

What is the impact on teaching and learning when children use an exit pass?

Darren Pryde
Group 1A

Rationale

Assessment for learning (AfL) is a tool that has been advocated by many educational researchers (Black & Wiliam, 2009, Black & Wiliam, 1998). There are a variety of ways in which assessment for learning can be used. One of these promoted by some researchers is formative assessment (Martos-Garcia et al, 2017). The use of formative assessment within an educational setting is something that can prove to be a pivotal method in the development of a child (Almuntasheri, 2016). Formative assessment is that which takes place during the learning process and allows feedback from its own practice (Martos-Garcia et al, 2017). It shows the strong and weak points of each individual based on their own answers and reflections of the learning process (Brew et al, 2009).

The school setting in which I carried out this research is one which its pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The school is situated in North Lanarkshire and has approximately 1000 pupils from various races and who follow many differing religions.

As a probationer teacher I recognise the importance of self-evaluation of lessons in order to positively impact on the learning of pupils. I aim to use the information gathered through this investigation to develop my knowledge of assessment is for learning and enhance my future teaching practice.

Aims

Aims of this investigation are circulated around the idea that in order for formative assessment to be effective, teachers must evaluate their own teaching and lessons based on the answers given by pupils in the formative assessment task. Teachers must look to critique every lesson they deliver and consider answers given by pupils when assessing if the relevant knowledge has been taken in by the pupils. Therefor this investigation aims to assess; what is the impact on teaching and learning when children use an exit pass?

Methodology

Research was gathered from both S1 and S2 core physical education classes, 57 pupils. Each member of the class completed the formative assessment, with evidence being gathered within each class. Information was gathered through the use of formative assessment by using exit passes at the end of each class. The exit passes in this investigation took the form of answering questions using a whiteboard, with the questions being based around content delivered within the class, namely around the topic of stamina. This was completed over a 4 week block of work (approximately 4 periods), showing how pupils' knowledge of the content grows through the assessment.

Three questions were asked each period within the exit passes, all targeted similar areas. These were:

- Define stamina

- How do you improve stamina?
- Have you improved your stamina today?

After each lesson I will assess the answers given by pupils and construct future lessons based on the knowledge that the class portrays back to me.

Findings

It was clear from the information gathered that for some learners, assessment is for learning proved a wholesomely effective technique when developing their knowledge on the subject matter. This was shown by one pupil at first giving an answer to the question “define stamina”, as “how long you can run for”. Due to the very basic nature of this answer I took the decision to provide an explanation through demonstration for the content knowledge I wanted them to gain. The questions asked were also adapted throughout the intervention in order to draw out more relevant information from the pupils, information that they should possess. The actions that were taken by myself going into the final lesson of the intervention led to their answer then reading “stamina is when the heart and lungs work together for a long period of time to supply muscles with oxygen needed to work through blood.” This improvement in answer was apparent in 51 out of 57 pupils’ answers.

Pupils’ knowledge of how to improve stamina was also largely improved due to a similar process being followed. Answers became much more detailed and 54 from 57 pupils answered using detail discussed within the lesson. Using technical phrases such as “Training zone” is something that became more and apparent within answers after the exit passes in each session had been reviewed and teaching modified.

Pupils’ self-assessment when evaluating if they had improved their stamina within the lesson also benefited as a result of this improved content knowledge. Pupils could now scientifically evaluate if they had been working at the correct level within the lesson and allowed them to make adjustments to their effort next time they were in the class. They knew if they had improved based on their current heart rate and many showed increased effort levels in order to work at the appropriate level to improve.

Conclusions

This research showed that the use of exit passes as a form of formative assessment can be highly effective. Analysing answers given allowed me to plan appropriately for future classes. Using a variety of methods to convey the appropriate content to the class began to be included and the use of demonstrations when discussing content became much more frequent. Making these modifications to teaching allowed learner knowledge of the content to increase from lesson to lesson during the intervention, with the overall practical experience for each pupil within the classroom also benefiting.

Implications for Future Practice

It is clear from the results shown within this intervention that the use of AfL and specifically formative assessment, can impact positively on learners. This will occur if the information gathered is used by teacher to make adjustments to their teaching. The results of this intervention has encouraged me to use this method regularly. This method will only work however if I as teacher make appropriate changes to my lesson and take time to plan ways to best meet the needs of all learners. Revisiting areas where appropriate knowledge and understanding has not been gained, changing the delivery of the content and using a variety of questioning techniques to draw out relevant knowledge is something that can be very effective for teaching and learning within the classroom. This improvement was only able to happen due to the information gathered through formative assessment.

Bibliography

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