



Saint Thomas More Catholic Primary School Teaching and Learning Policy

| | |
|--|--------|
| Consulted with staff | Sep 22 |
| Agreed by governor committee | Sep 22 |
| Ratified by full governing body | |
| Date for review | Sep 25 |
| Signature of Chair of Governors | |
| Signature of Headteacher | |

Teaching and Learning Policy

Jesus Christ said 'Let the children come to me, do not hinder them' (Matthew 19:14). As a Catholic school it is our mission to educate pupils in such a way that no matter what their abilities or background they may reach their full potential as human beings. We thus seek to overcome any hindrance that might prevent any pupil accessing the fullness of the curriculum, opportunities and activities we offer.

1. Intent

The aim and purpose of this policy is to outline the school's expectations of good teaching. We expect provision in every class to be at least good, as we believe that no child deserves less than this. Throughout a child's time at St. Thomas More, we aim to instil a love and passion for learning in each and every child, which they then take forward into their future. Class teachers not only consider the curriculum in teaching and learning, but also how we can support children in developing metacognitive strategies to enable children to learn how to learn. We aim to provide every child with not only the knowledge and skills to grow in their future, but also a growth mind-set to approach life with confidence, resilience and self-belief.

At St. Thomas More, we provide a broad and balanced curriculum, which is carefully designed and sequenced to ensure children develop both their knowledge and skills. Each subject has its own policy, which includes a focus on knowledge development, skills progression and curriculum design. All subjects utilise and promote the pedagogical model, research and practice stated in the Teaching and Learning policy

At St. Thomas More, we base our teaching and learning on highly regarded educational principles, such as Rosenshine's Principles of Direct Instruction. These principles are founded in cognitive, scientific and pedagogical research and each element underpins our vision for outstanding teaching. This policy outlines how we as a school approach each principle, which collectively outline what outstanding teaching looks like.

2. Implementation

Our teaching and learning practice is based around Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction, which are designed to give direct links from pedagogical research to classroom practice. These principles define the key elements that we incorporate into our teaching practice to provide children with rich, high-quality learning opportunities. Rosenshine's principles are made up of 10 types of instruction and they have been established from three bodies of cognitive and scientific research, including:

- Research into how our brains acquire and use information.
- Research on classroom practices of those whose learners make the highest gains in academic achievement.
- Research on cognitive supports to help students learn complex tasks.

These 10 principles have been condensed and organised into four strands by Tom Sherrington:

Saint Thomas More Catholic Primary
Teaching and Learning Policy
November 2022

| Sequencing concepts and modelling | Questioning | Reviewing material | Stages of practice |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 2. Present new material using small steps. | 3. Ask questions. | 1. Daily review. | 5. Guide student practice. |
| 4. Provide models. | 6. Check for student understanding. | 10. Weekly and monthly review. | 7. Obtain a high success rate. |
| 8. Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks. | | | 9. Independent practice. |

2.1 Sequencing concepts and modelling

At St. Thomas More, we believe that the most effective teachers ensure that learners acquire, practice and connect learning by providing high-quality teaching and support. Class teachers ensure knowledge and skills are sequenced and modelled well to enable pupils to achieve in their learning.

2.1.1 Present new material using small steps

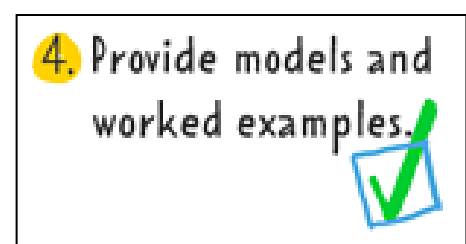
Research shows that we can only hold limited information in our working memory before becoming quickly overloaded. This can, in turn, lead to disruptive behaviours and a lack of confidence. At St. Thomas More, we build children's confidence by taking their learning step by step. We recognise the limitations of the working memory, and so class teachers break down new concepts and skills into small, manageable steps.



Class teachers spend time analysing the curriculum to ensure that each step is carefully planned and sequenced. Consideration is also given to opportunities for pupils to practise each step to allow children to become confident in their learning, whilst also building connections between prior and new knowledge.

