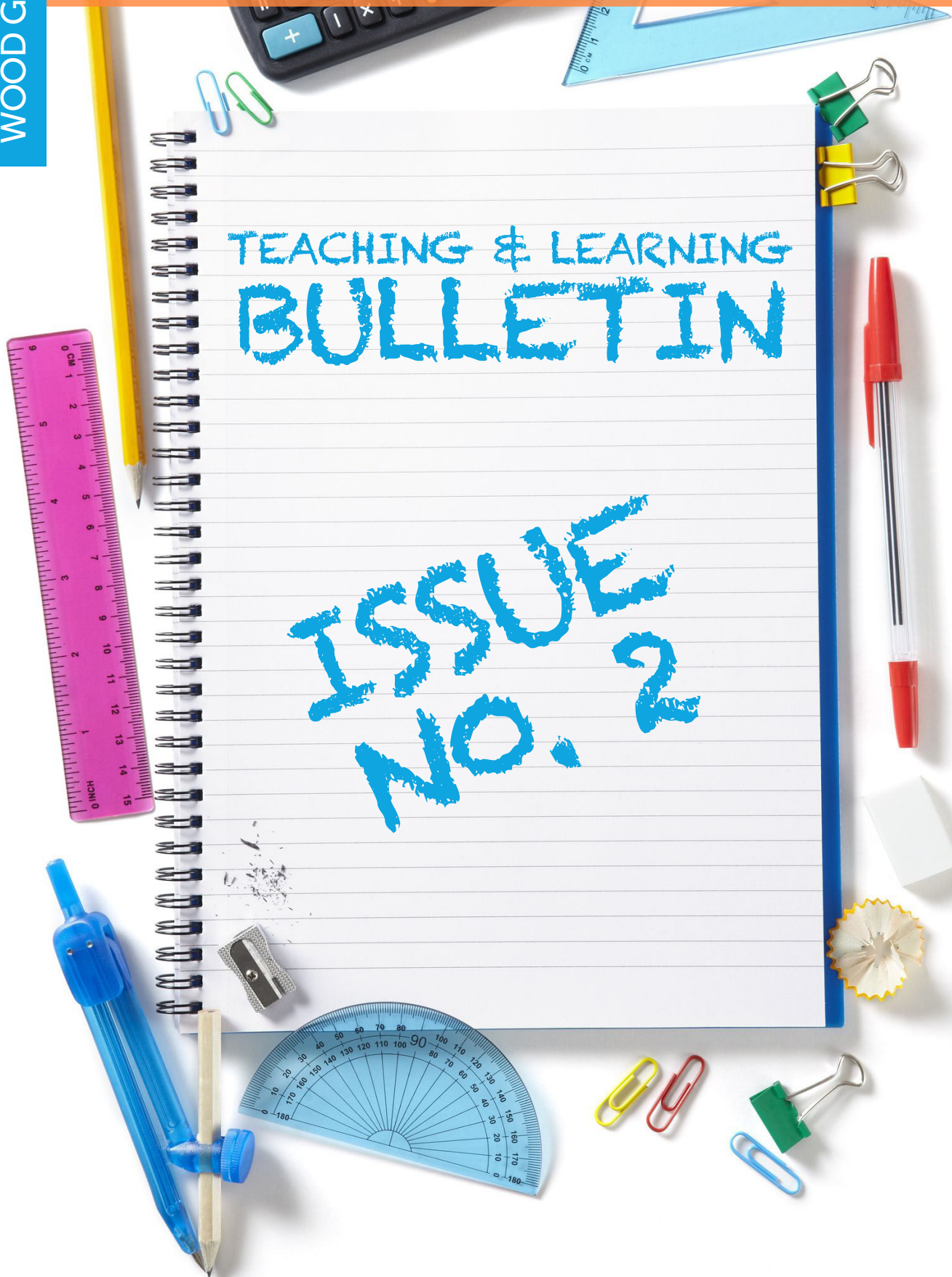


Teacher Feature: Surviving 25 years in the business!!

This Issue celebrates the achievements of three members of staff who have been teaching for a quarter of a century. Their commitment and dedication to the students and staff of Wood Green have not gone unnoticed. We decided to interview all three to share some of their pearls of wisdom with us.

