

ACHIEVEMENT AND CHARACTER

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Building Learning Power

- **Building the habits of confident, effective learning**
 - for school, college and life
 - dealing well with uncertainty, difficulty, disappointment...
- **Young people who can choose, design, research, adapt, trouble-shoot and evaluate learning for themselves**
 - Alone and with others
 - In school and beyond

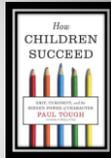
The layers of learning

- **Knowledge** (information, concepts, ideas, theories...)
 - **Literacies and expertise** (linguistic, mathematical, digital)
 - **Learning habits** (attitudes, dispositions, beliefs)
 - **Values and interests** (passions, vocations, identity)
- **NB These are all going on in every lesson**

Attitudes for success

- "Achievement tests predict only a small fraction of the variance in later-life success."
- "They do not adequately capture such qualities as perseverance, self-control, attentiveness, resilience to adversity, openness to experience, empathy and tolerance of diverse opinions."
- "Learning habits have strong effects on educational attainment...but have additional effects on important life outcomes beyond their effects on schooling."
- "These habits can be enhanced, and there are proven and effective ways to do so."

— James Heckman et al, *Improving Non-Cognitive Skills to Promote Life Success*, OECD 2013



You can't not be coaching attitudes and habits

- History PLUS credulity
- History PLUS criticality

- Fractions PLUS experimentation
- Fractions PLUS fear of mistakes

- Magnets PLUS curiosity
- Magnets PLUS passivity

- Reading PLUS pleasure
- Reading PLUS drudgery

Pleasure in reading and writing

- There is a significant link between positive attitudes towards reading and scoring well on reading assessments (Twist et al, 2007)

AND

- Reading enjoyment has been reported as more important for children's educational *and* life success than their family's socio-economic status (OECD, 2002).

YET

- children from lower socio-economic backgrounds read less for enjoyment than children from more privileged social classes (Clark and Rumbold, 2006; Clark and Douglas 2011)

How to improve numeracy Our teacher

1. gives us problems that require us to think for an extended time **perseverance**
2. gives us problems that can be solved in several different ways **agility**
3. asks us to decide on our own procedures for solving complex problems **independence**
4. presents problems that have no immediately obvious method for finding the answer **resourcefulness**
5. presents problems that require us to apply what we have learned in new contexts **transference**



- “Cognitive activation is significantly related to high maths achievement, and greater interest/engagement, across all pupils”
- AND
- “Pupils with low and medium socioeconomic status (SES) profit most from having high levels of cognitive activation in their maths lessons”
- YET
- “Lower-achieving pupils report undertaking such activities less often”
- BECAUSE
- “their teachers may not believe lower ability pupils are able to cope with the cognitive demand”

“Epistemic apprenticeship” We are learning to...

The Efficient School

- Retain information
- Discuss ideas
- Justify our thinking
- Perform calculations
- Solve well-formed problems
- ‘Knock out small essays’
- Accept criticism
- Achieve targets
-

The Expansive School

- ask deeper questions
- research independently
- check what we are told
- think on our feet
- design our own learning
- adopt different perspectives
- use our imagination
- be bold and trying new things
- help ourselves when we are stuck
- persist intelligently with difficult things
- plan and anticipate
- check and improving our own work
- seek and valuing feedback
- work well in different groups
- Look more carefully
- concentrate despite distractions
- become our own teachers
-

Many schools are doing some of this already...

- **But check: Is it**
 - **conscious, deliberate and agreed** – understood and accepted by all staff?
 - **pervasive** – embedded across all phases and subjects?
 - **explicit** – appealingly explained to students and parents?
 - **comprehensive** – covering the full gamut of learning habits?
 - **progressive** – increasing in strength, range and richness year on year?
 - **evidenced** – monitored and improved over time?

The BLP classroom

Building Learning Power

- **Gradual, cumulative adjustments of**
 - Language ('learning spaces', 'extension', 'learning habits')
 - Timetable (2-hour lessons, project-based learning)
 - Responsibility (clock, prom)
 - Self-review (parental consultations)
 - Participation in design ('a coaching culture')
 - Teaching methods...

First, you need to nail the basics of safe, challenging and independent learning

Some basics

- No Put Down Zone
- No hands up!
- Try 3 before me
 - brain-book-buddy-boss
- The STUCK poster
- 2 Stars and a Wish for your partner
- "Find and Fix!"
- Learning-focused quotes and heroes
- A Wonder Wall

Ban erasers!



Second, you need to understand the basic design principles of a Learning Powered Classroom

Some LP design principles

- 1. Notice and affirm spontaneous use of LMs
- 2. Question existing use of LMs
- 3. Offer choice of difficulty ('find the sweet spot')
- 4. Draft – critique - improve
- 5. Involve students in design
- 6. Talk about process, struggle, trickiness
- 7. Model learning yourself
- 8. Lots of discussion and collaboration
- 9. Students as researchers (SOLE)
- 10. Time to look for transfer

Third, you need a language for learning that everyone understands and uses

Learning powered language

- Inquisitive
 - Investigative
 - Sceptical
 - Flexible / agile
 - Self-instructing
 - Empathic
 - Creative
 - Adventurous
 - Resourceful
 - Determined
 - Methodical
 - Self-evaluative
 - Open
 - Collaborative
 - Attentive
 - Focused
- ask deeper questions
 - research independently
 - check what we are told
 - think on our feet
 - design our own learning
 - adopt different perspectives
 - use our imagination
 - be bold and trying new things
 - help ourselves when we are stuck
 - persist intelligently with difficult things
 - plan and anticipate
 - check and improving our own work
 - seek and valuing feedback
 - work well in different groups
 - look more carefully
 - concentrate despite distractions

Describe a student's learning power

- Think of a student you have known for a least a year (or your own child). Describe them to your neighbour in terms of any **positive changes you have seen in their learning habits**

- Inquisitive
- Investigative
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- Collaborative
- Attentive
- Focused

Self-evaluating: students' comments

- 'I felt more involved'
- 'It made it feel as if it was our project, not the teacher's'
- 'We knew how to improve and edit our presentation as we were making it'
- 'It made us feel more in control and more adult'
- 'Making up your own mark scheme makes you think more'

Fifth, use as much well-designed project / problem / enquiry-based learning as possible

Sixth, gather data to guide the journey

Monitoring progress in students' learning muscles, and in the school culture

The Learning Power Quiz

1. I know I can master new things if I try
2. I'm up for trying something new
3. I know what to do when I get stuck
4. I like working on what I've done to improve it
5. I get lots of creative ideas when I'm learning
6. I like working with others to figure things out
7. I don't mind if I make mistakes
8. I can tell you lots about how I help myself learn
9. I'm ready to take feedback and advice
10.

Tracking the development of learning power

- Comprehensive matrices
- Ladders and vignettes
- Teacher judgements
- 360 degree appraisals
- Student self-report (questionnaire)
 - Negotiated picture
- ‘What’s a next step for you?’

Building an inquisitive staff community

- “The biggest effects on pupils’ achievement occur when teachers become learners about their own teaching, and when pupils become their own teachers.”
 - Professor John Hattie



Working with parents

- Engage them in the conversation
- Talk to the difficult ones
- Use students as ambassadors
- Suggest Learning Power home activities
- Use reports
- Run parent workshops
- “Tip of the week”
- Gradual but relentless



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