2.1.2 Provide models and worked examples

At St. Thomas More, class teachers make effective use of modelling and providing worked examples to support pupils in their learning. Providing modelling is a central feature of giving good explanations, as it allows students to focus on the specific aspects of their learning, and thus reducing potential cognitive overload on their working memory.

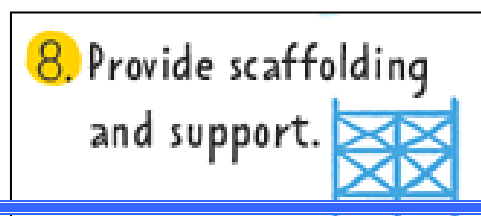


Models and worked examples may include:

- Physical representations of completed tasks, such as a model paragraph for a narrative.
- Conceptual models that illustrate abstract concepts using images or diagrams, such as a diagram of the water cycle.
- Explicit narration of metacognitive processes to model specific steps in learning, such as live thinking and solving a mathematical problem.
- Use of concrete examples or manipulatives, such as Dienes blocks to understand number and place value.

2.1.3 Provide scaffolding and support

Saint Thomas More Catholic Primary
Teaching and Learning Policy
November 2022



When planning and sequencing the curriculum, class teachers carefully consider potential scaffolds to ensure all children can access the curriculum. Scaffolding is often seen as a form of guided practice prior to independent learning, whereby pupils learn cognitive strategies from teachers who model, coach and support them. Rather than setting lower expectations for our pupils, class teachers support them in reaching ambitious goals using a range of scaffolding processes to guide them in their learning.

Scaffolds can take many forms, such as writing frames, sentence starters, word banks, exemplars, and checklists.

As children become more confident in their learning, scaffolding is slowly withdrawn. It is designed only to be temporary to support pupils in gaining skills until children are ready to complete their learning independently. For example, the number of sentence starters may be gradually reduced, or a teacher may solve half of the mathematical problem for the child to then finish finding the solution.

2.2 Questioning

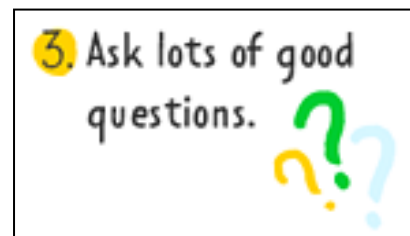
Pedagogical research shows that great questioning lies at the heart of great instructional teaching. At St. Thomas More, class teachers use questioning effectively so that it is a highly interactive, dynamic and responsive process.

Effective questioning involves:

- Ask a large number of questions and check for understanding.
- Ask pupils to explain what they have learned.
- Check the response of all pupils.
- Provide feedback and corrections.

2.2.1 Ask questions

Questions provide children with the opportunity to practice new knowledge and skills, and to connect new material to prior learning. Class teachers plan a range of high-quality questions, including potential questions stems, which will probe children's thinking and understanding, so as to build and develop their learning further.



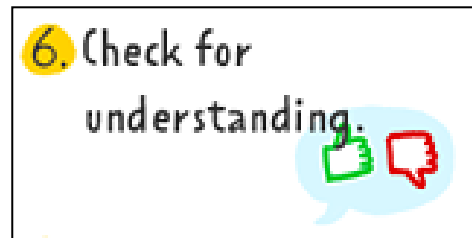
Questions strategies should be considered and balanced carefully in order that all children can be included in the lesson and grow in their learning. Questioning strategies could include:

- **Cold calling** or no hands up questioning can be used to check for understanding and keep all children focused on the learning. Teachers can be more targeted with their questioning, such as by asking a child a specific question to check that they have learnt from a prior misunderstanding.
- **Think, pair, share** provides pupils with the opportunity to rehearse their answer prior to sharing ideas as a whole class. Teachers should manage thinking and paired discussion time so that pupils have sufficient time to develop their thoughts whilst ensuring that the learning is focused and on-task.
- **Show me boards** provides a good way for class teachers to sample responses from a whole class. This strategy can be developed further by class teachers sharing pupils' answers on their whiteboards as a whole class, and using them as a focal point for further learning discussion.
- **Say it again better** can be used to support pupils in producing high quality responses. It allows children to develop their answers by thinking about what they are saying and generating an improved response.

