

# **“Tried and Tested”**

## **‘Working Together’**

**Raising standards through collaboration**



**May 2016**

# Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of **'Tried and Tested'** - a research learning journal designed to share key findings and recommendations of research from our own practitioners.

As a Teaching School, HTSA is passionate about creating a culture of research that has a real impact on learning and that enables staff to develop both the capability and capacity to engage with this process. Educational research and innovation is meaningless if it is kept in the isolated environment of a single classroom or within one school.

Here is a collection short articles that have been kindly donated by Alliance colleagues offering an insight into some research and pedagogy that could be useful to others.

Many thanks to the teachers who have contributed to this first publication and if you would like to get involved with the research process or share something that you are working on then please get in contact.

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# Project 3

## “Exercise enhances the progression of pupils physically, academically and socially”

### Rationale:

There is a significant amount of research proving that exercise enhances the progression of pupils in three key areas (physically, academically and socially). This project was designed to find out if this was the case with pupils at Harton Technology College and if pupils could further develop because of the positive impact of the club.

### Aim(s):

Project 3 aims to investigate if sport can develop pupils physically, academically and socially. It is hoped that by pupil engagement with sport they will develop:

1. Physically by doing an increased amount of exercise.
2. Academically as pupils are awake and prepared for the day ahead and therefore are ready to learn.
3. Socially developing pupil self-esteem, confidence and enthusiasm.

### Method:

The project runs through a morning sports club. The club runs 3 times per week between 7.50am until 8.30am. The club is open to all pupils from across all the Key Stages. Whilst at the club the pupils do a variety of activities such as, fitness, table tennis, trampolining, rock climbing, netball and dodgeball.

### Impact:

Research to find out if the project has been successful was done through questionnaires and verbal feedback. Many of the pupils who attend on a regular basis are Key Stage 3 girls who do not attend any other extra curricular clubs. Using verbal feedback and subjective observation it is clear that the project is now having a positive influence and all participants enjoy attending this club and are developing socially as they are enjoying spending time with old and new friends. Having completed anonymous questionnaires it is very positive to find the reason the majority of pupils attend the club is because *'it is fun, makes them fit and active'* and *'because of their friends'*. On the days they attend the club they feel *'more awake, energetic, motivated and fresher'* when they go to begin their school day, compared to days that they don't.

The impact of this club appears to be extremely positive developing the pupil holistically, it has been commented on by a Year 8 form tutor that *'He was beginning to get himself in a bit of bother at the start of term but he seems to have turned a corner and has been no problem for a long time.'* Further to this a Year 7 tutor has supported the impact of this project by commenting that *'the areas I have noticed a difference in is her motivation; she is very keen to take part in everything that is offered during reg, she is less needy than before she seems to have matured and is HAPPY!'*

### Next Steps:

To invite more Key Stage 3 girls to attend this morning sports club and monitor the progress of each pupil involved to see if they are more prepared for the day ahead and ready to learn.



# Instant Feedback in P.E.

## “How can new technologies provide aesthetic feedback in P.E.?”

### Rationale:

Verbal feedback is consistently used as a way for pupils to make progress when in their physical education lessons. However some pupils find that it is quite difficult to relate to what they are being told to what their bodies are actually doing. It was hoped that the iPad could be used as a tool to record pupils performing a skill, and then provide instant aesthetic feedback about how they could improve that skill. It was hoped that by pupils being able to see what they are doing they will be able to identify with what has been said and see what they have to do to improve.

I found that there are more pupils coming into secondary schools with less and less hand eye coordination, and lower fitness and ability levels. As a result of this pupils find it increasing difficult to understand what they are doing wrong in terms of the their skills and techniques which in turn can make it harder for the teacher to correct.

### Aim(s):

To assess the impact on pupils progress of using new technology (such as iPads) to record pupil performance and give instant aesthetic feedback in Year 8 P.E. lessons.

### Method:

An App called CMV (Coach my Video) was installed onto the iPad, this is a free app that allows the recording of an activity and provides instant visual feedback in slow motion.