TEACHING & LEARNING BULLETIN

ISSUE No. 2





WHAT MAKES A LESSON OUTSTANDING

EXCELLENT LEADERSHIP OF BEHAVIOUR AND ATTITUDES

Teachers create a well-ordered and very positive classroom environment. This goes well beyond simply managing behaviour. The pupils are so enthusiastic and have such a positive outlook, why would they misbehave?

LESSONS THAT CHALLENGE EVERY PUPIL

Teachers understand the needs and abilities of each child, and there is no 'teaching to the middle' of mixed ability groups.

Teachers have high expectations of all pupils. Lessons move along at a brisk pace. Pupils don't just do the same thing all the time.

Lesson activities are shaped to fit different pupils and everyone is challenged at the right level. Data about pupils' achievement do not just sit on a spreadsheet or in a file: teachers use this information when they plan their lessons. Teachers are quick to recognise when pupils are struggling or not challenged by the work; they quickly do something about it.

GOOD OPPORTUNITIES FOR PUPILS TO LEARN INDEPENDENTLY

Pupils get time to work on interesting and challenging activities on their own or in groups. This helps them to learn how to learn independently and use and practise the skills taught to deepen their understanding.

EXCELLENT USE OF QUESTIONING

Teachers target their questions at individual pupils – this keeps everyone on their toes. They don't just ask simple questions that can be answered in one word: open questions challenge and probe pupils' thinking. This generates pupils' enthusiasm and helps them to learn in much greater depth.

OUTSTANDING SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE

Teachers have a thorough and up-to-date understanding of their subject and they teach it with rigour and enthusiasm.

HIGHLY EFFECTIVE FEEDBACK TO PUPILS

Marking is regular. Teachers give pupils precise information about what they need to do to improve. Feedback is closely tied to pupils' targets. They are expected to respond to it and teachers make sure that they do.



WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF WEAK LESSONS?

THE WORK DOESN'T CHALLENGE

The work is too easy or too hard for some pupils. This is because teachers don't use information about individual pupils' achievements when they plan lessons.

LESSONS ARE SLUGGISH AND BORING

Lessons move slowly and pupils lose interest.

The lesson becomes a lecture. Teachers talk for too long without questioning the pupils.

Pupils are not given enough to do or are given too long to complete their work. This can lead to low-level disruption, as can lessons in which the pace is too fast and children do not have the opportunity to assimilate and understand what they are supposed to be learning.

TEACHERS DO NOT DO ENOUGH TO DEVELOP GOOD LITERACY SKILLS

Teachers of all subjects do not do enough to help pupils overcome poor literacy skills that prevent them from learning their subject.

MARKING AND FEEDBACK ARE NOT GOOD ENOUGH

Marking is irregular or not detailed enough.

Teachers don't tell pupils how to improve.

When they do, the information is too vague or pupils can't read it. As a result, pupils have little idea about how to improve their work.

A TIP FOR MARKING AND FEEDBACK – CREATING A DIALOGUE BETWEEN TEACHER AND STUDENT

When students are given their homework back after it has been marked by a member of staff, the classroom teacher gives each student a green pen. They then need to write under the teacher comment:

SLT

S: Strength /positive praise
strength of that piece of work

L: Literacy target
a target on how they think they can improve their literacy

T: Target for improving learning
how they can improve to make progress.

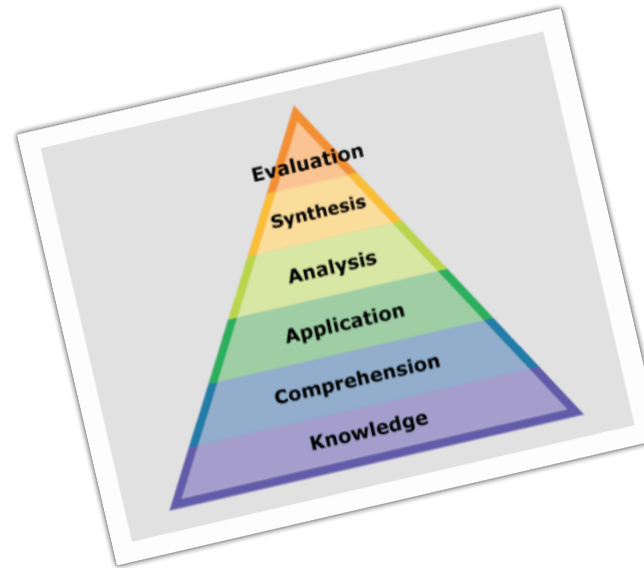


TEACHING AND LEARNING FOCUS: A*/A QUESTIONING

The Key to good questioning is to ask fewer but better questions. One of the simplest and most obvious ways of differentiating learning is to look at our questioning techniques. As teachers we tend to ask learners to respond most often to the knowledge recall type of questions: the questions for which they are simply required to know the 'who, what, when, why, which and how' of a particular topic. Teachers tend to ask these types of questions between 80 and 90% of the time.