- **Probing questions** develop pupils' learning by digging deeper into their understanding of the new concept or skill. Well-chosen probing questions can support pupils in making links between ideas, rehearsing explanations to support long-term memory, connecting abstract and concrete examples and identifying gaps in knowledge or misconceptions.
- **Process questions** support pupils in developing their metacognitive skills. Process questions focus the discussion on how we know something or how a problem is solved, and so encourages children to reflect on their learning.
- **Raising hands/thumbs up or down** to show if pupils agree with another pupil's answer. This engagement strategy can be used to engage all pupils in active participation of questioning and can be further developed, such as by asking a pupil why they agree or disagree.
- **Choral responses** can be used to hear multiple ideas at once, for example a teacher slowly waves their hand over a class and children shout out their ideas. This strategy is useful when collecting multiple ideas quickly whilst encouraging active participation from all children.

2.2.2 Check for student understanding

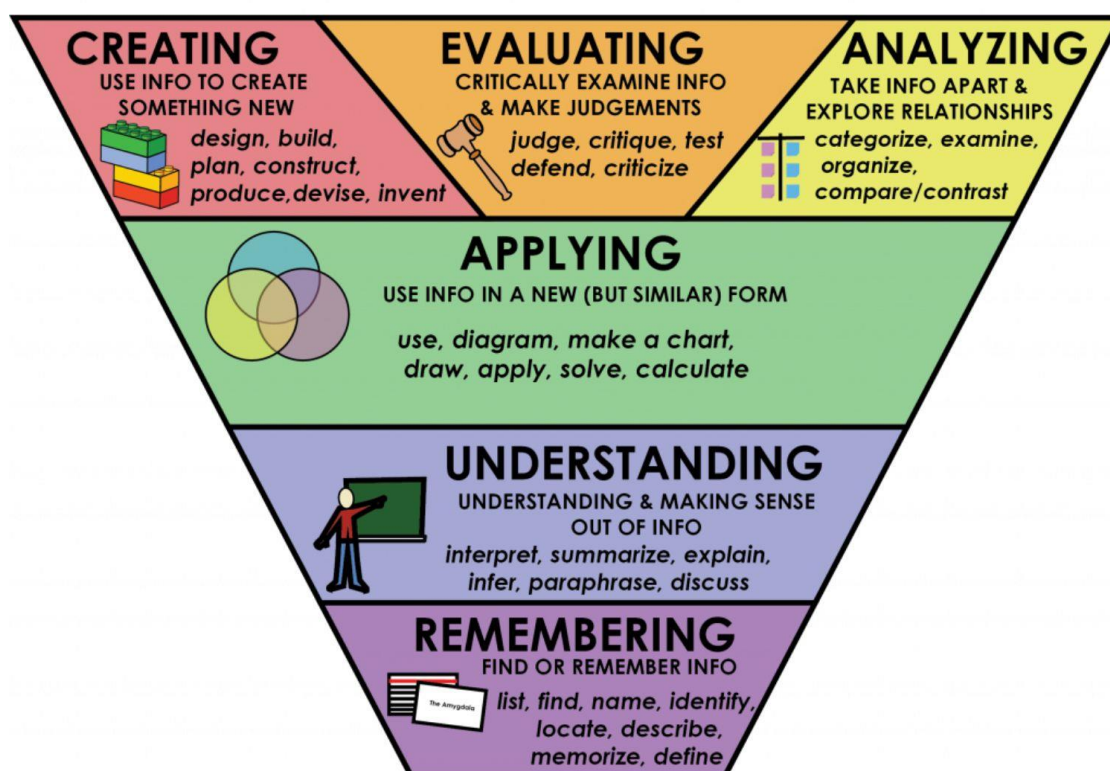
It is vital that class teachers also use questioning to check for pupils' understanding. Teachers cannot assume pupils have understood the learning unless the children can show or explain their understanding. This information then informs the next steps of the learning sequence, such as by re-teaching a step, tackling a misconception or moving onto the next step of learning. This process also helps pupils to review their learning and secure a deeper understanding.



