. She used the resources of her

history colleague – the video and glossary – knowing that they would be of high quality and pitched correctly for the age of her pupils. She used these to pre-teach (through homework and the last few minutes of the previous lesson) some of the key words and concepts she would need her class to be familiar with. That meant in her lesson, through the quiz and exposition, she was able to connect new content to their existing knowledge. Her exposition was brief, and – because she had scripted it – she made sure it was to the point. This allowed her class plenty of time to work independently. In turn, this afforded her the chance to give extra in-class support to the group who had struggled with the quiz on the video. Rather than create new resources for them, she reused the same materials as with the whole of the class. This made more efficient use of her planning time.

Mentor Meeting Activities

Throughout the session, try to refer explicitly to the Learning Intentions and encourage your mentee to record key points in their Learning Log. Tailor your use of the Theory to Practice activities below in response to the Review and Plan section of this session.

Review and Plan 5 mins

Clarify the Learning Intentions for this session with your mentee.

At the start of this module, you looked at all of the 'learn how to' statements for Standards 4 and 5 and conducted a module audit with your mentee: in some areas they will already be confident and skilled; in others they will want more practice, and support from you and others. Look back at this audit now and use it to help decide how you and your mentee will make the most productive use of the suggested Theory to Practice activities below.

Theory to Practice 40 mins

1. Analyse artefacts
Look at the annotated scheme of learning and the table of notes which the mentee

did as part of their self-directed study.

Foundational Concepts	Potential Misconceptions	Potential resources/expositions	Efficient? (my workload)

Trying not to interrupt, listen to your mentee as they explain the misconceptions they expect may arise and how they will efficiently plan resources and expositions to address them.

2. Sharing of practice

Share your own experience to help your mentee to plan for meeting their pupils' needs efficiently, without unnecessarily adding to their workload. Dwell on all four or one or two which have emerged as priorities for your mentee. (There are some ideas in the bullet points below.)

How do I make use of well-designed resources (e.g. textbooks)?

- what type of resources do I use and what is my rationale for using these resources?
- do I use different resources for different pupils and why?
- do I use commercial resources, collaborative resources or have I made my own?

How do I connect new content with pupils' existing knowledge?

- do I use analogies and metaphors?
- do I use 'concrete' examples that pupils are familiar with?
- do I encourage pupils to make their own connections, for example, what is this a bit like?
- are pupils encouraged to see links to other subjects?

How do I pre-teach?

- do I set homework before a lesson to pre-teach issues that will arise in my lesson?
- do I set reading or research tasks for this?
- do I pre-teach the same way for all pupils, or do I target some for extra support or challenge?

How do I make time for independent practice?

- when does practice occur, for example, do I teach many new ideas first before practice occurs or is new content 'chunked' up and practice occurs immediately?
- do I model a new process or skill first before pupils are asked to practise and do I show the process step-by-step clearly?
- do I give sufficient time for practice before moving on-- how do I know?

- how do I keep my exposition to the point and clear?

Next Steps 5 mins

Agree with your mentee how they will now put their learning from this week's session(s) into practice in their teaching. Help your mentee to clarify:

1. the action(s) they will take and how these action(s) are expected to contribute to improving pupil learning
2. what success will 'look like' in relation to these action(s)
3. how they will evaluate their success in taking these action(s)

Note the date of your next mentor meeting, when you will check on your mentee's progress.