

ECT Mentor session

Module 8: Developing quality pedagogy and making productive use of assessment

Week 5: Structured reflection upon the ECT's Module 8 inquiry and the alterations to their teaching

Session Elements



reflection



collaborative planning



observe a colleague

Learning Intentions for this session

The focus of your mentee's inquiry for Module 8 is on an element of the Early Career Framework (ECF) from Standards 4, 5 or 6. They might have chosen a focus which combines different elements of these standards.

The case studies are a reminder how to:

Case Study A

Group pupils effectively, by:

5n. Changing groups regularly, avoiding the perception that groups are fixed

And stimulate pupil thinking and check for understanding, by:

4o. Considering the factors that will support effective collaborative or paired work (e.g. familiarity with routines, whether pupils have the necessary prior knowledge and how pupils are grouped)

Case Study B

Develop pupils' literacy, by:

3r. Modelling and requiring high-quality oral language, recognizing that spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing (e.g. requiring pupils to respond to questions in full sentences, making use of relevant technical vocabulary)

3s. Teaching different forms of writing by modelling planning, drafting and editing

Plan effective lessons, by:

- 4a. Using modelling, explanations and scaffolds, acknowledging that novices need more structure early in a domain
- 4c. Removing scaffolding only when pupils are achieving a high degree of success in applying previously taught material
- 4d. Providing sufficient opportunity for pupils to consolidate and practice applying new knowledge and skills

Make good use of expositions, by:

- 4g. Combining a verbal explanation with a relevant graphical representation of the same concept or process, where appropriate
- 4i. Narrating thought processes when modelling to make explicit how experts think

And stimulate pupil thinking and check for understanding

- 4o. Considering the factors that will support effective collaborative or paired work
- 4p. Providing scaffolds for pupil talk to increase the focus and rigour of dialogue
- (6k. Thinking carefully about how to ensure feedback is specific and helpful when ensuring peer- or self-assessment)

Case Study C**Providing high quality feedback, by:**

- 6h. Focusing on specific actions for pupils and providing time for pupils to respond to feedback

Make marking manageable and effective, by:

- 6n. Using verbal feedback during lessons in place of written feedback after lessons where possible
- 6p. Reducing the opportunity cost of marking (e.g. by using abbreviations and codes in written feedback)

(And plan effective lessons: 4a, using modelling...acknowledging that novices need more structure...)

Case Study D

Stimulate pupil thinking and check for understanding, by:

- 4m. Including a range of types of questions in class discussions to extend and challenge pupils (e.g. by modelling new vocabulary or asking pupils to justify answers)
- 4n. Providing appropriate wait time between question and response where more developed responses are required
- 4e. Breaking tasks down into constituent components when setting up independent practice (e.g. using tasks that scaffold pupils through metacognitive processes)

Meet individual needs without creating unnecessary workload, by:

- 5k. Reframing questions to provide greater scaffolding or greater stretch

Check prior knowledge and understanding during lessons, by:

- 6f. Prompting pupils to elaborate when responding to questioning to check that a correct answer stems from secure understanding.

Introduction

In your last mentor meeting, you agreed with your mentee:

- alterations to their normal practice in relation to Standard 4, 5 or 6
- what evidence would show that this alteration had led to improvements for their pupils or themselves
- an evaluative inquiry question that they would sustain for the rest of Module 8

This week is an opportunity for you to check on the progress your mentee is making with their inquiry into this alteration to their practice. You will consider any adjustment to their inquiry that it would be helpful to make at this stage.

You will also help them to prepare for two weeks' time, when you will observe them teach.

Case Studies

You have seen these case studies before: they explore how four teachers – improving their practice and without adding to their workload – conducted their own practitioner inquiries into developing quality pedagogy and making productive use of assessment.

You can read back to Week 3, if you want to remind yourself of the issue they wanted to tackle.

We pick them up here from the point where they have agreed an alteration to their practice and framed this as an evaluative inquiry question. We see the methods they decide to use to collect evidence. And we see how some of them choose to make a further adjustment to their practice after starting their inquiries.

When studying these cases, your mentee will need to take account of their own pupils' characteristics, the context of their classroom and the nature of the material that they are teaching.

Case Study A: Grouping Pupils Effectively

Andy's approach to grouping pupils effectively

Following discussion with his Teaching Assistant (TA), Andy devised a system whereby all children would be required to work with two groups.

