

WHAT WORKED FOR ME

EXPERIENCES FROM A SECOND YEAR TEACHER

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As part of our profession, it is imperative that we remain reflective and proactive with our practice to ensure that we are maximising our teaching and learning. Applying an inquiry lens to different areas of our practice is extremely useful, as it provides you with a basic structure that promotes ‘praxis’ - a term that Paulo Freire used to describe the process of reflection and action. Although it is critical to know what *you* want the learning to look, sound and feel like, it is key to have an understanding of the theory and research behind specific things we implement such as having clear and specific learning intentions.

As discussed in earlier editions, at Featherbrook College, I was introduced to the High Impact Teaching Strategies (HITS) through weekly readings and meetings with the Professional Learning Team (PLT) I was working with. The [HITS](#) are 10 evidence-based teaching strategies that have been created by the Department of Education as a resource for teachers to utilise and implement into our practice. Something I found extremely useful, is the clear indication of what it looks like in practice and what it doesn’t look like in practice. This was beneficial as I was able to self-assess my practice, whilst also clarifying misconceptions I had. Furthermore, these strategies have been trialled and tested, with case studies attached to each HITS. It is important to note however, that these require your professional judgement as to how you will implement them and whether they will work with your group of students.

In my experience as a graduate teacher at Featherbrook College, we dissected the HITS collaboratively as a Professional Learning Team. This came to fruition through a weekly analysis that provided us with a base understanding of each of the HITS. Once the team had a consistent interpretation of the HITS, we were able to identify and share problems of practice team which we could then dissect and plan how we can strengthen specific HITS that related to our problems of practice.

A process that had a significant impact on my confidence and practice, was the use of the Professional Practice Days (a recent initiative by the Department of Education for teachers to improve their own practice) to unpack, observe, reflect and implement specific HITS that we had designated as a team. This

began by agreeing upon shared areas of practice we would be able to target related to the student needs and our own professional needs. For our first day, we focused on the HITS of: Goal Setting and Structuring Lessons, as we wanted to increase consistency and competency with our school instructional model (See picture below). This developed questions such as: What are the students doing during Explicit Teaching? What should best practice look like throughout the Learning Intention and Success Criteria? Through this PPD, we utilised a 'Japanese Lesson Study', which meant collaboratively planning a reading-hour lesson based around a specific checklist related to the two HITS that we were focusing on. Whilst we were planning the lesson, we were able to assess parts of the lesson such as if we had: Made a clear and achievable learning intention and success criteria, ensured we had incorporated smooth transitions between each stage of the lesson and how we were going to relate the learning back to the learning intention throughout the lesson. These were just a few of the things that were on the checklist, which ensured we were maximising learning and also had the same understanding of what goal setting and structured lessons looked like. Once we had developed the lesson, one of the teachers delivered this lesson to their Literacy group. During this time, we each had a checklist, which allowed us to write notes relevant to the HITS, and seeing our plan come to life. Post-lesson, we engaged in a round-table reflection using our observational notes to guide the discussion. It was extremely useful as there were consistencies within our observations, however, at the same time we were able to exchange different viewpoints that we might not have considered through an individual reflection. During this reflection, we modified the lesson, incorporating what we think worked well and making tweaks and fine tuning some of the areas for improvement. For example, one of the changes in the modified lesson, was that we wanted to collaboratively create the Success Criteria with the students at the beginning of the lesson (allowing them to set their own goals as a collective). We were now able to repeat the process with a modified lesson, this time having a different teacher deliver the reading lesson to different students. It was extremely beneficial to see the amount of difference to teaching and learning of minor changes that we made, and the effect of a collaborative, team around the learner approach.

This model of observation, reflection/feedback and action gave me a reinforced the HITS resource, whilst also engraining the cyclical process of reflection and action. I highly recommend choosing one or two of the HITS to fuel an inquiry process into your own practice, and would be extremely interested to hear about the different ways you have utilised this resource for your learning setting.

References:

Freire, P. (1972). **Pedagogy of the oppressed**. New York: Herder and Herder.

Department of Education and Training. 2017, High Impact Teaching Strategies, from <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/documents/school/teachers/support/highimpactteachstrat.pdf>

(these pictures will be available via download)

Featherbrook
College
Instructional
Model



		Co-Teaching Option
High Impact Teaching Strategies	-Setting Goals	Learning Space Warm Up
	-Explicit Teaching -Worked Examples	Learning Intention and Success Criteria - Ready, Hook Explicit Teaching
	- Differentiated Teaching - Metacognitive Strategies	Purposeful Mathematics Task - Collaborate, Apply
	-Feedback	Point of need instruction and Conference Reflection

Featherbrook
College Lesson
Plan Model