A guide to...

Productive Pedagogies

This booklet has been adapted from work produced by the University of Queensland during the completion of the School Reform Longitudinal Study commissioned by Education Queensland.
PRODUCTIVE PEDAGOGIES

Productive Pedagogies are classroom strategies that teachers can use to focus instruction and improve student outcomes. Some strategies are more suited for teaching certain knowledges and skills than others.

Therefore, when using Productive Pedagogies teachers should:

- consider and understand the backgrounds and preferred learning styles of their students
- identify the repertoires of practice and operational fields to be targeted
- evaluate their own array of teaching strategies and select and apply the appropriate ones.

This booklet describes each of the 20 Productive Pedagogies including an example of how they may appear in practice.
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HIGHER-ORDER THINKING
Are higher-order thinking and critical analysis occurring?

Explanation:
Higher-order thinking requires students to manipulate information and ideas in ways that transform their meaning and implications. This transformation occurs when students combine facts and ideas in order to synthesize, generalize, explain, hypothesize or arrive at some conclusion or interpretation. Manipulating information and ideas through these processes allows students to solve problems and discover new (for them) meanings and understandings. When students engage in the construction of knowledge, an element of uncertainty is introduced into the instructional process and makes instructional outcomes not always predictable; i.e., the teacher is not certain what will be produced by students. In helping students become producers of knowledge, the teacher's main instructional task is to create activities or environments that allow them opportunities to engage in higher-order thinking.

Lower-order thinking occurs when students are asked to receive or recite factual information or to employ rules and algorithms through repetitive routines. Students are given pre-specified knowledge ranging from simple facts and information to more complex concepts. Such knowledge is conveyed to students through a reading, work sheet, lecture or other direct instructional medium. The instructional process is to simply transmit knowledge or to practice procedural routines. Students are in a similar role when they are reciting previously acquired knowledge; i.e., responding to test-type questions that require recall of pre-specified knowledge. More complex activities still may involve reproducing knowledge when students only need to follow pre-specified steps and routines or employ algorithms in a rote fashion.

Continuum of practice:

Example:
The topic of a year 2 Maths lesson was classification and grouping generally and more specifically, set theory. The teacher brought in a range of diverse objects. Students, in groups, had to categorise them according to criteria which the students themselves determined in their groups.

At the end of that part of the lesson, the groups rotated around the classroom and in groups suggested the basis of classification. The teacher then gave hula-hoops to each group and asked them to place them in an overlapping set fashion. Instructions were given as to what was desired, with the request that items in the overlapping or intersecting set had to have characteristics in common with each of the hoops. The groups did this and again rotated and discussed the basis of the classification.

The basis of the classification was determined by the students and could be determined for a variety of reasons, for example, they were all yellow, or all dirty, or all cubes etc. Students simply had to articulate reasons and justify their classifications. The lesson concluded with the teacher making comments regarding the use of symbolic representations in Maths.
DEEP KNOWLEDGE

Does the lesson cover operational fields in any depth, detail or level of specificity?

Explanation:
Knowledge is deep or thick when it concerns the central ideas of a topic or discipline and because such knowledge is judged to be crucial to a topic or discipline. Knowledge is deep when relatively complex connections are established to central concepts.

Knowledge is shallow, thin or superficial when it is not connected with significant concepts or central ideas of a topic or discipline, and it is dealt with only in an algorithmic or procedural fashion. Knowledge is also shallow when important, central ideas have been trivialized by the teacher or students, or when it is presented as non-problematic. This superficiality can be due, in part, to instructional strategies such as when teachers cover large quantities of fragmented ideas and bits of information that are unconnected to other knowledge.

Continuum of practice:

Almost all of the lesson's content knowledge is very thin because it does not deal with significant topics or ideas.

Example:
Year 11 Multistrand Science students were nearing the completion of an extensive study of the ecosystem of the town's river. Previous work included a substantial amount of in-class and fieldwork activities, such as using classification systems, water quality monitoring and studying impact of flood and industry along the river, which sought to make the students 'experts' on the ecosystem of their local river.

