CREATIVE THINKING IN TEACHING PROFESSIONAL TEXTS

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The using of interactive methods in teaching professional texts has a significant value. First of all, It is vital to maintain the momentum of group work. Effective intervention should support pupils through the task without interrupting or interfering. For instance, it is all too easy for a teacher to join a discussion and unintentionally take it over.

According to Johnson and Johnson the cooperative group has five defining elements:

• positive independence – pupils need to feel that their success depends on whether they work together or not (they sink or swim together);

• face-to-face supportive interaction – pupils need to be active in helping one another learn and provide positive feedback;

• individual and group accountability – everyone has to feel that they contribute to achieving the group goals;

• interpersonal and small-group skills – communication, trust, leadership, decision making and conflict resolution;

• group processing – the group reflecting on its performance and functioning and on how to improve.

Actually, there we try to illustrate the reason for intervention and some strategies and possible questions to cope with.

To focus pupils on the learning these three questions can be asked to focus Pupils' attention on the task. (the first two can be modified slightly, according to the nature of the task.)

• What are you trying to find out / do?

• What do you think will happen / the answer is likely to be?

• Why ?

To ensure that Pupils are working within the time frame available timemarkers cam be given, e.g. 'You have 10 minutes left', or prompt Pupils, e.g. 'How much time do you think you have left? What else needs to be done?'

• Pupils are asked to map out how they will use the remaining time, e.g. 15minutes research, 5 minutes discussion. (This strategy is really essential in order to avoid further problems related to time management.)

To support Pupils who are stuck on the task

• Pupils are asked to restate the task in their own words. They are asked to explain their thinking about where they are, then ask them to speculate about the way forward, e.g. 'What do you think we need to do next?' or 'What could we do next? What are the options?'

• Pupils are provided with a scaffold such as a speaking frame (like a writing frame) to support discussion.

To support groups who are having problems cooperating with each other

• Pupils are provided with a group goal.

• Different roles are allocated to group members.

• Restate the learning outcome required and link it to the behavior required, e.g. 'To do this you will need to cooperate …'.

To press Pupils to take their thinking one step further by asking questions or supplying additional information Use a hierarchy of questions moving from recall through comprehension, application, analysis and synthesis to evaluation (Bloom's taxonomy).the following question stems that start with:

• name, state, describe, where, what;

• how, why, illustrate, summarize;

• use or predict, show me where;

• analyze, break this down into, relate this to;

• design, create, compose, reorganize; can be used.

To correct misunderstandings Make a judgment about the nature of the misunderstanding. If it is straightforward, then correct it. If it has arisen from a misconception, then use questioning to probe Pupils' thinking.

To give Pupils feedback on their performance Pupils respond well to praise, so link the learning to behaviors and force Pupils to consider what to do next, e.g. 'As a group you have collected the data and completed the table well; that means you concentrated. Do you think the graph you have drawn matches the data?

Once the basic practice and procedures of group work are firmly in place in the classroom, you will be able to embark on new challenges to extend Pupils' learning styles and skills. We should remember that it is easier to introduce more demanding processes using familiar subject material. Once the group-work strategies are understood, more challenging subject content can be introduced. Here are some alternative ways of structuring group work with examples of their main practice.

Group discussion strategies

Listening triads: Pupils work in groups of three. One student takes on the role of talker, one the role of questioner and one the recorder. The talker explains something, or comments on an issue, or expresses opinions. The questioner prompts and seeks clarification. The recorder makes notes and gives a report atthe end of the conversation. Next time, Pupils change roles.

Example: Pupils in a Year 2 English class were given an article. Each student selected sections that they felt were interesting or significant. The teacher organized the pupils into groups of three and each read out her or his chosen paragraph and discussed with the 'questioner' reasons for the choice. At the end, after all three had introduced their chosen paragraphs, and taken a turn as questioner and recorder, the recorder's notes were considered and the group drafted a collaborative written response to the whole article.

Envoys: Once groups have carried out a task, one person from each group is selected as an 'envoy'. The envoy moves to a new group to explain and summarize their group's work and to find out what the new group thought, decided or achieved. The envoy then returns to the original group and feeds back. This is an effective way of avoiding tedious and repetitive reporting-back sessions. It also

encourages the envoy to think about his/her use of language and creates groups of active listeners.

Example: Second year technical pupils are divided into small groups. Each group is given a different historical artifact to handle and speculate about. Once some ideas about origin, age and use had been generated, one group member went to the next group to introduce the artifact and explain the group's thinking. The new group contributed ideas before the envoy returned to the original group.

Rainbow groups: This is a way of ensuring that Pupils are regrouped and learn to work with a range of others. After groups have done a task, each student in the group is given a number or color. Pupils with the same number or color then join up to form new groups comprising representatives of each original group. In their new groups, Pupils take turns to report on their original group's work and perhaps begin to work on a new, combined task.

Example: Second year technical college pupils are asked, in pairs, to draw a concept map of all their ideas about the term 'force'. Pairs then formed fours to compare lists and categorize their ideas into different kinds of force. The teacher then gave each student a color (red, green, blue, yellow). New 'rainbow' groupings were then formed – all those with the same color – and Pupils were asked to introduce their force categories to each other. Each new group was then asked to devise some scientific questions in preparation for a class discussion.

Jigsaw: A topic is divided into sections. In 'home' groups of four or five, pupils take a section each and then regroup into 'expert' groups. The experts work together on their chosen areas, then return to their home groups to report on their area of expertise. The home group is then set a task that requires the pupils to use the different areas of expertise for a joint outcome. This strategy requires advance planning, but is a very effective nor only for reading, but also speaking and listening strategy because it ensures the participation of all pupils.

Example: The first rear college pupils class was working on maps of the local town. Five maps were used, each from a different period of history. Home groups of five divided the maps up and then expert groups formed, with a checklist of

questions to help them to interrogate their map. When home groups reformed, each student was required to introduce his or her map and talk through the information gleaned from it. Each group was then asked to summarize what it had learned about how the town had developed over a 200-year period, and to start speculating about the reasons for this.

Collaborative work in small groups is designed to develop higher order skills. The key elements are the talking and associated thinking that take place between group members. However, putting pupils in groups is no guarantee that they work as groups, so much deliberate work needs to be done to make group work productive.

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