



Gauging the miles

Evaluating learning during lockdown

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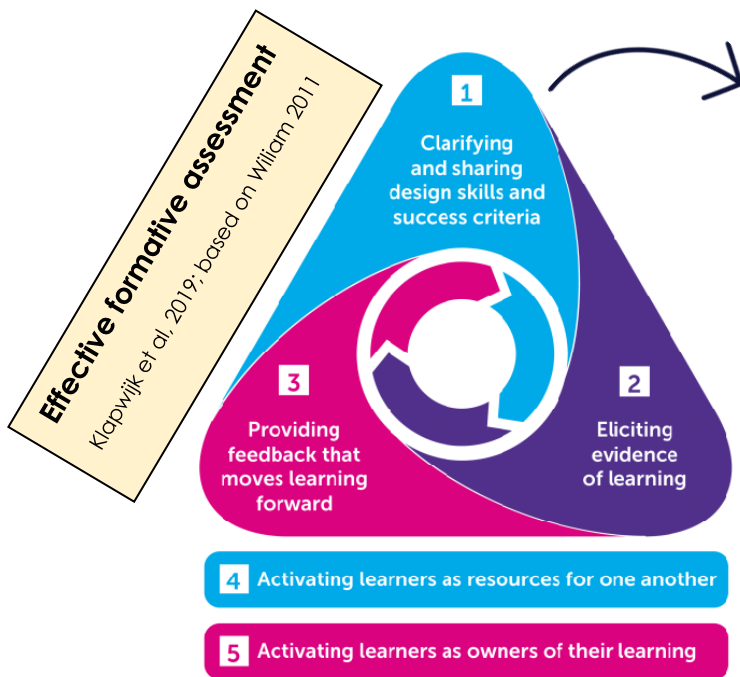
Main aim:

To establish precisely and accurately what our pupils and students have learnt during this period of disruption so that this can inform the next steps in our teaching and learning delivery.

Our use of assessment is always **formative** and is integral to highly effective teaching and learning. We take every opportunity to use the **evidence** we have on what pupils/students have learnt to **adapt** and define the **next steps** to our teaching and to help them build on strengths and develop their knowledge, understanding and fluency better.

REMINDER

REMINDER



Driving in the dark with no lights is unlikely to end well! We need to be absolutely sure that a) learners have been journeying the same road as us b) they have their lights on! As face-to-face contact continues to resume, identifying exactly what '**success**' through remote learning looks like, and where each young person is in relation to this, is a vital first step...



Establishing and sharing learning aims and objectives can be a useful yardstick against which progress can be measured. There is little value in

Tip!

learners simply copying objectives down, however. Avoid objectives which use 'all, most, some' - let's aim for '**all achieving all**' – something that is only possible with effective **modelling**, guided and **deliberate practice**.

2

Eliciting
evidence
of learning

Completion of remote tasks is no guarantee that **learning** has taken place. How will you know whether knowledge is **embedded in long-term memory**? It's important to avoid assumptions about what has been learnt; hard evidence is key!

REMINDER

Quizzing:

Quizzing can be a helpful means of gauging knowledge & understanding, but not necessarily **deep learning**. It's important to avoid a scenario where learners can be **wrongly-right**. The risk of multiple-choice answer responses can be to mis-inform teachers about what learners truly know and have learnt. A mixture of closed and more open-ended responses is most valuable...but not as valuable as what action is taken as a follow-up. Quizzing is considered to be valuable for memory-retention and to '**interrupt the process of forgetting**' (Brown et al, 2014).

Tip!



Questioning:

Questioning is most skillful when it accurately judges **learning** and **fluency**, rather than 'knowledge' stored in short-term memory. **Interleaving** through questioning can often be more **thought-provoking and probing**. Questions that precisely **target** the likely points during remote learning that pupils might have mis-understood, can quickly establish whether this is the case. We must avoid assuming that 'gaps' in knowledge & understanding have emerged during remote learning time; they might not have done at all, especially if work has fulfilled its purpose!

Tip!

Applying:

A key indicator of learning is whether pupils & students can **fluently apply** what they have learnt to a new scenario. Could your learners:

- use a summary sheet to pull together & connect what has been covered?
- devise/complete a flow-diagram to demonstrate how material connects?
- use a contemporary news item in relating theory to empirical evidence?
- explain the interleaving of home-learning work?
- complete (or partially complete) an exam/SAT-style question in class?
- 'act as assessor' – devising an assessment that their peer will complete?

Tip!

3

Providing
feedback that
moves learning
forward

Effective feedback **informs teachers** and **empowers learners**. Feedback is only helpful for learners if it is warmly received, signposts clearly and **facilitates independence** in taking the next steps. Its timing must be precise; its mode thoughtful.

REMINDER

Beware of the dangers associated with RAG-based PLCs. These can often allow teachers to see learners' levels of **confidence**; it doesn't by itself provide an accurate evidence-base of what has been **deeply learnt**. This is a starting-point for us in how we might **adapt teaching**, not simply a means of learners being encouraged to take charge of what happens next...



-*Comfort-feedback v Strategy-feedback*. Feedback which boosts self-esteem and makes a learner feel good has its place and is crucial in helping them to feel confident during these difficult times. *Strategy-feedback* can incorporate a positive vibe, but offers learners a solutions-focused means of taking further steps to improve. (Teacherhead, 24.6.2020)

Tip!

