

EDITION 10: PODCAST WITH AN EXPERT

- LAURIMAR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Transcript

Ben Pisani & Tracy Sims

Ben:	00:02	<p>Hi and welcome to the graduate teacher learning series podcast channel. I'm Ben and I will be hosting this episode in the podcast series. In this podcast series, we are going to look at how the resources within the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model are being used within different Victorian school contexts. The Victorian Teaching and Learning Model or VTLM is made up of resources that as a teacher you can use to develop, implement, and monitor learning programs tailored to your students' needs. In this series we will be talking about the high impact teaching strategies or HITS the practice principles and the pedagogical model. Teachers can use the VTLM to establish, enhance or modify pedagogical practice to promote excellence and consistency in teaching and learning across the school. Okay, so sit back and relax and let's get into this edition of the graduate teacher learning series podcast, talking to an expert.</p>
Ben:	01:06	<p>Can you please introduce yourself and tell us a bit about where you are working and your history in education?</p>
Tracy:	01:12	<p>My name is Tracy Sims. I've had 30 plus years' experience in teaching. I've worked in a variety of settings and taught all grade levels. I've had some experience at being a specialist teacher as well. Currently I'm at Laurimar Primary School, I'm in my fifth year here. Came across from a school in the eastern region. Prior to that I had most of my experience around, Craigieburn Reservoir area. At Laurimar, currently I am classed as a learning specialist. I am three days out of the classroom as a teaching and learning leader, so lots of coaching and I teach grade three for two days. Prior to this year I was also a teaching</p>

and learning leader, but I worked in the one/two area this year. It's in the year three/four area

Ben: [02:21](#) Tell us which of the Victorian Teaching and Learning Model or VTLM resources you have selected to talk about.

Tracy: [02:28](#) I'm going to talk about the HITS, which, uh, stands for high impact teaching strategies. So basically, what the HITS is, is it's a document that outlines 10 teaching practices, which are based on extensive research by a couple of, well known educational researchers, John Hattie and Robert Marzano. They have been put together because they've been proven to increase student learning outcomes. The HITS fit in with the FISO model, they link together, classroom teaching practice and other elements of FISO, which is the framework for improving student learning. The resource provides guidance on each of the 10 strategies. It's clear, it's in easy to understand language. It outlines what each strategies are, what each element is, and it gives examples of what it looks like in the school setting as well as what it doesn't look like in the school setting. The booklet that the government has put together has a page on each teaching strategy and it has a summary page which we found really useful at our school. I said before that it provides examples of what it is and what it isn't. It also helps you, um, practically apply it to a classroom situation. So, it's written in such a way that you can easily access it and implement it within your classroom. One of the great benefits of it is that it has a continuum of practice. So, it outlines the stages that you can move through from obviously a graduate teacher, which may be considered at the emerging stage, right through to experienced teachers and the excelling stage. The resource is extremely beneficial in that no matter what your experience is within a school, it provides you and your colleagues with a common language that you can use in terms of these defined strategies. It gives you guidance in terms of setting individual teaching goals for yourself, you could set PLT goals or it provides guidance in how you can implement these strategies within your school's strategic plan. The 10 heats strategies that are outlined in this document are; Number one, setting goals. Number two, structuring lessons. Number three, explicit teaching. Number four, worked examples. Number five, collaborative learning. Six is multiple exposures. Seven, questioning. Eight, feedback. Nine is metacognitive strategies and ten, differentiated teaching.

Ben:	05:48	Tell us a bit more about why you've chosen to talk about HITS.
Tracy:	05:52	As I mentioned before, some of the key features of the high impact teaching strategies are that they clearly outline what each strategy is about. It talks about what it looks like, what it doesn't look like. It provides illustrations of how it can be practically applied in a school and especially a classroom setting. And another great benefit is it's got that common language that can be used throughout the school no matter what your range of teaching experiences is.
Ben:	06:33	can you give us some examples of how you or your colleagues are using or have used the HITS in your own practice?
Tracy:	06:40	Well at Laurimar, I have several different roles within the school so I'm going to address the HITS in terms of each of the roles because they sometimes overlap, they are sometimes different. I'm going to talk about my role as a coach, my role as a PLT member, professional learning team member, and then how I use the HITS within the classroom as well.
New Speaker:	07:05	My major role at Laurimar is as a teaching and learning leader. And a big a chunk of my time is coaching teachers. Um, at Laurimar we have a grow coaching model. Grow stands for setting a goal, looking at what the reality is, exploring the options from moving you from your current, practice to achieving your goal and setting a short-term aim, I guess in what you want to achieve. It's based around lining up a teacher's individual goal with one of the relevant HIT strategies. So, what we actually do is we'll have a coaching conversation. We will link the teacher's own professional development goal. With the area of the HITS that it best fits with and then we will ask them to reflect on their, current performance using the continuum of practice. After those goals are set and we've discussed what the pathway forward is, I may need to go into classrooms. I model lessons based on what their goals are. We provide professional learning sessions based around each of, the HITS strategies, understanding that a lot of the time this is not something extra that we're doing, it's perfecting what we are already doing. Because a lot of the things that are in the HITS booklet are what's currently happening in our school, we're just trying to perfect our practice within that. As a coach, one of the major focuses that we've had over the last couple of years at Laurimar is to be able to improve our writing of learning intentions and