2.2.3 Bloom's Taxonomy

At St. Thomas More, we also utilise Bloom's Taxonomy to support teachers in structuring questions to elicit the best outcomes in learning. Using Bloom's Taxonomy, teacher can consider the balance in types of questioning depending on the lesson, frame the questions with the correct choice of language and ensure the level of challenge is appropriate to the learner.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

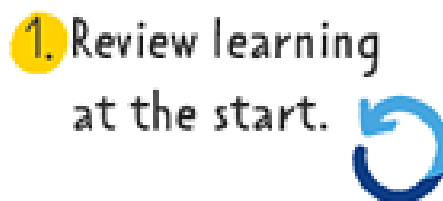


2.3 Reviewing material

At St. Thomas More, we believe that it is crucial for pupils to review their prior learning before building on it with new material. Unless children review what they have learned, their memory of that information diminishes: they remember fewer details, fewer connections and find it more difficult to retrieve information that has previously been learnt. Class teachers plan frequent opportunities to review material, which involve all pupils and encourage them to reflect on what they have learnt so far. By doing this, teachers support pupils in making stronger connections and gain fluency in their learning, whilst also identifying any gaps in their learning.

2.3.1 Daily review

A daily review of learning is significant because it allows pupils to revisit recently acquired knowledge and skills. This ensures this learning is active in children's working memory and so it is ready for further connections of new learning to be added to it.



When planning lessons, class teachers consider what information needs reviewing before learning new concepts and skills. This may be information from the previous lesson, from an earlier point in the year or from an earlier year group. Class teachers also consider how pupils are going to review this material. This could involve:

- Quizzing.
- Vocabulary tasks.
- Recapping information.
- Using a knowledge organiser.
- Setting new learning in a previously learnt context.

- Retrieval practice.

2.3.2 Weekly and monthly review

Research shows that pupils have a stronger long-term recall of information if they engage in review and retrieval practice after some time has passed. At St. Thomas More, teachers plan in regular reviews of learning from the last week or month to support children in retaining newly learnt knowledge and skills in the long-term. This also provides children with an opportunity to ‘step back’ from their learning and look at

their understanding of the curriculum as a bigger picture, thus gaining a deeper understanding of connections between different areas of their learning. This will, in turn, make it easier for pupils to learn and apply new information when prior knowledge is readily available in the long-term memory.



To ensure that daily, weekly and monthly reviews are effective, Tom Sherrington recommends the following principles:

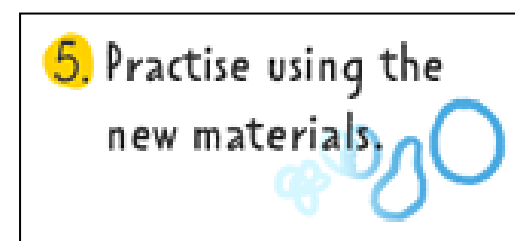
- **Involve everyone** – ensure recaps check the understanding of all learners.
- **Make checking accurate and easy** – give pupils the opportunities to test their own knowledge so that they can reflect on their learning journey.
- **Specify the knowledge** – focus the review on specific areas of learning so as not to overwhelm pupils.
- **Keep it generative** – pupils need to explore their memory to check what they know, understand and remember. Children are to be encouraged to develop a growth mind-set and not to be afraid of not knowing an aspect of their learning.
- **Vary the diet** – teachers plan a range of activities to review learning to keep reviews fresh and engaging.
- **Make it time efficient** – reviews should not dominate the whole lesson. The idea is to review and recap learning, not re-teach the material. A review will demonstrate whether re-teaching is a necessary addition to the learning sequence.
- **Make it workload effective** – teachers provide opportunities for children to check their own learning so that they may learn from errors.

2.4 Stages of practice

Practice is an imperative part of learning and as the saying goes, “practice makes perfect.” It is not enough to simply present new information to pupils, because it will be quickly forgotten without sufficient rehearsal. Practice provides pupils with an opportunity to improve their confidence and fluency in their learning, whilst also committing the newly gained knowledge or skill to their long-term memory. To begin with, class teachers guide pupils in their practice until children gradually become more confident in completing their practice independently.

