

Barr Beacon
School Centred Initial
Teacher Training
Your Future | Their Future



TEACHING AND LEARNING MAGAZINE

ISSUE 5 | AUTUMN 2019



WELCOME

**AUTUMN
2019
EDITION**



I am delighted to welcome you to the latest edition of the Teaching and Learning Magazine from Barr Beacon SCITT. This magazine collates some of the excellent work of our trainees from our 2018-2019 cohort.

Last academic year we recommended 100% of our completing trainees for Qualified Teacher Status and we're sure that they will have started to make a big difference in their new roles. I hope that you enjoy this magazine.

Kevin Shilton, SCITT Director



It has come to that time of year again when we say goodbye to the one cohort of trainees and welcome the next on their journey to becoming inspirational teachers. Throughout the last year we watched our trainees develop and we are confident that they have entered the teaching profession being able to make a real difference to children's life chances.

This magazine brings together three articles from trainees from our most recent SCITT cohort and shows off some of the excellent strategies that they have embedded throughout their teaching. Like me, I hope that you are able to take away some of the strategies given in this magazine and embed them into your own teaching.

Michael Eszrenyi, SCITT Course Manager



CELEBRATION EVENT 2019



On Thursday 27th June 2019 Barr Beacon SCITT hosted its annual celebration event to recognise the successes and achievements of this year's trainee teachers. The 2018-2019 SCITT cohort and their guests celebrated in style with canapés in our bespoke teacher training facility at Barr Beacon School. We were thrilled to welcome our trainees along with so many of their family and friends to our celebration event, which marks the first of many milestones in their teaching careers. This year, we were honoured to welcome Dr Phil Bright, an alumnus of Barr Beacon School, to speak at our event and he spoke passionately about the importance of education and the far-reaching influence that teachers have on pupils' lives.

As an Outstanding provider of Initial Teacher Training (ITT) we have a strong partnership of schools and Headteachers and members of the Senior Leadership Teams of all of our partner schools attended to present their trainees with certificates of achievement and congratulate them on their tremendous work. Our dedicated team of Subject Course Leaders was also on hand to recognise the work of their subject cohort and to congratulate them on what has been a very successful year.

Our Outstanding SCITT programme continues to go from strength to strength and we are delighted that for the third year in a row 100% of those that completed the course have been recommended to the Department for Education (DfE) for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The event also acknowledged the hard work, dedication and determination that the trainees have put into their training in order to ensure the very best outcomes for the pupils that they teach.

All of us at Barr Beacon SCITT are incredibly proud of the achievements of our trainees and would like to wish them every success in their roles as Newly Qualified Teachers in September.





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www.bbscitt.co.uk



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN LESSONS

We all know how important motivation and engagement are in the classroom. Great lessons get students on board, get them interested and, as a result, get them learning. But how do we make sure pupils are always motivated and engaged?

There are many different strategies, activities and techniques you can pick up and put in to practice straight away but the emphasis is to be practical throughout. None of the following strategies are set in stone: you can adapt and alter any of them to fit your teaching style and the particular needs on your students.



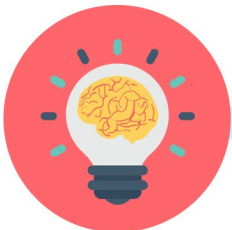
SMILE!

Smile in the classroom and your students will start smiling too. It's human nature to respond positively to a smile. Keep on smiling and the motivation levels of your class will soon start to spiral upwards.



SET FIRM AND CLEAR BOUNDARIES

We all like to know where we stand and what is expected of us. Firm and clear boundaries communicate this information simply and effectively. If you enforce the rules, this will be much easier if you can refer to the firm and clear boundaries you consistently outline and adhere to.



REMEMBER THINGS!

If you ask your students questions about their interests, lives and hobbies, remember the answers they share with you. Otherwise, you will give the impression that you are not really interested and only asked for a show.



LISTEN CAREFULLY AND GENUINELY

Much of the motivation and engagement in your classroom comes down to the relationships and rapport you develop with your students. Communicate better, with greater skill, care and attentions, and you are more likely to have a class who are motivated and engaged.



SET TIME LIMITS!

Time limits turn standard tasks into beat-the-clock-races-against-time. This creates motivations, a sense of fun and a specific goal which all pupils in the class can aim for in the context of the lesson.