Those aiming for A*/A grades need to go much further than this in their responses.

Blooms Taxonomy is a useful tool for ensuring we deliver differentiated learning and we can move beyond simple recall questions to more stimulating and thought provoking questioning leading in turn to deeper understanding and thinking.



Why not try using some of the higher order questions below to extend and deepen the understanding of topics to bring about those A*/A grade answers in your students.

Evaluating:

Find the errors, criticise – "Are there any inconsistencies ...?"
"Which information is more important, valid, better, more reliable, appropriate, inappropriate?"
"What do you think about... and why...?"
"Prioritise and explain why ...?"
"How could you improve?"
"What is important? What is not? Why?"
"What would you recommend and why?"
"What would you advise and why?"

Synthesising:

Creating something new – "How could you improve?"
Suggest an alternative – "What solutions would you suggest?"
Think of an original way to – "Using your knowledge predict, create, compose, design, and develop".
Solve the following – "How else would you ...?"



The Key to good questioning is to ask fewer but better questions. One of the simplest and most obvious ways of differentiating learning is to look at our questioning techniques.



The Q Matrix:

	Is	Did	Can	Would	Will	Might
What						
Where / When						
Which						
Who						
Why						
How						

TIPS FOR IMPROVING QUESTIONING

- ✓ Ask fewer, better questions.
- ✓ Plan to pose more higher-level, open ended questions that are designed to stimulate and extend thinking.
- ✓ Don't ask bogus open (known answer) questions.
- ✓ Don't answer your own questions (We all do it occasionally!!)
- ✓ Give students time to think about their answers and to collaborate with peers in exploring and improving their answers.
- ✓ When students give answers, prompt them to elaborate, clarify, reformulate and so on. Use these prompts as a 'follow up' to challenge individuals appropriately.
- ✓ Never assume that a satisfactory answer means that everyone else has got it!
- ✓ Ask students in pairs/groups to come up with three possible answers and then get another group to decide which one is the best. This encourages 'good' rather than 'quick' answers.
- ✓ Limit whole-class question and answers sessions to a total of five minutes in any lesson.
- ✓ Sometimes express learning objectives as questions.
- ✓ If all else fails -let's not forget getting the students to generate questions themselves for their peers to answer - USE THE Q MATRIX!!





8 TIPS FROM CLAIRE GADSBY'S ["PROVING PUPIL PROGRESS TO OFSTED"]

1. Tap into the room or quiz before you teach

Ask the group what they know about a given topic BEFORE you teach it by presenting them with a blank sheet of paper divided by eight sections and asking them to fill it with facts and points of interest.

2. Marking with success criteria

Marking is like a rear view mirror. It's already dead; it's behind you. After all, do the students really read (or care) about the comments you have written or do they just look for the grade? How do you make better use of marked work?

Create the success criteria list and share it with the students making sure to mark to the list.

3. Ask students to feedback on your feedback

Once a term, ask students to feedback on your feedback. Is the feedback (communication) you send being received and interpreted accurately by the student?

4. Turn the stop clock on yourself

We often time students on a task. Why not turn the clock on yourself and restrict the time you allow yourself to lead learning?

5. Giant questions

Take an exam question. Blow it up. Stick 'em the wall. Now get the students to deconstruct the exam question as a micro presentation. Even gradually add comments, sentences, paragraphs to answer the question.

6. Post it notes

Allow students to write down questions that they don't wish to ask out loud in class on a post it. Students stick them to the white / wall / door as they leave. As a lesson starter, provide the answers, even rewarding the best questions.

7. 30 Questions

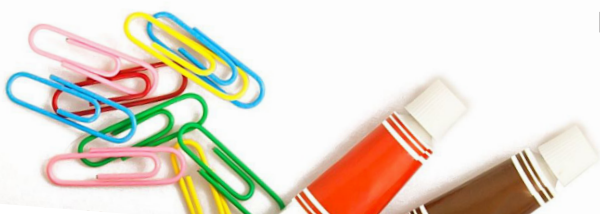
Create and laminate 30 questions. As students enter the classroom provide each student with a question. Students have to ask their question during the lesson at some point. Alternatively, set a simple task for students to construct and ask 'their' questions to the person sitting next to them or in group situations to facilitate a peer conversation.