2.4.1 Guide student practice

It is vital that teachers guide the early stages of practice, so that they can ensure pupils are getting the details of learning correct before misconceptions are made and become embedded in long-term memory. It also provides teachers with an opportunity to re-teach material if children are struggling to understand the newly acquired knowledge or skill. This may take the form of working in small groups or bringing a group of children back to the

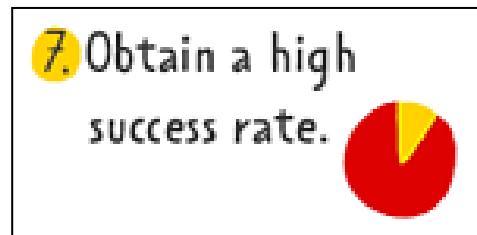


carpet to re-teach a specific area of the learning. On the other hand, it also provides an opportunity for teachers to challenge and move pupils onto independent practice if they are gaining fluency quickly.

Guided practice may take many forms, including questioning, worked examples, modelling and working in small groups. It is important that guided practice is specific to a particular aspect of learning. It may mean that activities themselves appear to be repetitive, however this allows pupils to focus on the knowledge or skill they are practicing rather than the instructions and understanding of the actual activity.

2.4.2 Obtain a high success rate

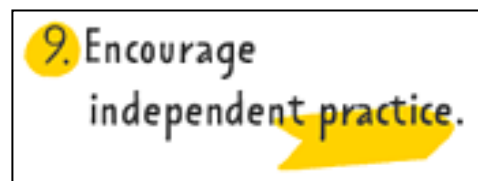
Rosenshine suggests that teachers should aim for a high success rate of around 80% as this in turn fosters students' achievement. The aim of this level of success rate is for teachers to reinforce error-free, secure learning and to improve pupils' fluency and confidence. It provides an optimum balance of successful practice and consolidation, whilst also maintaining an appropriate level of challenge. If the success rate was lower, pupils would be making too many mistakes, and consequently practicing and embedding these errors. If the success rate was higher, then teachers would risk not challenging pupils enough.



When planning and sequencing the curriculum, class teachers need to carefully consider the level of challenge to ensure that children can access the learning successfully whilst also being challenged. It is unrealistic for every lesson to achieve a success rate of 80%, and so class teachers may consider the success rate at different points of the learning sequence. It is also dependent on the level of children's needs, and so class teachers need to ensure learning is well adapted to allow all children to succeed and be challenged in their learning at their own pace.

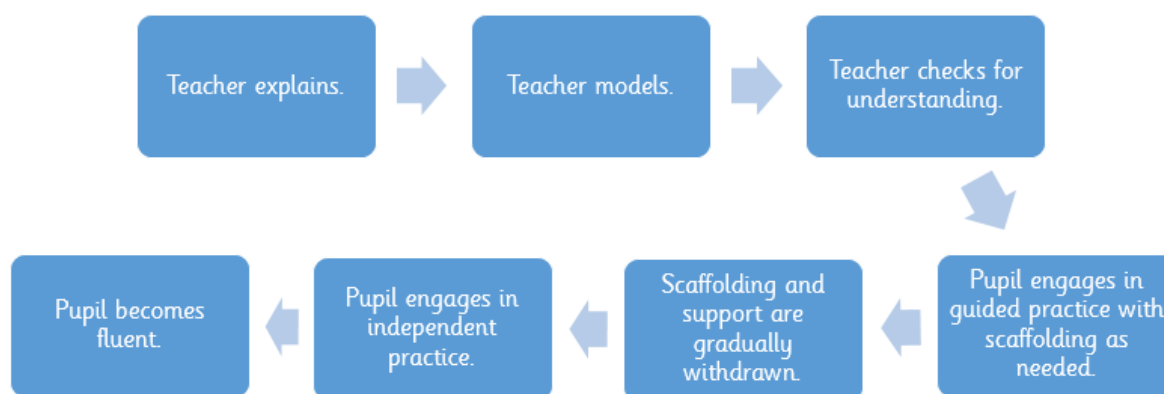
2.4.3 Independent practice

Once children have become confident in their learning through guided practice, they are ready to practise independently. This independent practice is vital because a great amount of practice is needed (overlearning) for pupils to become fluent and automatic in understanding a new piece of learning. When information is overlearned, pupils can recall it automatically and so it does not take up any space in the working memory.