1. From the start of a half-term, he introduced a 'dual grouping' system in which each pupil was assigned one table group by mixed attainment; and another by a hierarchy of need – where pupils were grouped with others with similar prior attainment for their literacy lessons.
2. Andy and his TA kept a close eye on the effects of the mixed attainment groups on motivation and behaviour. In the thrice weekly meetings, they discussed these arrangements and were prepared to make adjustments – these adjustments might help communicate to the pupils that their grouping (and their attainment levels) were not fixed.
3. He made sure each day that there was a structured opportunity for the mixed attainment groups to talk together - for example, about their favourite toys, pets, subjects or favourite television programmes. He hoped this would improve motivation and behaviour.

4. In their literacy lessons the pupils were regrouped by near attainment. He gave them paper, coloured pencils and a stimulus – such as a toy – for the group to create a story, which they would tell back to the class. Andy concentrated his support on two groups, his TA on one group, and two groups were allowed to work independently. The extra support was to ensure that all pupils were involved in contributing to the group’s story. He was also able to stretch the higher attaining pupils to expand upon their stories by asking them some ‘what if’ questions.

To evaluate the impact of his talk partner and pupil grouping intervention, Andy wrote the following evaluative question:

How can I use group activities over two half-terms to improve the engagement and attainment of my Year 1 pupils?

Andy considered the following sources of data:

- brief observation notes made by himself and the Teaching Assistant during the lessons and discussed at the end of the day, three times a week
- his own observations and reflections on the extent to which the pupil grouping intervention was having the desired effect on their engagement
- the progress records for his class that he had been updating twice weekly to measure their attainment



Further adjustments

Andy was aware that this intervention might cause some pupils some distress, as he was nudging them out of their comfort zones. He was therefore prepared to experience a certain amount of pushback at first, while the children adjusted to this new way of working. He made time to listen to any of their concerns at the beginning of lunchtime, and found that after a few days, the complaints dried up as the children adapted to this new way of working.

The following half-term as he monitored the impact of the group activities, Andy decided to make a further adjustment, whereby pupils were required to work in their near attainment groups for all literacy and numeracy lessons. They would then return to their mixed attainment group tables when studying other topics. He reminded himself of some of the other reading he had done of Research and Practice Summaries in year 1, this time relating to setting high expectations (Standard 1) and managing behaviour effectively (Standard 7). Throughout the inquiry period, Andy repeatedly reminded the children of the aim they were all working towards – to be able to work and talk productively with everyone in the class (1.3). Andy reinforced good behaviour with the use of verbal praise and by awarding house points, publicly celebrating the features of productive talk he wanted to see more of, such as listening carefully, sharing resources and building on the ideas of others (7.6, 7o).

Case Study B: Modelling and Scaffolding

Vashti's use of modelling and scaffolds to support writing

Vashti decided to create a 'speaking sentences' intervention, comprised of the following elements:

- create a physical resource – a laminated sheet with an icon and a key word to remind pupils of the basic features of sentence-writing (e.g. capital letter at start of sentence, capital letter for any names, quote marks to denote spoken language, full stop at end of sentence, finger spacing between words) (4a). She used this scaffold first with the target pupils, monitored how her pupils used it then gradually withdrew it from those who were successful without it (4c)
- model the use of the resource, graphically and verbally using the visualizer (4g) – she modelled this first, narrating her thought processes explicitly (4i), then three confident pupils used the visualizer to show their classmates how they used the laminated sheet
- create talk partners where target pupils are paired up with stronger writers (4o)
- create opportunities for talk partners to practise talking and responding to each other in full sentences, as a prelude to writing (3r)
- in pairs, each pupil talks through the stages of writing a successful sentence, using the laminated sheet as a scaffold (4p) and then they practise writing together for 10 minutes (4d)

- pairs use the laminated sheet to conduct an interim peer assessment on each other's work, and make recommendations for redrafting and editing (3s)
- after a writing exercise, ensuring peer feedback is specific and helpful (6k), all pupils use the laminated sheet as a checklist to check their partner's work and suggest corrections if necessary

To ensure she was developing her practice effectively, she devised this evaluative inquiry question:

How can I use 'speaking sentences' well, over the space of two terms, to reduce the prevalence of basic errors in written literacy among pupils with a Speech, Language and Communication Need (SpLCN) in Year 4?

Vashti considered the following evidence she already had to hand:

- data from her marking of writing assessments from the target class
- data from her colleagues' marking of writing assessments from her control group, the two other year 4 classes (they record such data centrally in her school)
- personal reflections and observations generated through dialogue in her mentor meetings, and recorded in her Learning Log

Additionally, she held a short, 5-minute 'focus group' with the 4 target pupils at the start and end of the intervention.