8. Explain it to a five-year-old

If someone truly has understood something, then they should be able to explain it to a five-year-old. This is simple, practical and ensures the student reframes their understanding, moving learning towards long term memory.

“ CREATE THE SUCCESS
CRITERIA LIST AND SHARE IT
WITH THE STUDENTS MAKING
SURE TO MARK TO THE LIST.

”



TEACHER FEATURE: MR PETE WORTON

1. Respect works both ways - to gain respect you must give respect!
Never volunteer for anything!
2. Try and make the effort to learn something new every day and.....
Be disappointed if you don't learn something new every day!!
3. Don't be afraid to say "I don't know the answer to that question" once in a while but.... ..Make sure you find out the answer as soon as you can!!
4. Take time to relax EVERY DAY!!
5. Some things cannot be completed today - leave them until tomorrow!
6. Try not to mix school life with home life!
7. Google is not the answer to everything - take time to read printed text!
8. Drink Red wine or Real ale not for the health benefits but because they taste so good!
9. Remember that everyone is an individual and will act and react differently to the way that you do!
10. Smile as often as you can - people will not have a clue what you are thinking.....
11. Don't reveal what you are thinking.....
12. this may get you into trouble!
13. Technology is not as reliable as you think – make sure you are prepared for the inevitable breakdown that usually happens during an observation or inspection!
14. Listen to the music you grew up with – they don't make it like that anymore!
15. At the end of the day – there will always be another day!
16. Just because you work with people does not necessarily mean that you have to socialise with them!
17. Children are born with wings, teachers help them to fly!
18. Encourage all the people you don't really get on with to run or jog 10 miles every day – by the end of the week they should be 70 miles away from you!
19. Don't get into the habit of looking forward to the end of the day
20. Nothing is really new anymore - you do not have to re-invent the wheel
21. The latest mobile phone does not necessarily make you more intelligent?

“RESPECT
WORKS BOTH
WAYS - TO GAIN
RESPECT YOU
MUST GIVE
RESPECT!”



Name: MR PETE WORTON

STARTED TEACHING IN JUNE 1988

Subjects taught: Science (Biology, Chemistry and Physics all to GCSE level)
ICT up to GCSE Computing for beginners (Adult Education Course)

Posts held: Teacher of ICT and Science - teaching in both departments
Principal of Adult Education at Wood Green 1999 - 2006
Principal of Adult Education at Churchfields 2001 - 2003/4

Most enjoyable moments - having the opportunity to work with the many dedicated staff at Wood Green over the past 25 years

Least enjoyable moments - Continuing changes (not always for the better) imposed by successive Governments

Baldev's Tips for Surviving teaching.

1. A passion for and first rate subject knowledge
2. Good sense of humour and a positive role modelAn evolving teaching style
3. Patient, empathetic and having a passion for making a difference
4. Able to see the talent 'within'
5. High expectations



Name: MR BALDEV JANDU

Started working at Wood Green on 11th April 1989

Subjects taught: Science; Physics;

Posts held: Co-ordinator of Technology, Co-ordinator of Numeracy; Head of Physics; Asst Head of Science.

Most enjoyable moments: making a lasting impact now and in the future for all children; feeling/knowing when you help a child to succeed even against the odds.

Least enjoyable moments: lack of support from Government; bureaucracy

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TREAT ALL STUDENTS
WITH RESPECT
AND THEY WILL
RESPECT YOU.



SALLY TIPS FOR SURVIVING TEACHING.

1. Get organised and use time wisely to avoid working until midnight every night.
2. Set clear boundaries so that all students know what you expect and stick to them like glue. Do not let your standards slip.
3. Treat all students with respect and they will respect you.
4. You are their teacher, not their friend, mate, mother (I've not been called Grandma as yet!) etc. Be firm but fair. You are in charge!
5. Teaching is like acting. You are performing to an audience so be confident, calm and in control.
6. Put yourself in the students' shoes and think about how the lesson will feel for them. Make students want to participate in your lessons.
7. The end of term is mentally and physically exhausting, so plan a proper holiday. You will feel so much better at the start of a new term.
8. Teaching does get easier with time and experience – honest!