It is important that students continue the same practice independently as they did when they were guided. This is because independent practice is an opportunity for children to practise their learning providing they have sufficient understanding, and so a teacher is no longer necessary to provide corrective feedback. If the practice were to differ between guided and independent, children may make errors because the practice itself has changed. Class teachers need to carefully consider when pupils are ready for independent practice, as some children will be ready more quickly than others, and other will benefit from more guided practice first.

To summarise, a learning sequence may take the structure below:



2.5 Adaptation

At St. Thomas More, we are committed to giving all our children every opportunity to be the best that they can be. As stated in our SEND policy, it is our aim to raise the aspirations of and expectations for all our pupils, including those with SEND. We believe strongly that the achievement, attitude and well-being of every child matters and inclusion is the responsibility of everyone within our school.

Adaptation refers to how teaching is adapted to ensure all children can access the learning, regardless of need or ability. It is the responsibility of teaching staff to adapt the learning to ensure all children have the opportunity to succeed, regardless of ability or need. When planning and delivering lessons, class teachers carefully consider how to best adapt the learning so that all children can learn and make progress. Class teachers consider the individual needs of all children and how to best support each child in accessing the learning.

Adaptation strategies could include:

- More guided practice.
- Working in small groups.
- Ability-set groups.
- Coloured paper/overlays.
- Printing resources in a larger font.
- Word banks.
- Fidget toys.
- Writing frames.
- Dual language resources.

3. Impact

3.1 Monitoring

Teaching and learning is regularly monitored across the school by the Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Leaders of Learning, the Quality of Education Lead and Subject Leaders (when linked to teaching and learning). As stated in the Monitoring and Evaluation Policy, we believe that every child has the right to an education that is at least good and we expect all members of staff to rise to this expectation. Monitoring is designed to move practice forward within the school and to raise the standards of teaching and learning across the school.

We use a number of different forms of monitoring, which include (but not be limited to):

- Learning observations.
- Book scrutiny.

- Pupil voice.
- Evaluation of data.
- Learning walks.

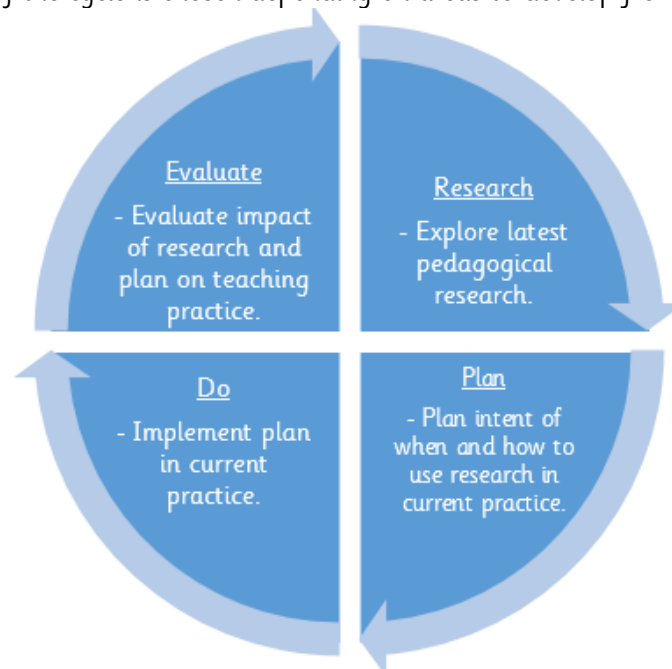
When completing monitoring, staff will consider how Rosenshine's principles are being used effectively and look for opportunities to share outstanding teaching practice with other members of staff. It is important to note that Rosenshine's principles are not to be used as a success criteria to observe lessons. They are to inform teachers of what good practice looks like, however an outstanding teacher considers the balance of each principle to create optimum learning. It is therefore unrealistic for teachers to showcase all of these strategies in a single lesson. Teachers are expected to use these principles as a framework for their teaching whilst not being afraid to take a risk or trying out new ideas/evidence based practice.