In addition to this ‘demonstration’ videos were uploaded so that pupils could watch each one to help them identify how they could improve their own skill.



### Impact:

Pupils have responded very positively to receiving the instant, visual feedback and they appear to understand how they can improve by watching the recordings.

Pupils would like this kind of feedback to be used across more of the practical subjects in school.

Although recording each pupil and then providing the individual feedback can be time consuming, the impact on the pupils has been very positive. When the feedback has been used effectively the pupils have made quicker and more significant progress.

### Next Steps:

Pupils to be trained in how to use the CMV App so that it could be used as a form of peer assessment/support within their lessons. Further to this a bank of “demonstration” videos can be uploaded so that pupils could use these to help improve their skill /technique further.

# Making the Grade

## “How can we support our GCSE students who are at risk of not achieving 5A\*-C grades?”

### Rationale:

Improving student attainment can mean a huge difference to the life of a GCSE student. It can be the difference between being offered a place at their chosen Further Education College – or not, or it can mean starting an Apprenticeship – or not. There are a number of factors that frequently cause students to lose marks in exams. These are, misreading the question and as a result giving an answer which misses the point. Failing to organise their revision, including failing to prepare a timetable; spending time ‘revising’ while not concentrating or lacking a ‘bank’ of effective revision skills and techniques. The reasons why students need help to achieve their grades are varied but the solution of intervention to look to resolve the issues in the run up to exams as much as possible.

### Aim(s):

1. To improve the attainment of a targeted group of pupils at risk of not achieving 5 A\* - C including English & Maths at GCSE level.
2. To improve the engagement of pupils with their own learning.
3. To assist pupils with the organisation of their time.
4. To reduce stress and provide an outlet for pupils to air any difficulties they are having at school or home.

### Method:

The main strategy used to establish a support programme for the GCSE students who are at risk of not achieving 5 A\* - C grades has been senior members of staff have individual meetings with no more than 6 pupils, where targets are set and then reviewed in subsequent meetings. The targets that are set relate one of three categories, attendance at after-school sessions, revision at home and coursework completion. The following key following key questions were considered as part of this support programme:

- Is there an impact of mentoring target students in the final 6 months of Year 11 on GCSE results?
- Is mentoring a worthwhile intervention strategy for students identified as being at risk of not achieving 5 A\* - C including English and Maths?
- Is mentoring worth focusing on for as a successful additional strategy?
- What training and support do mentors need to ensure quality, consistent mentoring? How do we ensure any benefit is sustained beyond mentoring?

### Impact:

Pupils feel very positive about the support that they were given as part of this programme. When questioned about their involvement they all appreciated the individual meeting time with their mentor and they all commented upon how “positive and prepared” they felt in the run up to their exams.

### Next Steps

To continue with the support programme for the next cohort of Year 11 pupils and the targeted pupils are those that are deemed to be making progress “below zero” for Progress 8 – based on teacher predictions. Staff will be mentoring no more than 4 pupils in a year.

# Raising Student Aspirations

## “How can providing background knowledge support achievement of pupils?”

### Rationale:

Aspirations are what children and young people hope to achieve for themselves in the future. Raising aspirations is often believed to be an effective way to motivate pupils to work harder so as to achieve the steps necessary for later success. A number of approaches to raising aspirations have been tried across three broad areas:

1. Interventions that focus on parents and families;
2. Interventions that focus on teaching practice;
3. Out-of-school interventions or extra-curricular activities, sometimes involving peers and mentors.

With this in mind I wanted to investigate the approaches that would help to raise aspirations and aim to improve learners' self-esteem, self-efficacy or self-belief.

### Aim(s):

To use Teaching and Learning as a tool to raise pupil aspirations and to improve learners' self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-belief.

### Method:

To use a group of pupils who have a target grade of a C but were working at the grade of either a D or an E. I investigated whether the way we assessed the basic skills and prior knowledge of the pupils could affect the engagement and progress of the child. Three key questions will be investigated as part of this process:

1. Will different forms of feedback raise student aspiration and motivate students to achieve?
2. Can raising aspiration be accredited to any learning gains?
3. How can progress of low ability classes be accelerated?