DEPUTY HEAD TEACHER:
CURRICULUM



Name: SALLY TAYLOR

Started working at Wood Green on 1st September 1987

Subjects taught: Commerce, Economics, Typewriting(!), Business Studies and Accounts

Posts held: Teacher of Business Studies, Work Experience Co-ordinator, Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator, Head of Department, Head of Sixth Form, Assistant Head teacher, Deputy Head teacher.

Most enjoyable moments: Making a difference to the lives of so many students, particularly those who develop a real passion for Accounts and want to study it further Post 18

Least enjoyable moments: at the moment, this would have to be all the Government changes affecting the curriculum

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AFL

TOP TEN TIPS



Assessment for Learning is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by students and their teachers to decide where students are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.

1. **Modelling:** Before starting a task, students find it helpful to see what a finished product might look like. It can also generate discussion about how examples could be improved.
 2. **Learning objectives:** This is a very important first step to a great lesson and needs to be put into a language that students can understand. Some departments call these objectives 'WALT' – We Are Learning To. Some Departments also use 'WILF' What I am looking for
 3. **EBI:** This stands for 'Even Better If' - a fantastic way to focus teacher and student feedback. For example: "EBI... you had lined up the equals signs so that the working out was easier to follow and so you could check it through more easily". In both written and oral feedback, it ensures everyone is thinking about the next steps.
 4. **Hands up, but not yet:** Ban hands-up for a few seconds after you ask a question. It will lead to more students having a go, and to be more thoughtful answers.
 5. **National Curriculum levels:** Get students to translate the descriptions of the National Curriculum levels that they're aiming at into their own language. This will help them understand how they can improve.
 6. **Thumbs up:** After posing an open question insist that all hands are raised, with students putting their thumbs up, sideways or downwards, depending on how confident their understanding is. The teacher receives a pretty accurate picture of where everyone is.
 7. **Grades aren't always necessary:** Don't always provide grades when marking work. They can lead to a loss of confidence for some students, and complacency for others. More importantly, without a number or letter to focus on, students are more likely to take in your carefully chosen comments on where improvement is needed and how it can be achieved.
 8. **Dialogue:** A one-to-one conversation can achieve so much more than written comments. It is an effective way to give instant, real-time feedback.
 9. **Peer assessment:** Students often like, and benefit from, assessing each other's work. To aid the process, discuss with the class what success criteria they think is appropriate for the task in question then get them to summarise these in a marking template.
 10. **Sharing good work:** After you've done a pile of marking, why not begin the next lesson by sharing some examples with the class? It gives you the chance to dish out some public praise, allows the class to see what good work looks like and evaluate it themselves.
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GIVING FEEDBACK

Giving feedback is one of the most important things a teacher can do to help students make the jump from what they currently know, to what they are expected to know. Finding time to do this is crucial. To maximise time try the following:

1. Conserve time handing out materials by giving students access to resources.
2. Time desk activities to give enough time for feedback.
3. Provide other sources of help: checklists, reference books, prompt sheets etc
4. Establish routines to ration time fairly, eg displaying a checklist of steps to take/ avenues to pursue before asking the teacher.
5. Manage time so a third of the class get oral feedback every third lesson.
6. When giving feedback accentuate the positive but don't eliminate the negative. Try to balance accuracy, honest criticism and support. When giving feedback about a difficulty focus on the task not the person. Rather than saying, 'You're not getting the hang of this are you?' try 'This is difficult isn't it?' adding helpful suggestions of how to deal with the difficulty. Focusing on effort or strategies also helps students overcome the sometimes-held belief that their ability is fixed at birth and nothing they do can change that.

HOMEWORK

When marking homework it is important to focus on agreed criteria. You will sometimes focus on grammar and sometimes on aspects of content. Rather than defacing pupils' work with scores, ticks, crosses etc. it is better to write neat comments in the margin and also to give students time in class to absorb those comments.

Pupils who get good marks don't read the comments because they don't think they need to do better, those with poor marks don't absorb the comments because they are upset. Pupils who want to improve, and believe they can, will read comments BUT under-confident pupils, no matter what their ability, will not act on them.

Getting pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning doesn't just happen. It grows out of strategies:

1. Pupils knowing what they are expected to learn and how they know they have been successful
2. Creating a climate in the classroom where there is open and honest dialogue
3. Modelling the giving and receiving of quality feedback
4. More emphasis on improvement and less on performance

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