Further adjustments

Halfway through the study period, Vashti noticed that the pupils were improving in some aspects of their writing. However, they were still often mis-spelling high frequency words. As a result of this mid-cycle analysis, she realised she could use her scaffold to more deliberately plan for her pupils to be exposed to high-utility high-frequency vocabulary (3o): she decided to add a table of high-frequency words to the laminated scaffold sheet, with the correct spelling in the 'tick' column, and common

mis-spellings in the 'cross' column. Because she was encouraged by her early observations and reflections, she also expanded the use of 'speaking sentences' to all pupils in her class, with three levels of scaffold sheets adapted for her pupils' prior attainment, monitor their use and withdraw them as her pupils became more successful (4a, 4c).

Case Study C: Making Marking Manageable

Louise's new approach to marking in Secondary History

Louise consulted her department's marking policy. Then she:

Use of codes (6p):

- created a set of codes to represent the most common kinds of feedback relating to spelling, punctuation and grammar
- created codes to represent the success criteria for each written task she set: whether the pupils had referred to source material (SM), and whether they had written a balanced argument (BA) etc. (6k)
- when marking books, instead of writing comments, wrote short codes in the margin (she found that this took around 1 minute per book, or 30 minutes to mark the class set) (6o)
- created a slide with a key explaining what each code meant

Verbal feedback (6.5):

- in the feedback lesson, she would also provide whole-class verbal feedback to highlight any common misconceptions she had noticed when marking the books (6n)
- made sure that her codes led to specific actions for pupils, and provided 15 minutes at the start of lessons for her pupils to respond to the feedback (6h)

Louise taught two Year 9 classes that year – both mixed ability – and so she decided to run her intervention with one of those classes, so that she could use her other class as a control group. Louise decided to use the new system of codes, combined with whole-class verbal feedback, for two half-terms (from Feb half-term to May half-term). She would then provide both classes with a written assessment to test what they had covered that half-term.

To ensure she was developing her practice effectively, Louise devised this evaluative inquiry question:

How can I implement codes and verbal feedback well, so that my Year 9 History pupils are able to correct misconceptions and make progress, and I am able to reduce the amount of time I spend marking?

To evaluate the impact of her 'minimal marking' intervention, Louise decided to collect the following naturally occurring data:

- pupil voice – using a hands-up survey in class – with the experimental class (before and after the half-term), to capture how well they felt they had been guided to improve their work
- book scrutiny of a sample of target pupils
- summative assessment of a written piece, from both of her classes so she could compare
- focus group conversation (5 min lunchtime conversation with target pupils)



Further adjustments

After using her new method once, Louise noticed that some of her pupils didn't seem to understand how they were supposed to respond to the coded feedback. She also realised that she was not always allowing them enough time in lesson to respond to her feedback.

In the next lesson, she used a visualizer to model how she expected pupils to respond to each of the codes, and gave her pupils a second chance to respond to her feedback. (4a)

In addition to the slide, where she had explained the most common codes, she added a 'Time to Respond' box – as a reminder both to herself and her pupils. (6h)

Case Study D: Questioning

Mo's use of direction and elaboration to improve questioning

He printed out a set of prompt questions and left them on his desk, so that he could refer to them at a glance during the lesson if he needed a reminder. (e.g. What if I told you the opposite was true? Why does that answer make sense to you? How do you know? How might you argue against this? Which ideas make the most sense and why?)

Mo understands that questions can be used for many purposes (4.6) therefore, the kinds of questions teachers ask need to be adapted in relation to the purpose of the questioning. As a general guide, Mo creates a list of principles of 'responsive questioning' that he can draw on at different times, to suit the aims of the lesson:

- organise the class into pairs
- when I ask a question, give each pair 2 minutes to discuss it, and to consult their notes / the textbook if need be (4.7, 4n)
- use a class list to make sure I direct at least one question at each pupil at some point in the lesson (direction) (5.3)
- ask a variety of questions: open, closed, content-based, process-based, exploratory, retrieval, checking, linking ideas... (4m)
- where appropriate, give up to 10 seconds of wait time before moving on (e.g. if they haven't had time to prepare an answer in advance) (4n)
- where possible/appropriate, ask pupils to elaborate on their answers on the 'third turn' (elaboration) (6f)
- use the question list to build on each pupil's answer, reframing questions and directing questions to other pupils in the class (5k)
- ask pupils questions that help them see the constituent parts, to encourage them to plan, monitor and evaluate their own learning (metacognition) (4e)

To ensure he was developing his practice effectively, he devised this evaluative inquiry question:

How can I best adapt the way I ask questions, implemented every lesson for one term, to improve the quality and amount of talk among Pupil Premium girls in Y11 GCSE PE?

