

Education Research Project: 'How do teachers motivate students in compulsory subjects?'

Elena and Emily

Rationale:

We decided to do a research project into education to help teachers to see how their teaching techniques are interpreted by students and to give the students an opportunity to feedback to the teachers in a less formal way. By doing this project we are able to present the student voice to teachers and be able to show them how they are able to improve their teaching techniques to motivate students in compulsory subjects.

Method:

A decision was made by the team to investigate the differences between both year groups and genders within the year groups themselves. As such we required two groups of three from each year group used in the sample. There was one female and one male group from each year because we decided that the students would probably work better like this.

To get an initial idea of what the students preferred and felt best motivated them, focus groups were put into place. By doing this it was established the different types of ideas they had. These focus groups were done by gathering the students in groups of three, within their year groups. This helped us to identify and differences in opinion of genders as well as year groups.

Furthering upon this data from the focus groups we had enough information to establish the favoured teaching styles. From this we went to take pictures of these styles (the top nine across the board for all the focus groups). We then gave each group of three the same nine photos to sort into diamond nines. This gave us adequate information to see different views between genders and year groups. The diamond nines mean we know have rankings on the different teaching styles summed up in photographs to make them more easily accessible for students.

Reliability of the data:

The data should be reliable due to the large range of students from key stages 3 and 4, also dividing them up into boys and girls means that we have information on both the year groups and the genders so we can make more comparisons. The focus groups were a better way to get ideas for the diamond nines than a questionnaire as it meant they could all discuss ideas; however the reliability suffered as we had to sometimes give suggestions when in the focus group, which meant at times we felt as though we were steering the conversation. Another problem is that we chose the top nine ideas for the students to rank in their own way; this meant we had an impact on the top nine but we left the students to put the nine into an order and as such this part of the data was very reliable.

Data:

Elena and Emily

Focus Group Data:

Year 7 Girls:

- Practicals
- Posters
- Outside lessons
- Presentations
- Videos
- Use of Computers
- Coloured notes
- Coping from the board
- Worked examples
- No hands up

Year 7 Boys:

- Essays
- Practicals
- Posters
- Outside lessons
- Presentations
- Spider diagrams
- Calculations

Year 9 Girls:

- Practicals
- Posters
- Outside lessons
- Presentations
- Videos
- Use of Computers
- Coloured notes
- Coping from the board
- Worked examples
- No hands up

Year 9 Boys:

- Practicals
- Posters
- Outside lessons
- Presentations
- Videos
- Use of Computers
- Coloured notes
- Coping from the board
- Worked examples
- No hands up

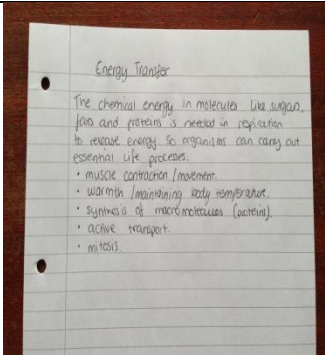



Year 10 Girls:

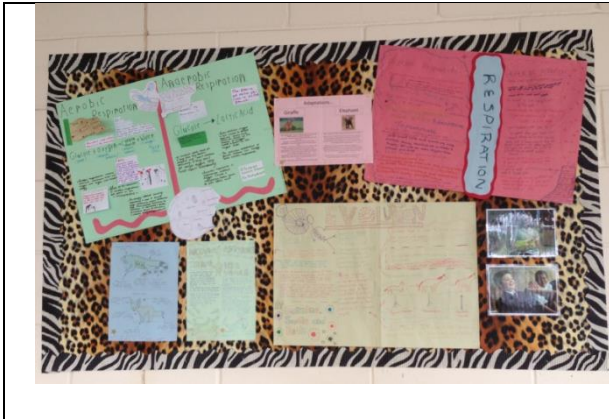
- Practicals
- Posters
- Outside lessons
- Presentations
- Videos
- Use of Computers
- Coloured notes
- Coping from the board
- Worked examples
- No hands up

Year 10 Boys:

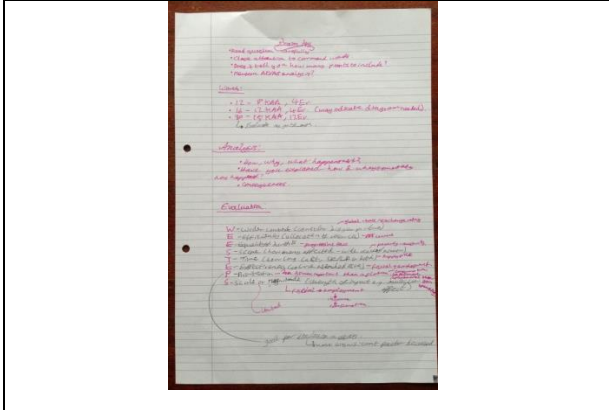
- Practicals
- Posters
- Outside lessons
- Presentations
- Videos
- Use of Computers
- Coloured notes
- Coping from the board
- Worked examples
- No hands up