3.2 CPD

Throughout the school year, staff receive opportunities for Continuing Professional Development to develop teaching practice. This includes staff meeting that are focused on providing CPD that is linked to the School Improvement Plan. Class teachers also have the opportunity to benefit from peer-to-peer mentoring, where teachers have the opportunity to observe other teachers and share good practice.

3.2.1 CPD Cycle

CPD for Teaching and Learning is based on the latest pedagogical research and practice. CPD staff meetings are designed in a cycle approach, where teaching staff develop an understanding of the latest research, plan how and where to use the research, implement in lessons and evaluate the impact. Each theme of the cycle is chosen depending on areas to develop from monitoring.



Further Reading

Principles of Instruction: Research-Based Strategies That All Teachers Should Know by Barak Rosenshine

Rosenshine's Principles in Action by Tom Sherrington

Teaching WalkThrus by Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Infographic of Rosenshine’s Principles (designed by InnerDrive)

by @Inner_Drive | innerdrive.co.uk


Rosenshine’s 10 Principles of Instruction

1. Review learning at the start. 
2. Present new material in small steps. 
3. Ask lots of good questions. 
4. Provide models and worked examples. 
5. Practise using the new materials. 
6. Check for understanding. 
7. Obtain a high success rate. 
8. Provide scaffolding and support. 
9. Encourage independent practice. 
10. Weekly and monthly review. 


Appendix 2 – Infographic of Rosenshine’s Principles (designed by Tom Sherrington and Oliver Caviglioli)

Barak Rosenshine's

PRINCIPLES OF INSTRUCTION




A thematic interpretation for teachers by **Tom Sherrington** @teacherhead



OLIVER CAVIGLIOLI


OLI CAV

Oliver Caviglioli @olcav




REVIEWING MATERIAL

1 Daily review




Daily review is important in helping to resurface prior learning from the last lesson. Let's not be surprised that students don't immediately remember everything. They won't! It's a powerful technique for building fluency and confidence and it's especially important if we're about to introduce new learning – to activate relevant prior learning in working memory.

10 Weekly and monthly review




QUESTIONING

3 Ask questions




The main message I always stress is summarised in the mantra: ask more questions to more students in more depth. Rosenshine gives lots of great examples of the types of questions teachers can ask. He also reinforces the importance of process questions. We need ask how students worked things out, not just get answers. He is also really good on stressing that asking questions is about getting feedback to us as teachers about how well we've taught the material and about the need to check understanding to ensure misconceptions are flushed out and tackled.

6 Check for student understanding



SEQUENCING CONCEPTS & MODELLING


2 Present new material using small steps




Small steps – with practice at each stage. We need to break down our concepts and procedures (like multi-stage maths problems or writing) into small steps that each be practised.

Models – including the importance of the worked-example effect to reduce cognitive load. We need to give many worked examples; too often teacher give too few.

4 Provide models




8 Provide scaffolds for difficult tasks



Scaffolding is needed to develop expertise – a form of mastery coaching, where cognitive supports are given – such as how to structure extended writing – but they are gradually withdrawn. The sequencing is key. Stabilisers on a bike are really powerful aids to the learning and confidence building – but eventually they need to come off.

STAGES OF PRACTICE


5 Guide student practice




Teachers needs to be up close to students' initial attempts, making sure that they are building confidence and not making too many errors. This is a common weakness with 'less effective teachers'. Guided practice requires close supervision and feedback.

High success rate – in questioning and practice – is important. Rosenshine suggests the optimum is 80%. i.e. high! Not 95-100% (too easy). He even suggests 70% is too low.

7 Obtain a high success rate



9 Independent practice



Independent, monitored practice. Successful teachers make time for students to do the things they've been taught, by themselves.. when they're ready. "Students need extensive, successful, independent practice in order for skills and knowledge to become automatic"