success criteria, which links to the number one part of the HITS, which is setting goals. Over the last two years, we've actually worked a lot on refining our practice in that area, making the learning more visible to the students and making sure that students understand how they can be successful. As part of this, I was involved in a team that worked with John Hattie at Melbourne university with the science of learning team and we learned lots about how to give feedback, which is also another very important element of the HIT strategies. So, we decided as a school that the best place for us to start was to link feedback directly back to learning intentions and success criteria. And we've done lots of professional learning with our staff on how to provide the three areas of feedback as recommended by Hattie's research, which is feed up, telling them what their goal was, feedback, how they're going with their goal. And of course, feed-forward which is this is your next step, and this is how you can get there.

New Speaker:

[10:14](#)

As a member of the grade three professional learning team or PLT we sit together for one hour a week where we concentrate on planning our curriculum. Basically, across the school. We have a one-hour planning session and we follow the same model no matter what area you teach in. We call it our 20 20 20 model, which is a 20-minute discussion based around the key learning areas. So, we will have a 20-minute discussion on reading. In that, within that discussion we will talk about what the data that we have collected tells us, how did we go with what we had already planned and how did we go with the delivery of it? Is there anything that our kids are telling us that we need to revisit because they haven't quite understood the concept, or we haven't taught it in as much depth as we would like. We look at where do we go next and we discuss what that looks like as a team so that we're developing common language. We are making sure that everybody understands the content and builds upon their content knowledge and that we have the same expectations of the students in our classes. We then sit together, and we write the learning intentions and success criteria together as a team so that everybody is clear on the learning sequence and the pathway upon which we're taking the students. We then divide into smaller teams and take responsibility for completing the planning by designing learning sequences and activities that will satisfy the learning intention and success criteria that will allow for the explicit teaching of concepts. We provide opportunities for multiple exposures of

the same content, maybe using different types of materials or with a slightly different focus. And within our planning we provide for differentiation. One of the great byproducts of this and working with the HITS document is that we are continually building teacher understanding and teacher knowledge of the content that they're expected to teach.

New Speaker:

[12:43](#)

As a classroom teacher in grade three, one of the things that we, I've already mentioned that we focused on as a school is learning intentions and success criteria. So, for each and every lesson we have the learning intentions and success criteria clearly visible to the students throughout the whole lesson. We unpack it and explain it and define in any of the terms that may, we may have used so that the clear, the students have a clear understanding of what we're hoping for them to achieve. This process, I guess relates directly to HIT strategy number one, which is about setting goals. As a classroom teacher, I also use the success criteria throughout the lessons to provide guidance to the students. And this gives us a firm base upon which to deliver feedback and feedback on what the students have already achieved and what their next steps are. We've worked a lot with our learning intentions and success criteria, especially the success criteria to move from surface level understanding to that deeper level understanding. So, some of the deeper level understanding, success criteria relate to students being able to explain or to teach other students about that particular concept. All of that is based around feedback, which is another one of the HIT strategies. Explicit teaching is another HIT strategy that is predominant in our classrooms. We make sure that we include a large element of explicit teaching in each lesson. We try to make sure that, as well as explicitly teaching the concepts that we are explicit in the feedback that we give to the students. So that in the reflection part of the lesson, we're going back to what the ultimate goal was, what the learning intention was and what the success criteria were. We find that another benefit of doing it this way is that we're giving the students the language that they actually need to be able to reflect on their own progress, which again relates to the HIT strategy of metacognitive strategies.

Ben:

[15:26](#)

How do you think using the HITS has impacted on your own practice? Are you doing anything differently as a result of the ideas and suggestions in HITS?