### Impact:

The students were assessed prior to any teaching taking place and then again after the module had been delivered using progress checks (a voting system) throughout the sequence of lessons. This was compared with a similar module that had been delivered differently (without using the voting system), where both prior knowledge and progress had also been recorded. The study showed that students responded well to progress checks being used throughout the lesson and it was clear, from the data recorded, that more progress had been made in the lessons where students had used the voting system. They enjoyed seeing their results collectively displayed on the board and were more actively engaged in the lesson as they were accountable for their own score. The feedback given to students in this way helped to raise aspirations and certainly motivated the students to work harder in class.

### Next Steps:

To further investigate intervention strategies that focus on raising pupil aspirations and improving learners' self-esteem.

# Teaching through Metacognition

## “Developing Higher Order Thinking Skills to Raise Standards”

### Rationale:

Metacognition can be a word that gets in the way of pupils' understanding that “thinking about thinking” is really about an awareness of themselves as learners. Most pupils don't spend time thinking about how they learn, however in order to become independent, self-directed learners, they need to be able to “orchestrate” their learning.

### Aim(s):

To develop higher order thinking skills in Year 10 Science pupils (who are predicted A\* and A grades) to raise achievement.

### Method:

Firstly I used existing teacher assessment data and predicted grades to identify pupils who could be targeted as part of this research. Student and staff surveys relating to attitudes and perception of “learning and how people learn” were handed out to establish a baseline. Further to this at the start of the project the level results for the identified target group were compared to their predictions, again this was used to establish a baseline data level. As part of the project there are three key questions that were investigated:

1. Will deepening understanding of student improve abilities to effectively apply knowledge to problem solving and raise achievement and results?
2. How does evaluating own learning impact on student progress?
3. Which methods are most effective in teaching learners to self-regulate?

### Impact:

The students involved in this study were encouraged to follow a scheme of work for their C2 study which centred around scientific questioning and investigative approach. This was developed to enhance their scientific thinking skills and allow a more scientific skill set to be developed and applied. The students were assessed via end of topic assessments, a formal mock exam and a student survey. The results of the survey proved that 100% of students enjoyed the more investigative approach to their lesson and also 100% of students felt more confident in application of the subject rather than trying to remember facts. The results of the formal mock exam showed that all students in this group achieved or exceeded their target grade of B. 88% of students achieved a grade A and 30% of these achieved at A\* level.

### Next Steps:

To share the findings from this project across the department and investigate how this process could be further developed to help more pupils raise their achievement level.

# Time Efficient Marking

## “How can we make marking more efficient?”

### Rationale:

I asked staff what they found to be the most difficult things to do and maintain in the teaching profession. The overwhelming response was marking and the feeling that students didn't engage with the marking, making the process seem unproductive and pointless. I conducted more than 200 anonymous student questionnaire asking general non subject specific questions about the frequency of marking and found that many students felt that books weren't marked often and they weren't marked for the benefit of students but for the sake of marking. This seemed an obvious problem to try and solve.

### Aim(s):

We would all like an idea that saves us time when marking. Well I cant offer you that but what I can share with you is something that I have tried that has made the time I spend marking much more effective. Surely that has to be a good thing? I am sure that we all would agree that, if time allowed, we would like to talk through with students every piece of work that we have marked. Essentially that is what I am trying to do.

### Methodology:

I researched the impact that marking and feedback had on students and found that it was a vital aspect to learning and helped gain many additional months of progress each year when done within a reasonable timescale.

I looked through the different marking policies within the different departments, the findings were that everyone seems to be spending a huge amount of time making repetitive points and comments in books with little or no perceived effect on student progress.

Thinking of possible solution to repetitive comments I decided to create a simple comment selection box similar to those used in the SIMs reporting. To make it fit inline with the schools WWW/EBI stamper I created two comments banks, each with a number to represent each response.