Key for diamond 9's

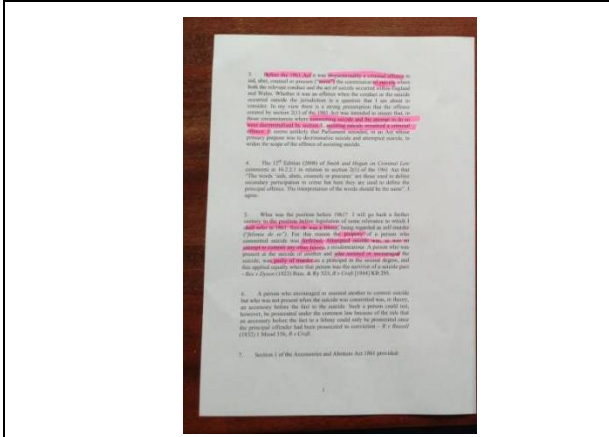
Picture	What it represents
	<p>Making bullet point lists</p>
	<p>Working in groups</p>
	<p>Practical work</p>
	<p>Visual aids (eg computers, powerpoints, videos)</p>



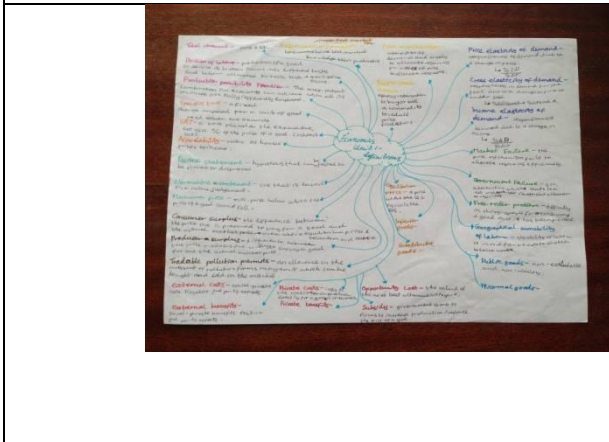
Making posters



Writing in colours



Highlighting



Making spider diagrams



Outdoor work

**Diamond Nine Data:
Year 7 boys;**



Year 7 girls;



Year 9 boys;



Year 9 girls;



Year 10 boys;



Year 10 girls;



Data Analysis:

Year 7 Girls:

The ratings of the year 7 girls revolve mainly around more practical work and working with others. They were less interested in tasks that involved more writing and reading.

Year 7 Boys:

The boys of year 7 chose bullet point lists as the most motivating method in a classroom, followed closely by practical work. The most interesting part is that they viewed outdoor work as the worst of the top nine even though they seemed very interested in it during the focus groups.

Year 9 Girls:

The year 9 girls rated practical work and group work very highly and visual aids and outdoor work were not as highly rated. Also, they thought that making display work was very motivational and they decided that bullet point lists were of the least help when it comes to motivation

Year 9 Boys:

Year 9 boys thought that practical work was the least motivational method and they also thought that highlighting and spider diagrams were not very helpful. They highly regarded group work and making display work as well as writing in colours.

Year 10 Girls:

The year 10 girls decided that the method that they found most motivational was group work closely followed by highlighting and writing in colours. They did not consider outdoor work or practical work to be motivational and they also thought that spider diagrams were not beneficial.

Year 10 Boys:

The year 10 boys thought that making bullet point lists was very motivational and also considered group and practical work to be highly motivational. They did not like highlighting or outdoor work and thought that spider diagrams did not help with motivation.

Comparing between year groups:

The most consistently highly ranked motivation technique appears to be the group work as each set of student rated it as either the most motivating or the second rated.

Spider diagrams were consistently in the middle of each diamond nine but were not focused on within the group discussions.

Practical work was very enthusiastically suggested and discussed by every group during the focus group sessions, however two of the groups rated it lowly on their diamond nines and there appears to be no correlation between a particular year group or gender for this.

Comparing between genders:

In the year 7 groups the boys rated bullet point lists as the most motivating activity but the girls viewed it as one of the bottom ideas showing a difference between the genders within an individual year group. This was surprising to us, as we believed that the female students were more likely to lean towards the writing activities than the males.

Conclusions:

At the end of this project we were able to conclude that, on the whole, the males preferred group work and practicals to motivate them and disliked highlighting and spider diagrams as a form of motivation. From this, we were able to advise teachers on the preferred techniques that they could use if they wanted to motivate their students. Furthermore, to conclude the female data, they also rated practical work and group work very highly so when advising teachers on the best motivational methods, these were the top two by far.

Problems and improvements:

One of the main problems that we faced during the data collection was the fact that not all of the pupils turned up when notices were sent out in their registers. To amend this we changed the time of data collection to during morning registration so all of the students would be present. We also found that after the students had constructed the diamond 9's, we took pictures of them and it was very difficult to tell what the pictures in the diamond 9 were so we had to number the pictures and reconstruct them onto a word document to make them clearer.