

‘What happens when I Introduce Blooms Taxonomy to set appropriate challenge?’

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Group 1E

Rationale:

The ambitions of this enquiry were to test the progression of children in Literacy in the second level. My enquiry was based upon the use of Blooms Taxonomy to promote higher order thinking skills and to create an ethos of challenge to the work the children produced. The question posed was ‘What happens when I introduce Blooms Taxonomy to set appropriate challenge?’. The children were to partake in their normal literacy comprehension strategies, and then complete a ‘Progress Checker’ that had Blooms questions on it. The children had the independence to choose their own question and answer it to show their thinking. This relates to me as a class teacher, as the children in my class need to be challenged, to encourage their thinking skills as this allows them to approach problems in new and dynamic ways.

Aim:

The aim of this enquiry was to promote higher order thinking skills within the children through the subject of Literacy.

Methodology:

One literacy time every week over 4 weeks was taken to collate evidence for the enquiry. All children in the class all completed a ‘progress checker’, however I focused on the responses from 4 individual children. The progress checker had a wheel in the centre filled with a variety of Blooms questions, focusing on all areas of higher order thinking skills. The

children were asked to choose their own question and provide a detailed written response, relating directly to their group novel, for one group this was 'Zac and the Dream Pirates', for the other it was 'The Borrowers'. The children were encouraged to think through the question before answering. I noted down any observations I made, and noted the responses each week in a diary, to gauge whether or not there had been genuine progress. I also checked the work of the pupils, and monitored the answers they gave. The questions were of varying complexity, Forehand, 2005, states 'Bloom's Taxonomy is a multi-tiered model of classifying thinking according to six cognitive levels of complexity.' (Forehand, 2005) showing that the 6 levels tie into one another, the children in my class had the chance to progress up the levels and show an understanding of the novel they were reading. The most difficult part of this enquiry was obtaining genuine evidence that could be analysed enough to show progression, so I decided to go for written evidence and use my judgement to determine if there has been progression in the thinking of the child. The challenge was to encourage children to take responsibility for their own learning, as the CfE states, children taking accountability for their learning is important, so my tasks were set to let children choose their own questions, 'The purpose of the curriculum is to help children and young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors (the four capacities). The framework therefore puts the learner at the centre of the curriculum.' (The Scottish Executive, 2006)

Findings:

The findings of this enquiry were varied. I chose 4 children to draw my analysis from, as I felt analysing 18 papers over 4 weeks was too time consuming. The pupil examples of work that were collected showed a gradual extension in the thinking of the child. Prior to the enquiry, there were challenge cards where the children could extend their knowledge and skills in literacy, but I found from discussion with the children that these cards didn't really encourage the children to think further about what they had read, it only allowed them a different way of approaching the book. The progress checker allowed me to create questions that challenge the child's thinking. Some tasks were designed to make the child go back and reflect on the chapter they read (see figure 1). This child chose to go back and report on the important information of the chapter, she decided that reflecting on the chapter allowed her a

second chance to go over the details again to see if she missed anything. This progress checker allows the child to visualise their thinking, and allows me to see their thought process. By allowing the children to attempt these checks at their own disposal, children could use Bloom's to reach their potential in any task, 'Bloom's taxonomy is presented to help students strive to attain more sophisticated levels of understanding and abstraction in this course and their entire educational experience.' (Krathwohl and Masia, 1984). Research suggests that children feel more comfortable in their own knowledge where the teacher has implemented a source of challenge, 'Students felt that in lessons where they felt challenged, the teacher was in control, organised and had good subject knowledge. They taught well-planned and focused lessons, were relaxed and open, but also had established and clearly set boundaries.' (Williams, 2005). The children all showed slight progressions in their learning, however there was no clear indicators that the introduction of Bloom's to my class made a massive difference.

Conclusions:

To conclude this enquiry, my findings were not clear enough to determine whether there was a clear change in the thought process of my children. If I was to conduct such an enquiry again, I would create a sheet that had the same questions, as I could then track the quality of answers given by the children. Bloom's is a fantastic method of promoting higher order thinking skills, and I believe it is a system that I will continue to use and adapt into my teaching. Thus enquiry was done on a small scale, if a larger scale enquiry was undertaken, the amount of evidence collected could have given a broader result.

Implications for Future Practice:

In my future practice, as stated above, I will adapt the Bloom's resources to provide a more specific analysis of the thought process of the children in my class. It is crucial to continue with challenging children to improve their academic attainment and ability to think more critically in their learning.

Bibliography

APA Citation: Forehand, M. (2005). Bloom's taxonomy: Original and revised.. In M. Orey (Ed.), *Emerging perspectives on learning, teaching, and technology*. Retrieved 06.03.17, from <http://epltt.coe.uga.edu/>

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