Trialled the idea with my own students, using the WWW/EBI stamper and quickly choosing the numbers (when possible) that related to the correct feedback. Students then had the 'starter' task of writing these comments up – forcing them to be engaged with the feedback, solving the previous problems of time consuming writing and student engagement.

Presenting the idea with the department along with a new marking policy and 4 rotation styles of marking. After 3 months of trialling I held another meeting which saw every teacher in the dept. finding it useful, time saving and keen to have it as a permanent feature.

New, revised comment banks were made and the concept has been shared and now adopted by other departments.

### Impact:

Staff commented that using this process has enable marking to be more manageable. Students now feel that they benefit from the work that is mark and that their work is marked on a more frequent basis.

### Next Steps:

Making the time spent marking become more effective an A4 wireless page scanner is now being used. Marked essays can be scanned in and put directly onto the whiteboard allowing all students to see the answer and the marking that has been done. It is hoped that this will encourage students to engage with the marking being done and share the advice given to individual students to a larger audience.

Michelle Trotter

Year 2 Teacher

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# Literacy Superheroes

## “Can I improve the awareness of punctuation through the use of superheroes in the classroom?”

### Rationale:

In June 2016, all children at the end of Key Stage 1 will be assessed on their use of spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPAG 2016). Children are introduced to SPAG from a young age and by the age of 7 will have completed a SAT to test this. Whilst a difficult concept for children to grasp, with many rules and exceptions to remember, punctuation is included in the EYFS curriculum onwards. Boys in particular find the day to day use of punctuation a challenge and are rarely inspired to use it consistently in their work. Overall ‘punctuation’ is a dull, difficult area to teach and learn. However there could be light at the end of a very dark tunnel.

I’ve taught for 8 years in the EYFS and KS1 and have always found that children fail to use punctuation the way they should regardless of how many times they are reminded, symbols are written in their books and phrases such as ‘you need capital letters here’ are used. This is especially challenging in EYFS and lower KS1 as children are beginning to learn to read and can’t always understand what is written. Having attended an inspiring writing course by ‘Shonette Bason’ and with the SPAG tests in mind I decided to embark on my own mission to improve the use of punctuation within our school. I started by thinking about the children’s interests and the levels in my class where, in writing, boys were particularly weaker than the girls. We were about to begin a ‘Superhero’ theme, so I designed some characters with a punctuation theme which I knew the boys would love. Enter the ‘Sentence Superheroes’.

### Aim(s):

To use punctuation characters to improve the use of SPaG in KS1.

### Method:

The characters would be introduced into EYFS, year 1, year 2 and year 3 and they would be Captain Capital Letter, Captain Finger Space, Captain Full Stop and Queen Aneata. The characters would be used to introduce punctuation, each had a theme tune, an individual design and stamp to be used as a ‘child friendly’ way of giving feedback. Three children would be chosen from each class HA, AA and LA to track throughout the project, a piece of writing at the start and at the end. Children would be asked to give feedback about the ‘Superheroes’ and their purpose as well as the staff being asked to complete questionnaires throughout the project.



### Impact:

Over the past term the staff and pupils have really engaged with the ‘Sentence Superheroes’ and they have transformed Mortimer Primary School. One child aged 6 said “I like the ‘Sentence Superheroes’ because they help me all of the time with my writing.”. Another child from reception said “This is Captain Capital Letter, we need to use him at the start of a sentence and you need Captain Finger Space after every word and Captain Full Stop he goes at the end of a sentence.” After collating

# Literacy Superheroes

## “Can I improve the awareness of punctuation through the use of superheroes in the classroom?”

all of the teachers questionnaires it was clear to see the impact it had during lessons and as a marking tool. One year 2 teacher said “The ‘Sentence Superheroes’ have provided a success criteria that the children can self assess against, then use them as future targets.” Another teacher in the EYFS said ‘I love it and so do the children, they are striving to use more punctuation in their work.’”