These ideas and strategies have been taken from Mike Gershon's, '50 quick ways to motivate and engage your students'.

This article was contributed by Laura Thomas (Professional Mentor and English Subject Course Leader).



ENGAGING STARTERS



One of the main things I have learnt during my training year is to ensure that there is pupil engagement in the lesson. In order to achieve this, I use my starters as a way of grabbing pupils' attention and exposing them to the topic of the lesson. I find the following very useful:

- Videos
- Word searches
- Crosswords
- Anagrams
- Retention quizzes

I have found that this works very well with pupils as they enjoy completing these and become quite competitive with their peers. When they are completing a word search, I ensure that there are questions on the board and then the pupils need to find the answers (see example below). Also, I find that there needs to be a timer on the board so pupils can see how much time they have to complete this task. I also ensure that when pupils are watching a video, there are questions that the pupils need to answer to ensure they are focused for the whole duration.

As we are already aware, Year 11 pupils must sit a large quantity of exams which consists of them using their previous knowledge. In order to help pupils' retention, I use retention quizzes as starters to help pupils remember topics which were taught last term. This has been a very successful way of helping pupils to remember a previous topic as well as allowing them to learn their new topic in the same lesson.

This article was contributed by Elizabeth Freeth, who trained with us on the 2018-2019 cohort.

Starter: Complete the word search (A Christmas Carol revision).

1. What is the form of 'A Christmas Carol'?
2. Name of Scrooge's old employer?
3. What stave do we see him in?
4. Who says 'Our contract is an old one'?
5. Dickens personifies Ignorance and....
6. 'I can't afford to make....people merry'
7. Technique used at the start where the weather creates a mood.
8. What century was 'A Christmas Carol' published?



LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Literacy consists of four key elements; grammar, reading, writing and speaking & listening. These are skills that can be utilised in every lesson, regardless of subject. Therefore, improving literacy in schools should be a shared responsibility, ensuring that there is a whole-school focus on literacy. As part of my PGCE assignment, I explored the underlying issues relating to literacy across the curriculum in schools, discovering how this matter can be resolved to effectively promote the importance of literacy in secondary schools.

According to a report from Ofsted, many pupils today still emerge from schools without the confident and secure literacy skills they need to thrive as adults. This disturbing declaration reinforces that the need to promote literacy across the secondary curriculum is an urgent and essential matter for all. As teaching professionals, it is our duty to raise our pupils' standards and improve their lives. Furthermore, the Teachers' Standards explicitly identify that all teachers are required to demonstrate an understanding of and take responsibility for promoting high standards of literacy, articulacy and the correct use of standard English, whatever their specialist subject (TS 1.3c). This further highlights the importance of a whole-school focus on literacy, ensuring that all teachers, regardless of subject taught, make a conscientious effort to implement literacy development strategies within their lessons, as this is an important element of their effectiveness as a subject teacher. So why have literacy initiatives over the years failed to have long-lasting impact on daily practice in secondary schools?



Fundamentally, the importance of literacy across the curriculum is an issue that needs to be made more effectively so that there is a clear whole-school approach. Pupils need vocabulary, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of all subjects. For example, pupils are unlikely to make good progress in physical education (PE) if they are unable to speak clearly about tactics or strategies in sport. Therefore, it is imperative that school leaders check that teachers have sufficient understanding, establish training programmes when needed, and rigorously monitor how effectively teachers are developing their pupils' literacy skills as an integral element of their wider learning. Furthermore, acquiring high standards of basic literacy can lead to improved self-esteem, motivation and behaviour, as it allows pupils to learn independently. This further highlights how literacy creates a universal application, not only to a young person's academic abilities, but to the way in which they develop as a person. Ultimately, literacy is more than just an academic aspect that should be encouraged in education, it is about whether a society is fit for the future. Finally, literacy across the curriculum can have many benefits for students, as better literacy skills can help raise students' attainment in all subjects.