<p>Tracy: 15:36</p>	<p>For me as a teacher, even though I've had a, a lot of years' experience, I find that in the last couple of years the quality of learning intentions and success criteria that I'm involved in writing and delivering to the students has definitely improved. As a school focusing on feedback, I guess it's provided us with strong foundations for giving feedback to students and because feedback is integral to them actually moving forward as a learner, we're much more targeted in the feedback that we can give. And, I guess the major area of feedback that I see actually benefits the students, and that they are now requesting from us as teachers is the feed-forward element of what do I need to do next to improve as a learner and how am I going to get there?</p>
<p>Ben: 16:40</p>	<p>In a school as we know there is no one size fits all - context is everything. Tell me a bit about your school context and how the HITS work within it.</p>
<p>Tracy: 16:51</p>	<p>At Laurimar Primary School, we are allow large school in the northern suburbs. We have over a thousand students. They are organized into 43 single level classrooms, which means that we don't have any composite or multi age classes within that. The teaching staff at Laurimar range from a number of first year graduates to some teachers like me that have 30 plus years' experience. We are a school in the city of Whittlesea. We have students that come from a range of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds and several of our students or a high number of our students face challenges both within and with outside the school context. We do our very best to cater for the whole child, so not only are we concerned with developing the academic side of the child, we run a social emotional program throughout the whole school and we participate in lots of extracurricular activities where we can develop the artistic and more creative side of the students as well.</p>
<p>New Speaker: 18:04</p>	<p>When the HITS document was first released by the department we sat together as a staff and listed everything that we already did under each of the areas of the strategies so that we could prove to ourselves, I guess that we were already doing a lot of what was written in that, that booklet. So, we wanted to make it clear to our staff that the HITS is not something extra that you need to be doing, but a resource that actually compliments and sort of ties together everything that we do as a school. From there we began our journey focusing on the setting goals element of the HITS, which is all the work that we did in</p>

expanding our knowledge and expertise in creating good quality learning intentions and success criteria. I must say that this has developed greatly over the last couple of years, but we're, by no means done, it continues to be a work in progress. Making sure that new teachers who come into our school understand our journey and the pathway that we are continuing upon. I've already talked a little bit about the planning model that we use at Laurimar Primary. Within that planning model, we actually cover a range of the HIT strategies. So, we focus on how we structure lessons, the explicit teaching that's involved in each of the lessons, providing the opportunities for students to have multiple exposures to the content. And a huge focus at our school is on differentiated learning and making sure that we are targeting the needs of each of the students in our classes. In, like I said before in 2018, we worked with the science of learning team at Melbourne Uni where we had a huge focus on feedback. We chose feedback because of how Hattie's research and the fact that it has the greatest effect size. We started with a small team going off and working with the Melbourne Uni team came back to school and got volunteers to be part of a pilot team where we tried some of the strategies that we had worked upon. We've then rolled it out to our whole school and again, like the learning intentions and success criteria that continues to be a focus. We are developing our practice in that area each and every day. We are hoping in the not too distant future to move from teacher to student feedback to student, sorry, teacher to student feedback from student to student feedback. And ultimately our end goal would be from student to teacher feedback. We actually haven't really touched on some of the areas of the HITS, as you can imagine with 10 of them, you can't focus on everything all of the time. But even though we're not having a major whole-school focus or even individual focus on each area, they are still a part of our general everyday practice.

Ben: [21:38](#)

As you know, the graduate teacher learning series is designed to bring specialized content to graduate teachers as they enter the profession. How do you see a graduate teacher using the HITS?

Tracy: [21:50](#)

Okay, so for graduate teachers, my best advice would be to actually get your hands on the resource. Either grab a booklet or go to the department website and use it purely as a resource. Make sure that you familiarize yourself with the content. Acknowledge that you're probably already involved in,

implementing lots of the HIT strategies on a daily basis. I would recommend that you use your mentors and more experienced teachers' expertise by having them share with you what they do in each area of the HITS, how they use the strategies in their everyday practice. Understanding that it's not an extra, it's just part of what we do as teachers. And my best advice I would hope is that you start small. Pick one area to work on until you're happy with your progress and your movement along the continuum of practice. Take it slow and be kind to yourself. Don't expect to be able to achieve everything all at once in your very first year. Also, remember that each school will have learning specialists and coaches. Don't be afraid to approach your coach. I know I will be more than willing to work with any of our graduate teachers in this area.

Ben:

[23:18](#)

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.