Through tracking children throughout the age range I have been able to identify the improvements in their independent written work. The ‘Sentence Superheroes’ have popped up in pieces of work as a visual aid of what has been included in written work and they have also appeared by giving feedback themselves with speech bubbles stating ‘I’m so disappointed, you forgot about me!’ This has made them a versatile resource as they can be used as a praise tool and to prompt next steps as children are able to identify what superheroes they have included and what they need to improve on. This has made the children a lot more independent and they are actually excited to read their feedback. The ‘Sentence Superheroes’ are accessible to children from EYFS to KS2 and can even be used as a challenge. Less able, able and more able children have all been able to access the resource as they cover a wide range of punctuation and provide appropriate challenge to all abilities.

### Next Steps:

To share the impact and implementation of this literacy programme with at least one other primary school so that more KS1 pupils can further improve their use of SPaG.

# Creativity VS. Attainment

## “To develop knowledge and understanding of British Values through Dance and Physical theatre”

### Rationale:

Epinay Business and Enterprise School caters for children and young people from 5–18 years of age with a wide range of special educational and complex needs. These include provision for children and young people with moderate learning difficulties, emotional, social and behavioural difficulties and some children with severe learning difficulties. If we want to engage learners, close the attainment gap and help young people develop the skills they need in order to thrive in an unpredictable and fast changing world, we can't afford *not to* be creative.

### Aim(s):

1. Improve achievement in English specifically in speaking and listening and writing increasing approximately 1 national curriculum sub level within the 12 week time period in both writing and speaking and listening.
2. Improve pupils and parents understanding and knowledge of the importance of British values both within school and the wider community.

### Method:

Various methods were used to investigate how creativity can engage learners, improve attainment and develop pupil confidence and self esteem:

- Weekly dance/physical theatre session for 1½ hours per week on the theme of British Values (this session is lead by a professional dancer.)
- English classed based sessions are taught by the individual English teacher and pastoral teacher.
- Extra sessions will be available during morning pastoral sessions and RE/PSHE lessons.
- English teacher will identify a range of genre for the pupils to explore.
- Class activities, plenaries to be filmed as supportive evidence. Pupils will complete a project diary.
- Formative assessment through English target sheets and questionnaires.
- Pupils to plan, lead and develop the enquiry project . The outcomes will be different for each class depend on the route taken.
- Vivo Incentives are used to improve behaviour, motivation and engagement within English lessons
- Pupil will present dance, physical theatre, findings, knowledge, and work to a selected audience including parents, governors, and councillors.

### Next Steps:

Incentives are to be used as an important part of the project, weekly certificates/postcards home/vivos points will be rewarded and there is a planned end of term class Trip to a cultural venue.

# LEGO Club

## “How do we engage Inclusion Resource Base learners to develop the essential awareness and skills for successful communication, learning and interaction?”

### Rationale:

There are effective results in research around LEGO Therapy, for children with ASD, ADHD, Speech & Language difficulties, Behavioural Difficulties, Anxiety & /or Depression.

The therapy is found to improve:

- Social skills: both verbal and non-verbal e.g. eye-contact, listening, turns, topic focus
- Self and other awareness: from concrete to more abstract levels
- Language concepts, related vocabulary, content, and communication repair skills
- Joint attention with an ‘on task’ focus, sharing and joint enjoyment
- Joint problem solving: negotiate, collaborate, compromise, thinking from other’s viewpoint

All of the above tend to be a problem to one degree or another affecting communication, learning and interaction within our ASD population. Also, the linguistic aspects along with communication repair and verbal reasoning are often difficulties for the Language Disordered population.

### Aim(s):

To use LEGO to engage learners to develop communication and interaction skills.

### Method:

Although, building motivation, to attend lunchtime groups, is challenging. We know that many pupils enjoy LEGO and we expect that a LEGO Club will be a motivating vehicle to develop the above essential skills. We also expect, in this structured situation, that children will feel more confident in communicating and maintain or build feelings of self esteem. The ‘club’ will run on Wednesday lunchtimes, initially with 4 pairs of children; they will take turns weekly to experience the role of the ‘engineer’ or the ‘builder’.

- **Engineer Role:** Has the model instructions and tells the builder which bricks are needed and how to build the model, he/she also clarifies if the builder is confused.
- **Builder Role:** Listens to the engineer, asks for clarification if confused and builds the model.