The students were asked to apply this deep knowledge to the task of creating a creature adapted to the conditions of the river ecosystem. They were required to draw the creature and describe its physical and behavioural adaptations. The creation of this creature was dependent upon the students having a thorough knowledge of the topic.
DEEP UNDERSTANDING
Do the work and response of the students provide evidence of depth of understanding of concepts or ideas?

Explanation:
For students, knowledge is deep when they develop relatively complex understandings of these central concepts. Instead of being able to recite only fragmented pieces of information, students develop relatively systematic, integrated or holistic understandings. Mastery is demonstrated by their success in producing new knowledge by discovering relationships, solving problems, constructing explanations, and drawing conclusions.

Students' understanding of important concepts or issues is taken to be superficial when ideas are presented by students in a way which demonstrates that they only have a surface acquaintance with the meaning. Evidence of shallow understanding by students exists when they do not or can not use knowledge to make clear distinctions, arguments, solve problems and develop more complex understandings of other related phenomena.

Continuum of practice:
Almost all students do at least one of the following: sustain a focus on a significant topic; or demonstrate their understanding of the problematic nature of information and/or ideas; or demonstrate complex understanding by arriving at a reasoned, supported conclusion; or explain how they solved a complex problem. In general, students' reasoning, explanations and arguments demonstrate fullness and complexity of understanding.

Example:
A year 12 art class worked collaboratively on a submission to design a 3-D installation for a public space with a youth theme.

The collaborative nature of the task required extended dialogue between students and the teacher to develop shared ideas, concepts, themes and design elements. Because the installation was planned for a public space, local government officers were also consulted. The students demonstrated complex understandings of each stage of the project: the specifications of the design brief, the time frame of the project, the sourcing of materials and the preparation of the application.

Their final proposal was supported by reasoned and creative explanations of its aesthetic and functional appeal.

In the class we observed there was very little teacher direction. Students were clearly engaged in the project in ways that demonstrated their complete understanding of what was expected of them. They were able to provide an insightful artistic explanation of their work.
SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATION

Does classroom talk break out of the initiation / response / evaluation pattern and lead to sustained dialogue between students, and between teachers and students?

Explanation:
In classes with substantive conversation there is considerable teacher-students and student-student interaction about the ideas of a substantive topic; the interaction is reciprocal, and it promotes coherent shared understanding. This element describes the extent of talking to learn and to understand in the classroom.

Features of substantive conversation include:

A. INTELLECTUAL SUBSTANCE: The talk is about subject matter in the discipline and encourages critical reasoning such as making distinctions, applying ideas, forming generalizations, raising questions.

B. DIALOGUE: The conversation involves sharing of ideas and is not completely scripted or controlled by one party (as in teacher-led recitation).

C. LOGICAL EXTENSION AND SYNTHESIS: The dialogue builds coherently on participants' ideas to promote improved collective understanding of a theme or topic.

D. A SUSTAINED EXCHANGE extends beyond a routine IRE (initiate/response/evaluate). This can occur between teacher and students or student and student and involves several consecutive interchanges. Dialogue consists of a sustained and topically related series of linked exchanges between speakers.

In classes where there is little or no substantive conversation, teacher-student interaction typically consists of a lecture with recitation where the teacher deviates very little from delivering information and routine questions; students typically give very short answers. Discussion here may follow the typical IRE pattern: with low level recall/fact based questions, short utterance or single word responses, and further simple questions and/or teacher evaluation statements (e.g., "yes, good"). This is an extremely routine, teacher centred pattern, that amounts to a "fill in the blank," or "guess what's in the teacher's head" format.

Continuum of practice:

All features of substantive conversation occur in an ongoing and sustained fashion, extending across almost ALL OF THE LESSON, with both teachers and students scaffolding the conversation.

