

Assistant Principal Message:

Classroom Instruction That Works

Over the past term our teachers have enthusiastically taken part in professional learning on *Classroom Instruction That Works*. *Classroom Instruction That Works* is based on a survey of thousands of comparisons between experimental and control groups and across a variety of subject areas, where it was identified that there were nine core instructional strategies proven to improve student achievement. The following list shows the identified instructional strategies that have a high probability of improving student achievement:

1. Identifying Similarities and Differences
2. Summarizing and Note Taking
3. Reinforcing Effort and Providing Recognition
4. Homework and Practice
5. Non-linguistic Representations
6. Cooperative Learning
7. Setting Objectives and Providing Feedback
8. Generating and Testing Hypotheses
9. Cues, Questions and Advanced Organisers

The professional learning involved three full days learning about the above strategies with a trained facilitator, Chris Egan, who has worked in schools as a regional coach as well as overseas coaching teachers on best practice. The framework presented to teachers has the following three components: Creating the Environment for Learning, Helping Students Develop Understanding, and Helping Students Extend and Apply Knowledge. These components were selected as a focus because they focus on the key aspects of teaching and learning.

Teachers learned that Creating The Environment for Learning – should be the backdrop of every lesson. When teachers create an environment for learning, they motivate and focus student learning by helping students know what is expected of them, by providing students with opportunities for regular feedback on their progress, and by assuring students that they are capable of learning challenging content and skills. The second component – Helping Students Develop Understanding – acknowledges that students come to the classroom with prior knowledge and must integrate new learning with what they already know. Constructing meaning is an active process.

Strategies in the third component of our professional learning focused on – Helping Students Extend And Apply Knowledge – emphasizing the importance of helping students move beyond the right answer to an expanded understanding and use of concepts and skills in real world contexts. These strategies help students become more efficient and flexible in using what they have learned. They involve the use of complex reasoning processes, which are necessary for students to use knowledge meaningfully.

Please speak to your children and ask them about the nine instructional strategies and how it is helping them with their learning in the classroom.

"All learning has an emotional base." ~Plato

Warmest Regards,

Kathy Cvitkovic – Assistant Principal (3 – 6 Learning Community)

Message from our School Vice Captains

Hi Everyone,

Tomorrow will be 'Walk to school day'.

Students will walk with staff from Melton West Primary School from 231 Centenary Ave. The group will be leaving at 8:25 am and it will be a 750 m walk which will take approximately 9 minutes.

This is all for walk to school safely.

School Vice Captains
Brooklyn and Shehrish



Getting it right in reading!

Helping Your Child At Home with Vocabulary Building

Parents are the first “language models” for children. The language children use is modelled, or based on, what they hear from their parents. Parents / Carers need to create an environment that enriches what a child hears. The words your child hears are the words they will use with encouragement.

Encourage family discussions. Turn off the TV and talk. One of the best places is the dinner table. That’s one of the few times everyone is together. Set up some ground rules such as “No eat and run”, and “Everyone will have something to talk about” during and after dinner. It’s a kind of ‘hear and tell time’. What to talk about? Things going on in the neighbourhood, what happened at school, events that are coming up, family plans, and family decisions. Remember conversation should be pleasant and relaxing.

If you have the technology available, make a recording of words. Say the word, define the word and then use it in a sentence. Select words that your child will find interesting. Encourage regular use of the recorded words.

“Word of the Week” is a family game-like activity. Each person selects a word taking turns each week. For example, the first week it might be mum who writes a word on a card and puts it on the refrigerator door. Everyone must use that word as much as possible that week. The next week it’s dad’s turn, and then the children’s turn, and so on until it is mum’s turn again. As the words are used, they are posted on a cabinet door to stimulate continued usage.

Enter a subscription to a child’s magazine. There are many of these, and they cover practically every interest area of children: cars, sports, computers, the out-of-doors, et cetera. (Information from the articles makes an ideal subject for family discussions.)