### Next Steps

We have prepared symbolised prompt sheets for club rules, roles and aims, a self assessment questionnaire for the learners and an observation sheet for staff, both of which will be completed at the beginning and end of the project. We sought parental permission for specific learners to join the group and shared, with parents, information about the process and areas we hope to improve. The initial parental interest is positive and the learners are keen.

**Kate Simpson**

Head of Secondary Department

Epinay Business and Enterprise School

# Working Memory

**“Working memory is the #1 predictor of learning success!”**

## **Rationale:**

The term ‘working memory’ refers to the ability to hold and manipulate information in the mind for a short period of time. There is substantial evidence that working memory plays an important role in learning, especially during the childhood years, children at school need this memory on a daily basis for a variety of tasks. The project came about when the following comment was made by the facilitator whilst on dyslexia training; “working memory is the best predictor of GCSE grades.” The basis of this quote comes from research by *Gathercole, Brown, & Pickering, 2003, Measures of working memory at school entry (at 4 or 5 years, in the UK) have also been found to provide excellent predictors of children's success in national assessments of scholastic abilities up to 3 years later (Gathercole, Brown, & Pickering, 2003)*. This project will focus on the working memory of pupils in year 9 and if it would be possible to improved. Within our target group there are a range of complex and learning needs.

## **Aim(s)**

The project aims to determine whether working memory can be improved by the use of targeted activities. The aim is to improve at least one area of working memory to improve a pupil’s ability to access the curriculum, relate to peers or improve social interaction.

## **Methodology**

Various methods were used to investigate the impact that working memory can have as a tool for pupil learning success:

- SDP questionnaires to be completed by pupils.
- SDP questionnaires to be completed by teachers.
- Pupils to be grouped by outcomes of questionnaire.
- Activities to be matched to the groups.
- Different activities to take place once a week with targeted groups.
- Every 2 weeks the group will be split into 4 groups and will all complete the same memory activity.
- Observation notes to be taken of behaviour patterns and traits.

## **Next Steps**

To complete a follow up questionnaire with both pupils and teachers. To review observation notes and to survey teachers outside of project to see if an improvement has been noticed.

# Parental Engagement VS. Pupil Participation

## “How can new technologies help create an effective partnership between home and school?”

### Rationale

In the September 2015 Ofsted Framework it was announced that an even greater emphasis is being placed on partnerships with parents and their involvement in their child’s education. This is a key Ofsted requirement for schools. In order to obtain outstanding judgments in terms of Effectiveness of Leadership and Management, and Quality of Teaching and Learning, schools have to evidence:

- *‘...how well leaders engage with parents... to support all pupils’*
- *‘Parents are given guidance about how to support their child to improve’*
- *‘Leaders use highly successful strategies to engage parents, including those from different groups, in their children’s learning in school and at home.’*

This partnership between parent and school is a coveted one which unfortunately still requires improvement due to the already exhausting demands of the job. However the **Class Dojo System** has made it possible for weekly communication to exist between the parents and class teacher allowing updates on assessments, spelling tests, homework projects, general progress and lesson content. The app allows for images to be sent home too allowing parents to visually see the activities their sons/daughters are participating in. The system also allows for positive reinforcement of a range of behaviours from punctuality and politeness to asking questions and independent learning. The Department for Education in 2011 produced a report called *‘A Review of Best Practice in Parental Engagement’* which claimed *‘it is a priority to identify interventions that are effective in supporting parental involvement, particularly those parents who are either not significantly involved in their children’s education or who are not involved at all.’* This still remains true in 2016 and hopefully this research project can explore another possible way of increasing parental engagement.

### Aim(s)

The intended impact is to create a more effective partnership between the parents of our learners and the teaching within humanities classrooms by using new technology. Through a consistent weekly dialogue it is hoped that pupils attitudes to learning will become more positive, homework hand in rate should increase as should spelling test or assessment scores. It is also hoped that parent’s begin to create a dialogue at home on a weekly basis with their son/daughter discussing their most recent Humanities lessons strengthening subject knowledge and understanding.