Virtually no features of substantive conversation occur during the lesson. Lesson consists principally of either a sustained teacher monologue/lecture and/or a repeated IRE sequence with little variation, or conversation which is not substantive.

Example:
A year 8 integrated Maths and Science class was divided into groups. Each group spent a period building animals to certain design specifications. The animals were given names by the students. Discussion was then held about classification systems of the animals. The teacher then distributed a classification system that he had created.

In groups of 4 the students then moved from table to table where the 15 animals were set up and had discussions about the animals. On a sheet they classified the animals according to the system the teacher had given them. When all the animals had been classified by all groups, the teacher held a whole group discussion of the classification by each group of each animal. Interesting discussions ensued in respect of different classifications by some of the groups of the same animal.

This discussion covered issues of measurement, including very sophisticated discussion about exactitude, angle of viewing the animals, injured animals, error in measurement generally and its sources and so on. In most instances within these conversations students were initiating the dialogue and other students were providing the frameworks upon which the group was subsequently to follow.
KNOWLEDGE AS PROBLEMATIC
Are students critiquing and second-guessing texts, ideas and knowledge?

Explanation:
Presenting knowledge as problematic involves an understanding of knowledge not as a fixed body of information, but rather as being constructed, and hence subject to political, social and cultural influences and implications. Multiple, contrasting, and potentially conflicting forms of knowledge are represented.

Knowledge as given sees the subject content represented as facts, i.e., a body of truth to be acquired by students. The transmission of the information may vary, but is based on the concept of knowledge as being static and able to be handled as property, perhaps in the form of tables, charts, handouts, texts, and comprehension activities.

Continuum of practice:

All knowledge as problematic. Knowledge is seen as socially constructed, with conflicting implications and social functions producing resolution and/or conflict.

Approximately half knowledge seen as problematic. Multiple interpretations recognised as variations on a stable theme.

No knowledge as problematic. All knowledge is presented in an uncritical fashion.

Example:
As an introductory lesson to a topic about the environment, a Year 8 Social Science teacher drew a long horizontal line across the blackboard and wrote 'very concerned' at one end and 'not concerned' at the other end. She asked students to place a mark on the line representing their degree of concern about the environment.

This required that the students make a 'low-key' public statement about their position and then justify it in writing by answering the question: 'Why I chose my position'. The teacher made a number of statements that could be interpreted as supporting multiple positions, thus reinforcing that there was no one correct position.

It was clear from the way that this task was managed that the teacher anticipated divergent and potentially conflicting views to surface during the activity. She skilfully and continually kept opening the discussion up by reinforcing the complexity of the issues and the need to consider multiple viewpoints and experiences.
METALANGUAGE

Are aspects of language, grammar and technical vocabulary being foregrounded?

Explanation:

High meta-language instruction has high levels of talk about talk and writing, about how written and spoken texts work, about specific technical vocabulary and words (vocabulary), about how sentences work or don’t work (syntax/grammar), about meaning structures and text structures (semantics/genre), about issues how discourses and ideologies work in speech and writing. Teachers tend to do a good deal of pulling back from activities, assignments, readings, lessons, and fore-grounding particular words, sentences, text features, discourses, etc.

Low meta-language instruction has little explicit talk about talk and writing, about how written and spoken texts work, about their features, characteristics, patterns, genres and discourses. There is an emphasis on simply doing text-based activities, without any pulling back and talking about curriculum and evaluation of texts.

Continuum of practice:

Consistent use of meta-language: the teacher provides ongoing and frequent commentary on language use, perhaps using jokes, puns, ironic comments on her/his own or students' language, points out how differing sentences, text-types, discourses actually work, compares and contrasts them, and shows how language can be used to constitute texts, knowledge and power.

Initial or periodic use of meta-language: at the beginning of the lesson, or at some key juncture, the teacher stops and explains or gives a mini-lesson on some aspect of language, e.g., vocabulary, punctuation, grammar, genre.