In light of this, I have ensured that I have highlighted not only the importance of literacy in my subject, but the overall importance of literacy as a whole-school responsibility, as improving literacy in secondary schools should be a shared responsibility. This has been further achieved through creating clear connections between the four key elements of literacy, so that my students are provided with opportunities to engage in specific activities that develop speaking and listening skills as well as activities that integrate speaking and listening with reading and writing. Although, it should be highlighted that literacy is more than just the mechanics of writing, reading and speaking & listening. Literacy is the ability to develop considerable thought and understanding, for recall, selection and analysis of ideas and information, and for coherent, considered and convincing communication in speech and in writing. Through applying these sets of skills that are recognised as fundamental to education, students will improve not only their reading, writing and speaking and listening skills, but their ability to engage with more challenging concepts, make constructive connections between subjects, and learn from the thinking and experience of others. The progress made in the shared responsibility of improving literacy in secondary schools will effectively assist with raising standards for our students and thus improving their lives.

This article was contributed by Dominique Wedderburn, who trained with us on the 2018-2019 cohort.





USE OF DATA AND IMPORTANCE OF KNOWING YOUR PUPILS

Throughout my training year, I have developed my own professional practice significantly as a result of the SCITT training course, and a strength of mine is creating a love of learning within the classroom.

Across my training, I have created lessons that focus on love of learning through the use of varied resources, activities and different revision techniques. When planning lessons, I use data to plan targeted interventions for pupils, such as additional adult support, to ensure they are being supported. An example of this is a lower ability Key Stage 3 group, two thirds of which are SEN, whom I taught upon returning to my main placement school. While planning their lessons, I used data to observe which pupils were achieving in regard to their last assessment and I then plan differentiated questioning, whereby questions are targeted to pupils ability; challenging their learning without overwhelming them; encouraging a growth mind-set. By building a rapport with pupils and knowing their abilities through data use, I know what type of activities they engage with and promote the best progress. In turn, through knowing their preferred ways of learning, lessons can be tailored to their interests and spark children's intellectual curiosity. As a result of this, pupils don't realise they are learning as they are enjoying the lesson due to the tailored activities within it.

As Geography is a content heavy subject, I have found the element of competition particularly successful. The use of mini quizzes, including low and high order questions, and key word bingo, focussing on key geographical terminology, both positively support knowledge retention for all Key Stages - even more so when supported by praise and rewards. For Key Stage 3, I primarily use image analysis, videos, and creative activities, such as dual coding, to introduce new concepts and consolidate knowledge. These techniques have allowed lower ability pupils to learn the same content as the higher ability, just scaffolded in a different format allowing easy access to the information.