### Method:

To send out a range of exploratory questions to parents of from Year 7 ad Year 8 classes who are already using the system. To send out a questionnaire to the Year 7 and Year classes who have not used the system yet to get initial impressions on the relationship between parents and the students education. To ask a colleague to implement this system with 3 KS3 classes. At the **end of the second term** send out another version of the questionnaire to see the **impact** on the relationship between parents and student’s education.

### Next Steps:

Teaching staff using the system should **compare data** (spelling tests, assessment scores, homework hand in) from before and after using the system to see if there has been a positive impact.

# Is it too early for intervention?

## “What impact can early intervention have on student progress?”

### Rationale:

The idea behind the study is based on the work of Zwart et al 2008 and their work and analysis on peer coaching and actual teaching activities. Peer coaching strategies need to be based on actual strategies to support one another in raising achievement and performance rather than discussion and desired activities but need practical application in the classroom. Using the work of the Zwart et al study I intend to adapt their process of teachers discussing efforts to support learning and then experimenting with teaching strategies to aid teaching and learning with targeted specific teaching and learning objectives for certain students. As Zwart et al state ‘Insight into which specific activities concur with which specific learning outcomes is obviously valuable for the development and implementation of professional development activities for teachers in schools.’ This study will then inform future departmental planning and action points for underperforming students.

### Aim(s):

The aims of the project is to look at intervention strategies for underperforming KS3 strategies using data analysis to identify underperformance. Following identification of underperformance a series of peer coaching sessions will occur involving professional discussion, planning, observation and experimentation with instructional methods and post observation reviews with staff.

### Method:

The model on the right hand side is used by Leeds Metropolitan University and reflects the approach that will be taken.

- Students will be selected from KS3 based on data from the Mid Year Assessment data . Their performance will be measured against their target grade.
- Once underperformance has been identified a professional conversation will occur between department members to discuss action points following analysis.
- Peer coaching will then occur where staff observe lessons/students in a non-judgemental way, following this planning for progress can occur with strategies selected to raise improvement and performance. Students will then be measured again at assessment point 2.
- Students who have been identified as underperforming will complete a student voice questionnaire before and after the intervention period.

### Next Steps

To identify the KS3 students who are underperforming and invite them to attend a Geography club on a weekly basis where the focus will be on developing basic geographical skills.

# Developing a Narrative Voice

## “What impact do external partners have on student creativity?”

### Rationale:

There is no formula for having a great idea – but to begin writing, pupils need, at least, some kind of idea. However, pupils do need to find a way to turn an idea into something a reader would enjoy reading. This is the creative part, taking something ordinary and turning it into something extraordinary. So how can we help pupils achieve this?

### Aim(s):

The aim of this project is to investigate the impact of using of a professional writer (i.e. an external partner) as a tool to engage and motivate pupils. This project is also beneficial as a meaningful stretch and challenge activity for the classes participating.

### Method:

A professional writer will work with two high ability Year 9 English classes (once a fortnight over six sessions) where the focus will be to create a unique and experimental narrative voice (a key focus of the new GCSE Linear English Exam).