Low meta-language: the teacher proceeds through the lesson, without stopping and commenting on his/her own or students' use of language.

Example:

A year 11 English class was being introduced to the concept of 'discourse'. The teacher asked the students to examine how medical, legal and mechanical languages operate within particular contexts to construct speakers, listeners and subjects. The students gave some concrete examples of these and described how power operates in each situation and is closely aligned with knowledge.

By reversing the speaker and the listener, students were able to consider alternative discourses and to examine how power relations can be disrupted. There was consistent use of meta-language throughout as the teacher and students examined how discourses constitute texts, knowledge and power.
KNOWLEDGE INTEGRATION

Does the lesson range across diverse fields, disciplines and paradigms?

**Explanation:**

*Integrated school knowledge* is identifiable when either: a) explicit attempts are made to connect two or more sets of subject area knowledge, or b) when no subject area boundaries are readily seen. Topics or problems which either require knowledge from multiple areas, or which have no clear subject areas basis in the first place, are indicators of curricula which integrates school subject knowledge.

*Non-integrated school knowledge* is typically segregated or divided in such a way that specific sets of knowledge and skills are (relatively) unique and discrete to each specified school subject area. Segregated knowledge is identified by clear boundaries between subject areas. Connections between knowledge in different segregated subject areas are less and less clear the stronger the dividing knowledge boundary. In the extreme, such boundaries prevent any inter-relation of different subject areas.

**Continuum of practice:**

![Continuum of Practice Diagram](image)

- **Complete integration of subject area knowledge** to the degree that subject area boundaries are not recognisable.
- **Knowledge from multiple subject areas connected or related together, but still treated as separate and distinct subjects.**
- **All knowledge strictly restricted to that explicitly defined within a single school subject area. No intrusion of other contents permitted.**

**Example:**

Growing enrolments at a high school necessitated increasing the number of houses by two for various inter-house sporting events. To accommodate this change, two extra lanes had to be marked on the running track in time for the school athletics carnival.

This prompted a group of year 8 teachers from different disciplines to work together on an integrated unit with the same group of students.

An HPE teacher worked with the students to design the new track and athletics field so that it would accommodate the extra competitors. Extra areas had to be allocated for the new house groups, for more marshalling space and for specialised events such as discus and long jump. A Maths teacher worked with her class to determine the actual lengths of the new tracks and the position of the starting blocks for events over various distances. An English teacher worked with his class to draw up programs, advertising material, results lists and signage. A computer studies teacher worked with her class to construct a web site for the carnival and there were continual updates made to this web site.

Thus integration in this example occurred around a common topic with subject boundaries remaining intact.
BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE
Is there an attempt to connect with students' background knowledge?

Explanation:
*High connection* lessons provide students with opportunities to make connections between their linguistic, cultural, world knowledge and experience and the topics, skills, competencies at hand. Background knowledge may include community knowledge, local knowledge, personal experience, media and popular culture sources.

*Low connection* lessons introduce new content, skills and competencies without any direct or explicit opportunities to explore what prior knowledge students have of the topic, and without any attempts to provide relevant or key background knowledge that might enhance students' comprehension and understanding of the 'new' material being offered.

Continuum of practice:

![Diagram showing the continuum of practice]

Students' background knowledge and experiences are consistently incorporated into the lesson, with the lesson shunting back and forth between known material and new material. At least some connection to out-of-school background knowledge.

No reference is made to background knowledge: students' community and cultural knowledge or school knowledge covered in previous studies, other subjects and lessons.

Example:
In a year 6 Social Studies class, the children worked in small groups over a number of lessons to design a theme park. This topic was closely connected to the students' world beyond the classroom because the school is located close to a number of major theme parks.

As well as having visited these parks, some of the children knew park employees and the parks were significant in the community's psyche. Along with designing themes, rides and attractions, the children were also required to consider a range of other issues such as profit margins, marketing, integration with other local industries and services, facilities for people with special needs, personnel issues and pricing. The groups gave regular reports to the class and were required to respond to questions posed by the teacher and other students.