To help him answer this question, Mo decided to collect the following data:

- arrange a follow-up lesson observation with the Assistant Head for Teaching and Learning, using the school's in-class video technology
- interview a sample of pupils, including Pupil Premium girls, in a focus group lasting 5 minutes after final period on a Wednesday
- book scrutiny, sampling 6 of the target pupils, compared with a sample of 6 high attaining pupils – Mo marks these books every other week, so this data is near to hand



Further adjustments

Once he started collecting evidence, Mo decided he needed to make one adjustment to his approach for the inquiry. In particular, based on his marking of books, he wrote key questions that he would target at particular pupils, to make sure that he was able to check understanding and fill gaps as they progress from one lesson to the next.

(6a)

Mo also started using his new approach to 'responsive questioning' with his other classes. (4m)

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 sections of this session.

Review and Plan 5 mins

- (1) Start this session by briefly following up the actions that the mentee set at the end of your last mentor meeting. Ask your mentee to summarise
 - a. what they did
 - b. the impact of this on pupil learning (including how they are evaluating this)
 - c. what they will do going forward to build on these actions
- (2) Clarify the Learning Intentions for this session with your mentee.
- (3) Invite your mentee to read the case studies on this module's topics, or the one or

two that are most relevant to their own chosen area of development and the exploratory question they are investigating. As they read, reflect on:

- how similar this scenario is to their own situation
- how, despite any differences there may be to their own context, this case study may still be relevant to them
- what lessons there might be for the way they conduct their own inquiry

Theory to Practice 40 mins



1. Reflection

Last time your mentee shared with you their assessment of their normal practice in relation to their focus for development in Standard 4, 5 or 6. You agreed then on an 'alteration to their practice' – this may have been a simple small change, or something more fundamental, depending on your mentee's circumstances – and an evaluative inquiry question.

Help your mentee to reflect on their progress with implementing the alteration to their practice. Remember, you should not expect them to have done everything yet, and not everything will be 'going well'.

These might be useful questions to ask:

In relation to...	What's going well, or not so well?
how you are implementing the change to your practice	
how you are gathering evidence of impact on your pupils or yourself	
how your pupils are responding	



2. Collaborative Planning

It is likely that, similar to the case study teachers, your mentee will want to make some adjustment. This could be about how they teach their pupils, how they collect evidence, or to the inquiry question itself.

When discussing these adjustments, you should always refer first to the research within the ECF. The best place to look may be the Research and Practice Summaries across the modules of Year 1. You can navigate to an overview of these summaries in the Glossary. Even better, use the module overviews to locate a particular session material – the summaries there offer lots of guidance as to how to make the ECF statements work in practice. Finally, your mentee may have made notes in their Learning Log then that will be useful again now.

You might find it helpful to look again at what the teachers did in the four case studies.

For example, returning to our four case studies

To group his pupils more effectively	Considering the factors that support effective collaboration; changing groups regularly; and ensuring that, when based on attainment, they are for subject reasons Look back at the further adjustments that Andy made
To improve her pupils' writing using modelling and scaffolds	Modeling high-quality oral language, and the processes of planning, drafting and editing in writing. Giving novice learners more scaffolds and models at early stages; and removing these as they become more confident and successful Look back at the further adjustments that Vashti made

To make her marking more manageable	<p>Working with colleagues to discover alternative efficient approaches; using verbal feedback in place of written feedback; and reducing the opportunity costs of marking</p> <p>Look back at the further adjustments that Louise made</p>
To use questioning to stimulate his pupils to think, talk and write more in lessons	<p>Including a range of question types; providing enough wait time; reframing questions; and prompting pupils to elaborate</p> <p>Look back at the further adjustments that Mo made</p>



3. Observe a Colleague

Your next mentor meeting, in week 7, will be split between a focused observation of your mentee and a feedback meeting. Use the time now to agree:

Class:	Date:	Time within lesson:
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Focus: This should be to allow you to gather further evidence for the inquiry. E.g. you might concentration on...

A group of pupils

Teacher behaviour

What pupils say

What the teacher says

Use of time/resources

Pupil responses

Next Steps 5 mins

Agree with your mentee how they will now put their learning from this week's session 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 observation in week 7 (which should be about 20 minutes) and of the feedback session following it (about 30 minutes).