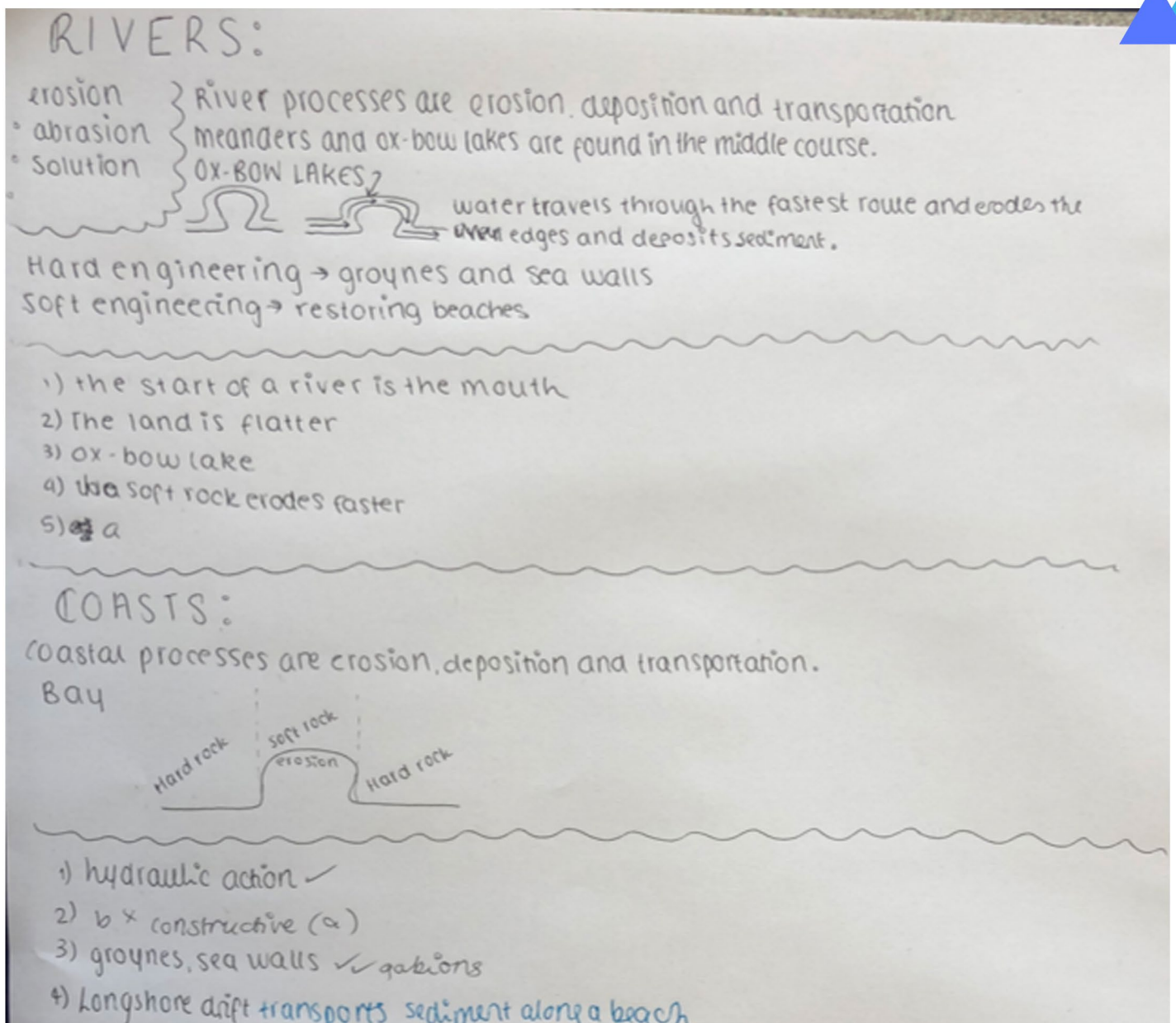
Love of learning should still occur in Key Stages 4 and 5. For older pupils, the use of decision-making activities builds their independence and encourages pupils to debate different topical aspects. Through doing so, pupils construct both sides of an argument and justify their answer; indirectly preparing themselves for 9 marker exam questions. Currently, Year 10 pupils have completed their content for GCSE AQA Geography, therefore lessons are primarily revision based. As a result of this, pupils can be less enthusiastic, which can impact the classroom atmosphere. Through the use of reflection plenaries, pupils expressed which topic areas they would like to strengthen in preparation for their end of year mock exam. Acting upon pupils feedback, I used gamification to create topic specific revision board games, dominoes and hot seat questions. Pupils had 10 minutes per activity to revise each topic without additional support such as books. Through knowledge recall, pupils challenged each other to justify the content and quality of their answers, stretching and challenging their peers; preparing themselves for their mock paper in a few lessons time.

Through implementing gamification and using the element of competition among peers, the classroom has a buzz and pupils enjoy learning. Following discussion with a Year 10 pupil who wanted to learn 1 topic in 10 minutes, I reflected upon his comment and planned an information race for the following lesson, with the aim to fully engage him within the lesson. Prior to the activity beginning, I grouped the pupils based on their baseline, current achievement level and ensured all groups were mixed ability, pairing lower ability pupils with higher ability pupils as a form of scaffolding, to encourage the building of subject-knowledge confidence. The race consisted of pupils working as a team and writing as much topic-specific information as they can recall onto the table in front of them. The more detailed the

information, the higher points they will receive per round. This motivated pupils to succeed and work together as a team, as they wanted to win the prize. The activity was followed up by a quiz on each topic following the completion of the round, to assess knowledge retention, understanding and application, and therefore, consolidate learning. With both revision lessons, pupils left the classroom feeling confident in their increased knowledge as a result of the implemented revision techniques.

By planning with pupils data and interests in mind and providing successful interventions when necessary, lessons become more engaging and pupils proactively participate in a positive manner. I ensure that pupils have a love of learning in Geography by making lessons engaging and sparking curiosity through the creation of different resources and activities. Regardless of Key Stage or ability, pupils should continue to have a love of learning throughout their educational journey and as teachers, we should continue to ensure this happens.

This article was contributed by Kaylee Walsh, who trained with us on the 2018-2019 cohort.



An example of a pupil's work from the information race.

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