Marvelous Math's

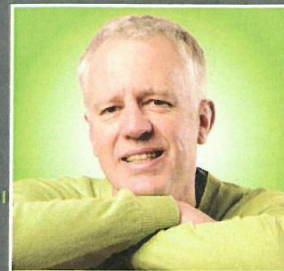
Practicing math facts can be boring BUT here are some games you can play to improve number fluency and practice at home.

- **Coloured Dice:** Pick up a bag of coloured dice at the \$2 shop. Students roll the dice and either add or multiply the two numbers. This is an easy game for them to do while you are making dinner or even sitting at a restaurant. You can play against each other and keep score of who has the greatest sum or product. As your kids get older, you can incorporate different colours to mean different operations. For example: choose 2 red dice and 1 white: Roll all 3 dice, add the 2 red dice, and then multiply by the white die. This increases children's flexibility with numbers and speed as well. * * *
- **Playing Cards:** Using either a deck of playing cards, play "battle" to practice facts. Split the cards between the two players. Each player turns over two cards – you can then either add, subtract, multiply the two cards or use place value to make the largest number to see who wins. The winner takes all 4 cards. Whoever has the most cards at the end wins!
- **Go Fish!:** Remove all cards higher than 10 in the deck. Play the traditional game of fish to find any pairs that add up to the featured number and place them face up in their discard pile. For example, if learning addition facts for the number seven, appropriate pairs would be 6+1, 5+2 or 4+3
- **Memory:** As for Go Fish! Have a specific number in mind such as tens facts. Remove all cards higher than 10. Lay out the cards face down in a grid pattern. Taking turns, have each player flip two cards to look for a matching pair. For example, if learning tens facts, appropriate pairs would be 5+5, 4+6 or 7+3...
- **Snap:** Divide the cards amongst the players. Snap the cards that add up to 10. The player with the most pairs at the end wins.



INSIGHTS

by Michael Grose - No. 1 parenting educator



Coaching kids in social situations

"Kids are born with L plates when it comes to social skills. Boys, in particular, need a little help and prompting about how to act appropriately around other kids."

A mum approached me after a recent seminar with an interesting question about her son's behaviour amongst his peers.

She said her son is lovely but loud. He was a little too enthusiastic with his friends. So much so, that his buddies felt downright uncomfortable around him and sometimes gave him the cold shoulder. He also liked to be the boss, and didn't like being a follower in social situations.

Here was a perfect opportunity for this mum to do some coaching to help her son negotiate social situations.

Sure, it's great to get excited but kids from 2 to twenty-two need to learn that they have to **tone their enthusiasm down around certain people and in certain situations**. That's what the socialization process requires. Besides, popular children generally know when to follow the lead of others, how to share their possessions and that they won't always have their own way. This ability to share comes with maturity, but sometimes children need some gentle parental help in this area.

Here are three techniques to use to help your child to behave well around others, and maintain friendships as well.

- ✓ **Remind:** Be pre-emptive with your teaching. Before they visit their friends give them a couple of pointers that are relevant to them about their behaviour. *"Remember, to say hello quietly and ask them if they'd like to play with you."*
- ✓ **Rehearse:** It's useful to practise with kids how they should act in social situations. *"Okay, Jeremy tell me what you will say when you go to Grandma's. Let's practice saying hello."*
- ✓ **Revisit:** Give kids feedback after the event but keep it positive and upbeat. *"That was great the way you let the other kids lead the way. Your friends love it when you let them be boss."* Kids benefit from being told what works well in terms of their social behaviours, even if their attempts at being good only approximate what you are after. **It takes a little time for some kids to get things right!**

Effective parents are teaching parents. A lot of the lessons kids pick up from their parents are through mimicry. That's why modeling is one of your greatest allies. They need to spend some time with you so they can pick up good manners, the

importance of sharing and other social niceties. Boys, in particular, need a little help and prompting about how to act appropriately around other kids.

There are times when parents need to make sure their lessons hit home and that includes when you coach kids how to be social and consider the needs of others.



Published by Michael Grose
Presentations.

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