

What happens when you use exit passes as a form of self-assessment?

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Rationale

Assessment is an extremely important issue in education. The way pupils are assessed is under constant scrutiny and is an area that needs regular examination. Although pupils are assessed through examinations and coursework there remains little insight into how pupils can self-assess and evaluate their own performance in the classroom itself. This topic is an interesting one and may hold key information on what individual pupils think and feel during lessons, and within the classroom environment. A number of strategies have been implemented throughout education, this enquiry will focus on the impact of exit passes as a form of self-assessment.

Aim

The aim of this enquiry was to assess the effectiveness of exit-passes as a form of self-assessment.

Methodology

A simple method of sticky notes as exit passes was used. The exit passes were used during consecutive lessons of basketball. These lessons were purely games based and consisted of the pupils playing full court 5v5 following the correct rules and regulations we had been learning in previous lessons. At the end of the first lesson the class were gathered in a group and explained what they were expected to do. The class were told to evaluate their performance in reference to the question 'On a scale of 1-10 how well do you think you performed during today's lesson?' Each pupil was given one sticky note and told to write their initials and then a number out of 10 (1 being the poorest and 10 being the best). The sticky notes were then gathered at the end of the lesson. At the end of the second lesson the pupils were again asked the same question, however a number of sub questions were added such as 'Did I communicate well with my team mates?' 'Did I show good sportsmanship to my opponents?' 'Did I perform the required skills well during games?' Again, the exit passes were collected from each pupil. The third lesson the pupils were reminded that they would be filling out the self-assessment sticky notes. This time the original general question of 'how do you think you performed during the lesson?' was used. The original question was used because by this point it was felt that the class would have grasped the idea of the exit passes and understood now how to evaluate themselves.

Findings

It was thought that the pupils responded well to this form of self-assessment. The fact that the sticky note system was quick and easy, and only took a few minutes complete meant every pupil was able to answer accordingly. It was apparent that there was a big difference in response between boys and girls in the class. The boys in the class responded with high numbers, with 8 out of the 12 boys giving themselves at least 8 out of 10 on the occasions the exit passes were used. In contrast, the girls in the class rated their performance fairly low, with 7 out of the 9 girls rating themselves a 6 or lower out of 10.

It also became evident however that the effort and motivation levels of the class greatly increased by the 3rd lesson and lessons following the use of exit passes. It was identified that individual pupils, who in the past would have been hesitant to get fully involved, were in fact more confident and more enthusiastic during the lesson. For some pupils this may have been caused by the realisation that for a few lessons they weren't performing as well as they could, therefore wanting to improve.

Implications for Future Practice

This study was extremely small and only a carried out over a short time frame. Therefore, a longer enquiry might give more accurate or relevant data. Through this experience, the use of exit passes have shown to be a useful form of self- assessment. They can be completed quickly, easily and is a good way for both the pupil and teacher to gain a better understanding of how they think they are performing. As a practical subject it may also be possible to use these exit passes not only as a form of self-assessment but also as a form of questioning at the end of a lesson. This could be in the form of a small sentence or response to a question regarding the learning intention or focus. Or it may be used through a more detailed methodology such as a variety of questions in a questionnaire format.

Conclusions

It is apparent that pupil evaluations during a lesson are not always accurate. It has become evident from this enquiry that many pupils either overestimate or underestimate their own performance. This was highlighted mainly in gender, where boys' assessment of their performance was always high, and girls often low. It was thought that this form of self-assessment had a positive impact on a number of pupils who perhaps lacked confidence, or had previously not been performing as well as they would like. This strategy therefore made them aware, through their own evaluation that they wanted to improve.

As a form of assessment, the sticky notes system was quick, easy and gave the pupils a simply question to think about and answer. The exit passes put the responsibility of learning onto the child themselves which aligns with the 'getting it right for every child' (GIRFEC) initiative.

Bibliography

GIRFEC, (Getting it right for every child) <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/People/Young-People/gettingitright>