



# EDITION 10: PODCAST WITH A MENTOR

## WHAT AM I LEARNING AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

### *Transcript*

Ben Pisani & Emma Beck

Ben:	<a href="#">00:02</a>	Hi, welcome to the graduate teacher learning series podcast channel. I'm Ben and I will be hosting this session. In this podcast series. We will be talking to graduate teachers, mentors and experts about a variety of different topics that relate to each editions framing question. We will also get the graduates and mentors to share some reflections on their practices that may assist you in yours. In each podcast, the graduates and mentors will be asked the same questions so you can hear the different perspectives on each topic. Okay, so sit back and relax and let's get into this edition of the graduate teacher learning series podcast, talking to a mentor.
Ben:	<a href="#">01:00</a>	Hi, thanks for being part of this podcast. Can you please introduce yourself and tell us a little about where you were working in some of your experiences?
Emma:	<a href="#">01:08</a>	My name is Emma Bourke and I work at Broadmeadows special developmental school. This year I'm working in the classroom with a group of eight- and nine-year old's who are predominantly nonviable and I'm also Yana Torres Mentor.
Ben:	<a href="#">01:28</a>	In this first section of the podcast and discussion will focus on the framing questions for this edition. What do you think makes a great teacher?
Emma:	<a href="#">01:37</a>	I think that a great teacher, has a special ability to get to know their students and to form connections and rapport with both students and their families. I also think that patients and an ability to remain calm in busy situations is really important and

also organization and ability to prioritize within the classroom and then of course, knowledge of what they're teaching and effective teaching strategies,

Ben: [02:09](#) Feedback, is it important and who should we collect it from?

Speaker 3: [02:13](#) Feedback is definitely important. It's so important because without feedback and I think both positive and constructive feedback, we can't grow as a professional. Continual learning is important for all teachers and I think that's important, whether you're new graduates or if you're a more experienced teacher as well. Feedback could come from many different people. Here at our school we have formal feedback practices such as structured peer observations. But then there's always the opportunity for more informal feedback from colleagues during impromptu discussions. I also think that it's really important we never underestimate the feedback that our students are giving us. So even though I work with students who are predominantly nonviable and who use alternative methods of communication, it's their engagement in lessons and their behavior that's feedback to me on my teaching and planning and that's I use for reflection too.

Ben: [03:08](#) Feedback is an important element of teacher's professional practice. How have you used it to inform your professional development?

Emma: [03:15](#) Constructive feedback from colleagues is one of the most valuable professional development opportunities that we have and it's relatively easy to access whenever there's something happening in my classroom that I need a second person's idea on. I will speak to my colleagues either informally in the staff room or ask someone to come in and provide more formal feedback in the classroom. This year we've also had feedback on our PDP goals, which has been really useful when we've had the opportunity to sit down and reflect with an experienced colleague on our own practice and look at where we need to develop, and we'd like to grow. For me personally, this helped me to realize my strengths in the classroom, but also where I needed to seek out support and guidance to build my practice.

Ben:	<a href="#">04:01</a>	Reflecting upon your year, what have you learned about yourself as a teacher and how will this prepare you for the future?
Emma:	<a href="#">04:07</a>	This year I've been focusing on my ability to support others. In my new role as a learning specialist, I have been able to access a range of professional development that has helped me to continue to develop my ability to work in with and coach other teachers as I continue to work in Israel. I really think these skills are going to be valuable.
Ben:	<a href="#">04:31</a>	What advice do you have for graduate teachers?
Emma:	<a href="#">04:34</a>	I would really advise people that if they have an area that they would like to develop to speak to leadership and there are so many opportunities for teachers to take on different roles and responsibilities and that's how I began mentoring other people and working towards the learning specialist role.
Ben:	<a href="#">04:55</a>	What are your time management tips?
Emma:	<a href="#">04:57</a>	To stay organized throughout, to do lists and keep them organized. It feels good when you check off things, so make sure you do that too. Look at your deadlines and how much you, work you need to do in the weeks leading up to busy times, like report time or goal writing time, splitting up the work into smaller chunks so that you aren't working on everything the week before it's due is really important. And ask for help when you need it and ask for it early.
Ben:	<a href="#">05:28</a>	What department resources have you found to be particularly useful in your classroom practice as a teacher?
Emma:	<a href="#">05:33</a>	So at our school, like everything we do is for our students. So, I guess thinking about their practice principles, we have the high expectation for every student that we have in no matter their ability, we know that they can achieve so much in their own rights. So, we have a focus on positive behavior support, and we create an environment which our students feel safe and supported every day.
Ben:	<a href="#">06:00</a>	In a new career it can be difficult to ask for help. Who should graduate to turn to?

Emma:	<a href="#">06:06</a>	So graduate teachers could speak to their mentors, experienced staff, and potentially leadership. Not always when there's an issue, it can just be to have those end of day discussions or to speak highly of their kids. And also making sure that graduates have support from family and friends outside of work is really important, so they have a network of people to support them in their personal lives as well as at work.
Ben:	<a href="#">06:36</a>	And finally, give us you words of wisdom
Emma:	<a href="#">06:39</a>	For graduates, since your first year. So, enjoy it and always look after yourself.
Ben:	<a href="#">06:51</a>	And that's it for the graduate teacher learning series podcast. Thank you to our guests for sharing their experiences. And thank you for listening. We'll see you next time. Bye for now.