A feedback cycle of researching, developing and presenting the theme park designs was well established in the class when this observation was made.

A local theme park manager had also been invited to a final presentation of the proposals and to comment on each design.
Do the lesson and the assigned work have any resemblance or connection to real-life contexts?

**Explanation:**

*Connectedness* describes the extent to which the lesson has value and meaning beyond the instructional context, making a connection to the larger social context within which students live.

Two areas in which student work can exhibit some degree of connectedness are: (a) a real world public problem; i.e., students confront an actual contemporary issue or problem, such as applying statistical analysis in preparing a report to the City Council on the homeless; (b) students' personal experiences; i.e., the lesson focuses directly or builds upon students' actual experiences or situations. A high level of connectedness can be achieved when the lesson entails one or both of these.

In a *low connectedness* lesson with little or no value beyond the classroom, activities are deemed important for success only in school (now or later), but for no other aspects of life. Student work has no impact on others and serves only to certify their level of competence or compliance with the norms and routines of formal schooling.

**Continuum of practice:**

*Students study or work on a topic, problem or issue that the teacher and students see as connected to their personal experiences or actual contemporary public situations. Students recognize the connection between classroom knowledge and situations outside the classroom. They explore these connections in ways that create personal meaning and significance for the knowledge. This meaning and significance is strong enough to lead students to become involved in an effort to affect or influence a larger audience beyond their classroom.*

*Students study a topic, problem or issue that the teacher succeeds in connecting to students' actual experiences or to a contemporary public situation. Students recognize some connection between classroom knowledge and situations outside the classroom, but they do not explore the implications of these connections which remain abstract or hypothetical. There is no effort to actually influence a larger audience.*

*Lesson topic and activities have no clear connection to anything beyond itself; the teacher offers no justification beyond the need to perform well in class.*

**Example:**

A year 10 English class was provided with the opportunity to conduct an independent unit. The only requirement was that students had to provide a written product and had to present their project to the class.

The criteria for the unit were decided in conjunction with the students. Some of the topics which were covered by students in this class included 'How to do a PowerPoint presentation', 'How to maintain a bicycle', 'How to do sign language', 'How to take good photographs' and 'How to do Japanese cooking'.

In each case the students saw the topics as having value outside of the class. Indeed there was some suggestion, for example, that the students learning how to do PowerPoint presentations would be able to in-service some of the staff. The students learning sign language articulated a number of uses to which they wanted to put their new found skills. The two students who were creating a manual on how to maintain a bicycle were discussing ways in which they could market their booklet in the community.
PROBLEM-BASED CURRICULUM
Is there a focus on identifying and solving intellectual and/or real-world problems?

Explanation:
A problem based curriculum is identified by lessons in which students are presented with a specific practical, real, or hypothetical problem (or set of problems) to solve.

Problems are defined as having no specified correct solution, requiring knowledge construction on the part of the students, and requiring sustained attention beyond a single lesson.

Continuum of practice:

Example:
A year 8 Health and Physical Education teacher was working on a unit with a Year 8 class about building a raft. Teacher directed discussion ensued about what skills the students would need to build the raft and what outcomes they wanted from the exercise. This was discussed and negotiated.

The students suggested that if they were going to build a raft, they needed to learn how to effectively work in groups. In response to that the teacher had the students play game in the gym where students were allowed to throw balls in all directions with the aim of the game being to keep the balls in perpetual motion. There was frenetic movement of balls around the class. The teacher stopped the game and asked how it could be modified to work more effectively. There was extensive discussion about rules. Much of this discussion was extended to take in questions of rules in society - questions of who created them, why, were they able to be negotiated, did everyone have the same opportunity to create the rules and so on.