Responding to misconceptions and errors accrued during remote learning time

Assess and move...	Misconceptions and errors are addressed on a one-to-one basis; there is no real need to stop the whole class or re-teach material...
Light excavation...	A misconception or error doesn't warrant the re-teaching of material to the whole class, but is significant enough to require the attention of the whole class while it is addressed. Questioning should suffice...
Deep excavation...	Whole-class teaching is adapted in order to address a series of misconceptions or errors. Deeper, probing questions are useful here, as well as modelling followed by deliberate practice....



(Lemov, 2015)



Which way next?

Anticipating the *misconceptions* and errors, that form through remote learning experiences helps to inform the way that teaching is then *adapted*. There is a place for bespoke *differentiation*, especially in allowing learners with complex personal needs to access the curriculum, but for everybody else, this can bring a risk of a 'ceiling' that unintentionally caps potential...

Tip!

4 Activating learners as resources for one another

-*Peer assessment* is a popular tool. It is important to consider *why* this method might be used, and exactly what learning goals can be directly attributed to it. Use of peer assessment can be a helpful stepping stone to effective self-assessment, since the former helps to make more explicit to learners what exactly is required in order to demonstrate a job done well (Reinholz, 20116). To add a degree of *challenge*, consider using multiple members of the class to peer-asses the same piece of work, thus encouraging a deeper, more forensic examination of work...

Tip!



Learners need effective training in order to reap the benefits of peer assessment; they must be *guided* every step of the way and develop the skills required to utilise this feedback tool.

Learners can initially be very resistant to peer-assessment processes, regarding this as 'the job of a teacher', or having severe doubts about the ability of peers to form an accurate judgement about the quality of their work. Reminding them that this is a *learning process*, rather than a judgement about a *learning outcome*, should help to encourage buy-in (Daniels, 2019)

Tip!

Tip!

-*Collaborative learning* can be an incredibly powerful means of learners facilitating both their own learning and the learning of others. Careful planning to ensure that *each person's contribution is equally as valuable as the next person's*, can be a challenge. All too often, learners end up sitting in a group, but working independently! This can be avoided by thoughtfully planning who will take responsibility for what. Might one person be tasked with extracting core knowledge; another evidence of application; another effective evaluation? True collaboration can then take place as learners *utterly depend upon each other* to ensure the task is completed. The process of explaining something to their peer(s) also helps to facilitate the transfer of knowledge into long-term memory!



Current health & safety restrictions prevent group work right now, but individual contributions to a task that a group complete as a whole might still be possible...

5 Activating learners as owners of their learning

-*Self-assessment* is a very valuable means of encouraging learners to develop metacognitive skills. Step-by-step guidance, followed by plenty of practice, is key to success. Learners might become actively involved in the construction of the mark scheme or assessment grid that is used to judge their progress. Done well, this can generate self-identified DIRT targets. It's the self-awareness element here that defines the very essence of *metacognition*!

Tip!

-*Modelling* is a powerful tool in allowing learners to gain the skills and confidence needed for effective self-assessment and to develop *fluency*. Step-by-step instruction is crucial, using anonymised examples to provide learners with *visual* evidences to support the process. Can they identify and explain the core components of a top-quality piece of work when this is placed in front of them? Might a mid-range piece of work be even more useful in helping to train learners in the art of succinct, tangible target-setting and so facilitating improvement? It is said that there are at least 10 steps to becoming a top catwalk model, with plenty of practice along the way required. The same principle applies to our use of modelling – guiding learners with step-by-step training, with timely opportunities for *deliberate practice* along the way.

Tip!





-Guided and deliberate practice

Few of us have got to where we are today without guidance along the way! In order to develop and embed the skills learners need to take charge of their own learning, guided and deliberate practice is fundamental. Avoid the temptation of providing an example of highly effective work and then expecting learners to instinctively produce something similar themselves. Thoughtful *interleaving* helps to facilitate the *overlearning* of material and the embedding of knowledge in long-term memory.

"Tell me and I forget.
Teach me and I
remember. Involve me
and I learn."

-- Benjamin Franklin

Further *collaborative learning* opportunities exist here as part of the nurturing of learners' skills and confidence in producing high-quality work themselves.

Don't mistake guided and deliberate practice for *spoon-feeding*, since this isn't the case at all. Parents hold the spoon for babies as part of the process of them being able to begin feeding themselves!



Key questions to reflect upon...

- *How will you *know* precisely what learners have *learnt* during lock-down?
- *How will you most effectively *measure* progress against learning aims?
- *Are your learners tuned-in to the metacognitive strategies that work for them?
- *Are learners more positive and empowered to drive their own learning now?
- *How deeply embedded is knowledge in long-term memory? Evidence?
- *Are learners able to *apply* knowledge to new scenarios? Could this be evidenced?
- *What opportunities can you take from recent experience to fine-tune pedagogy?

Our only assessment is formative assessment!

Remember!



Further reading:

Bromley: *Formative assessment classroom strategies*, SecEd, April 2020

Brown et al: *Make it stick*. 2014

Daniels: *Peer & self-assessment: Principles and strategies*, SecEd, April 2019

Reinholz: *The assessment cycle*. In *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* (41) 2016

Lemov: *Teach like a champion*. 2015.