Structuring Learning

How to recognise a classroom with well structured learning ...

- Pupils are clear about what it is to be learned, how it fits in with what they already know and the structure of the lesson
- Pupils understand expectations
- Pupils use assessment to help them to improve
- Pupils are actively engaged in their learning so they make their own meaning
- Pupils are confident that they can succeed because they are in the right conditions for learning to take place
- Pupils are able to work independently if required to do so

What makes a good lesson structure?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Be clear about objectives and outcomes</th>
<th>Be aware of the range of teaching strategies available</th>
<th>Select the right strategies to meet the objective</th>
<th>Correct climate and organisation to ensure learning takes place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Objectives come from schemes of work</td>
<td>- depends on subject &amp; learning objective</td>
<td>- depends on the pedagogic approach</td>
<td>- climate for learning (right pitch, relationships which help pupils to feel safe, variety to accommodate different learning styles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Outcomes are what pupils will produce to demonstrate that learning has taken place</td>
<td>- for example direct interactive teaching, inductive teaching, enquiry (see below)</td>
<td>- for example card sort, concept mapping, group work</td>
<td>- classroom organisation (layout of room, displays, annotated work &amp; examples of levels)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What can go wrong if you don’t structure learning?

- Your pupils don’t appear to be making enough progress
- You aren’t happy about how your pupils respond to activities
- Your lessons don’t go according to plan

Effective classroom teachers:

- Take responsibility for ordering activities during the lesson
- Give pupils some responsibility for their work and independence
- Maintain high levels of pupil involvement in tasks
- Provide ample, challenging work
- Interact regularly with the whole class
- Create a positive atmosphere in the classroom
- Give high levels of praise and encouragement
- Use a variety of approaches, strategies and techniques

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Six steps to effective lesson

1. Think about where this lesson comes in the series of lessons, what you know about pupils’ prior knowledge & learning styles
2. Form a learning objective – it will fit into one of these categories
3. Plan learning outcomes straight away
4. Plan distinct stages for the lesson (episodes) each with its own objectives & outcomes
5. Most of the time use this basic structure
6. Check back through to make sure the plan has coherence

Can’t I just use a textbook?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>But</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✗ Textbooks can be very helpful for supporting planning</td>
<td>✗ Overuse of textbooks can become routine and demotivating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✗ Textbooks can lead pupils logically through new knowledge</td>
<td>✗ Textbooks should only be used within a structured lesson</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Different pedagogic approaches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>pedagogic approach</th>
<th>good for...</th>
<th>less effective for...</th>
<th>stages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct interactive</td>
<td>learning new knowledge or skill, processes or communication</td>
<td>exploring feelings, generating new perspectives on complex issues, forming a concept, creative thinking</td>
<td>1. engaging and motivating starter 2. listen to what lesson about &amp; expectations 3. teacher explains main activity 4. pupils apply what they’ve been taught 5. whole class plenary to review learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inductive</td>
<td>forming a concept, building or shaping previously learned concepts, exploring feelings</td>
<td>learning new knowledge or skills, creative thinking</td>
<td>1. pupils gather/given info 2. sort and classify the info 3. make hypotheses/rules 4. test hypotheses/rules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>setting up an enquiry</td>
<td>forming/building on a concept, stimulating conditions for learning new knowledge, embedding understanding of processes, practising skills</td>
<td>learning new processes or skills, exploring feelings</td>
<td>1. pupils introduced to problem and formulate hypotheses about possible solutions 2. consider what data needed 3. gather data. Look for patterns 4. interrogate data, looking for patterns 5. draw conclusions</td>
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