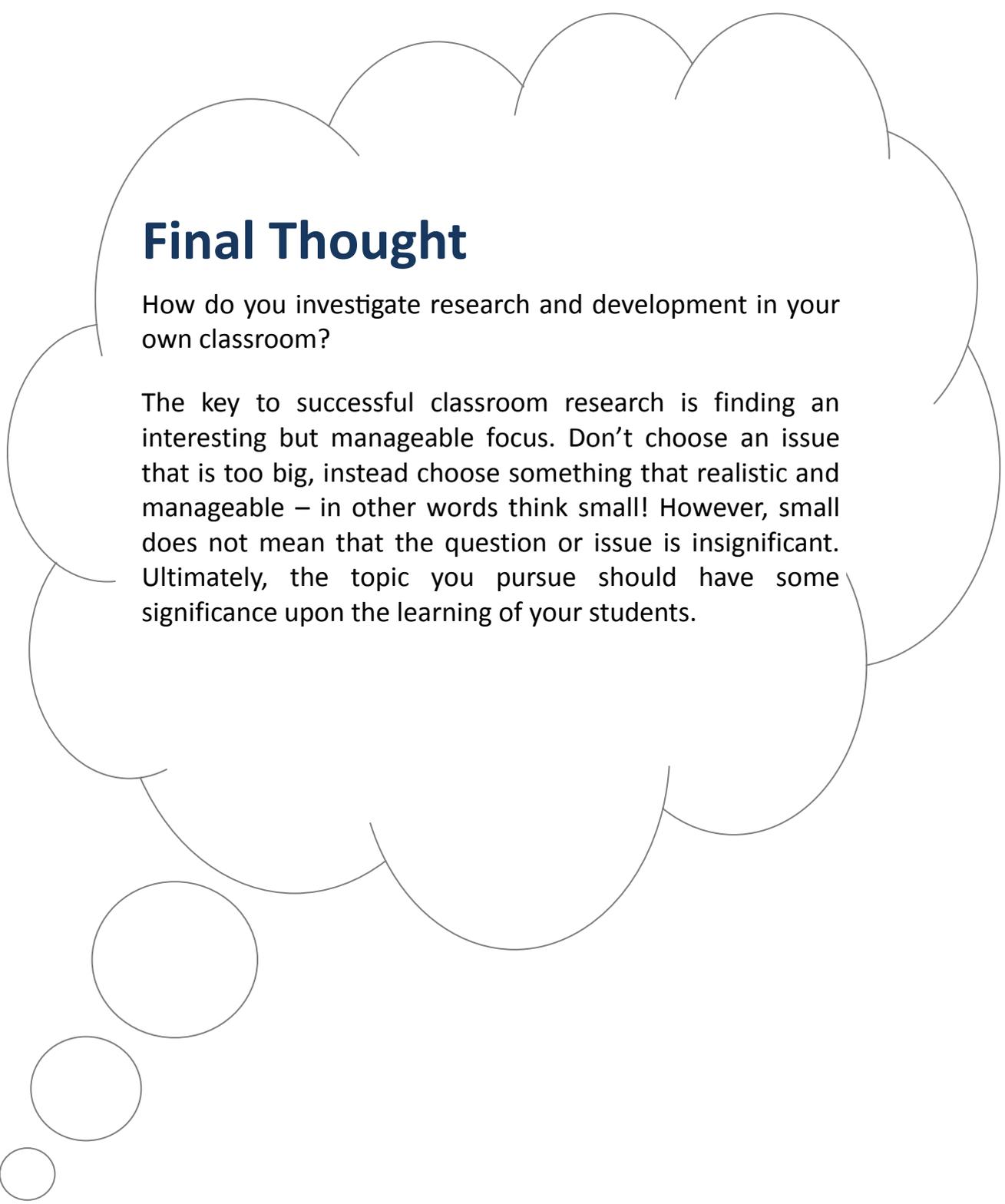
There are two key questions to consider as part of this project:

1. What impact do external guest speakers have on KS3 students?
2. Do external guest speakers motivate students and help them improve creativity?

In addition to this the plan is for the class teachers to observe each session delivered by the external partner and using the knowledge of an expert facilitator to improve practice and to develop a creative/narrative writing scheme of work to be shared across the English department. An attitudinal survey will be completed by both staff and students who are involved with this process.

### Next Steps:

To evaluate the impact of using an external partner within the classroom to engage and motivate pupils. To work with a fellow colleagues (who have observed each session) to develop a creative/narrative writing scheme of work to be shared across the English department.



## Final Thought

How do you investigate research and development in your own classroom?

The key to successful classroom research is finding an interesting but manageable focus. Don't choose an issue that is too big, instead choose something that realistic and manageable – in other words think small! However, small does not mean that the question or issue is insignificant. Ultimately, the topic you pursue should have some significance upon the learning of your students.



# **“Tried and Tested”**

## **‘Working Together’**

**Raising standards through collaboration**



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