The game continued under different sets of rules. Students were able to construct rules, argue why they were appropriate and look at their effects. This one lesson was not treated as an isolated incident but as focusing on the development of one skill needed in order to solve the larger problem. A number of other interesting lessons were conducted by this teacher. All of these were designed in ways which sought to build upon the skills and knowledges which the students and the teacher had deemed necessary to solve the larger problem of the construction of a raft.
STUDENT CONTROL
Do students have any say in the pace, directions or outcomes of the lesson?

Explanation:
Student control sees students influence what specific activities or tasks they will do in the period, or how these will be realised. Such tasks are likely to be student-centred, as in group work or individual research or investigative projects. In this way the students assume responsibility for the activities with which they engage, or how students complete them.

A low level of student control is exhibited where students do not influence the class activities and the teacher, or some other educational/ institutional authority, explicitly determines what activities students do, and hence how they will meet the specified objectives required within the period. The appropriateness of an activity towards meeting this criteria is thus decided by the teacher and/or external authority.

Continuum of practice:

Example:
A number of teachers were concerned about the engagement of year 8 students with the academic curriculum of the school.

A group of four teachers (a social science teacher, an English teacher, a maths teacher and a science teacher) with the support of the school administration decided to embark on an innovative program which sought to address this issue. Central to the philosophy behind the innovation was a commitment to student direction of activities.

When the year eight students entered the high school at the beginning of the year they were presented with two questions: 'What do you want to learn about yourself?' and 'What do you want to learn about the world?'. These questions have served as the basis of the year 8 curriculum. Students have been involved in the determination of both the content and the activities throughout the year.

This has been a most successful project in relation to changing the pedagogies of the teachers in ways which have engaged the students in productive learnings.
SOCIAL SUPPORT
Is the classroom a socially supportive and positive environment?

Explanation:
Social support is present in classes when the teacher supports students by conveying high expectations for all students. These expectations include: that it is necessary to take risks and try hard to master challenging academic work, that all members of the class can learn important knowledge and skills, and that a climate of mutual respect among all members of the class contributes to achievement by all. Mutual respect means that students with less skill or proficiency in a subject are treated in ways that continue to encourage them and make their presence valued. If disagreement or conflict develops in the classroom, the teacher helps students resolve it in a constructive way for all concerned.

A lack of social support will be evidenced when teacher or student behaviour, comments and actions discourage effort, participation and taking risks to learn or express one’s views. For example, teacher or student comments that belittle a student’s answer, and efforts by some students to prevent others from taking seriously an assignment serve to undermine support for achievement. Support can also be absent in a class when no overt acts like the above occur, but the overall atmosphere of the class is negative due to previous behaviour. (Note: Token acknowledgements by teacher of student actions or responses do not constitute evidence of social support.)

Continuum of practice:

Social support is strong; the class is characterized by high expectations, challenging work, strong effort, mutual respect and assistance in achievement for all students. Both teacher and students demonstrate a number of these attitudes by soliciting and welcoming contributions from all students who are expected to put forth their best efforts.

Social support is neutral or mildly positive. Evidence may be mainly in the form of verbal approval from the teacher for student effort and work. However, such support tends to be given to those who are already taking initiative in the class, rather than those who are reluctant participants or less articulate or skilled in the subject, or given in compensation for negative peer social interaction.

Social support is negative; actions/comments by teacher or students result in “put-downs”; classroom atmosphere is negative.

Example:
In a year 12 Art class, students were in the closing stages of work on a self-directed, themed, multi-media project which formed part of their major assessment for the year. These works in progress were permanently displayed in the classroom.

At the beginning of the lesson the students made quick charcoal sketches which related to the theme of their major work. The students then rotated around these quick, warm up sketches and added a quick sketch of their own. When the warm up sketching was finished, the students were invited to move freely about the room making observations and comments upon each other’s work. The students and the teacher made thoughtful comments upon the work, not only providing positive feedback but also making relevant suggestions for improvement.

As this lesson progressed the students frequently asked the teacher and other students for feedback on their work. This example of a socially supportive classroom not only illustrates the teacher as supportive, but also illustrates students supporting and encouraging each other in the development of their project. Furthermore, this activity encouraged students to take risks by seeking and providing comments which could contribute to the improvement of their project.
ENGAGEMENT.
Are students engaged and on task?

Explanation:
Engagement is identified by on-task behaviours that signal a serious psychological investment in class work; these include attentiveness, doing the assigned work, and showing enthusiasm for this work by taking initiative to raise questions, contribute to group tasks and help peers.

Disengagement is identified by off-task behaviours that signal boredom or a lack of effort by students; these include sleeping, day dreaming, talking to peers about non-class matters, making noise or otherwise disrupting the class. It is assumed these behaviours indicate that students are not taking seriously the substantive work of the class.

Continuum of practice:

Example:
Some year 8 students were engaged in writing CD reviews. The students had each chosen a CD to review, with the selections ranging from country music (e.g. Garth Brooks) to pop music (e.g. Backstreet Boys). All of these selections were valued and accepted.

The students studied music reviews from a variety of sources such as magazines, newspapers and from the Internet. Through whole group and small group discussion the teacher and students developed a set of criteria for the CD reviews. Nearly all the students were highly engaged and focussed throughout this task.

Engagement with this activity was illustrated through enthusiastic discussion and questioning during the development of the review criteria and in the ensuing drafting of the CD reviews.
EXPLICIT CRITERIA
Are the criteria for judging student performance made explicit?

Explanation:
*Explicit criteria* are frequent, detailed and specific statements about what it is students are to do, to achieve. This may involve overall statements regarding tasks or assignments, or about performance at different stages in a lesson.

*Implicit criteria* are identified by lack or absence of written or spoken reference to criteria, requirements, benchmarks, levels of acceptable performance expected of students. This may not be an indicator of neglect but a deliberate strategy for students to discover or construct their own outcomes.

Continuum of practice:

Teachers have not made any explicit statements of the expected learning outcomes, quality of performance required of the students.

Example:
In a year 8 English class the students worked in teams to create school newspapers. The students were allocated clearly defined roles such as editor, sub-editor, reporter and photographer.

Each role required familiarity with a particular writing style, such as news reports, comment pieces and editorials. The newsworthiness of photographs and cartoons was also assessed. As well as their allocated role all students were expected to sub-edit material written for the paper and, thus, were involved in a number of drafting/re-drafting exchanges.

Access to numerous actual newspapers provided a ready supply of benchmarks against which students could evaluate their own work and the cyclic nature of the writing/sub-editing tasks repeatedly reinforced what counts as high quality performance. The teacher drew the students' attention to the structural features of the genre of each written piece on a regular basis.
SELF-REGULATION
Is the direction of student behaviour implicit and self-regulatory or explicit?

Explanation:
High implicit control is identified by teachers not making or not having to make statements that aim to discipline students' behaviour (e.g., you're not being good today, put your pens away) or to regulate students' bodily movements and dispositions (e.g., 'sit down', 'stop talking', 'eyes this way').

Low implicit control is identified by teachers who devote a substantial amount of verbal work to disciplining behaviour and regulating student movement.

Example:
A year 8 Social Studies teacher wrote two letters about an event that might have occurred in the classroom the day before. The two letters were written from different perspectives, one from that of the teacher and one from the perspective of a student. The views presented were largely divergent around the same issue.

The teacher very cleverly and creatively utilised discussion about these two letters to pursue the issue of evidence in historical research and writing and historiography. Many issues were raised, including, power and the production of knowledge and its links to veracity, along with knowledge/power relationships. There was also extensive discussion about the creation of historical narratives and analysis and the use of historical sources.

One of the striking features of this lesson was the studious and enthusiastic way in which the students engaged in this activity. Because of its perceived relevance they were eager to pursue the discussion and monitored their own and their peers' behaviour. This ensured a range of contributions from some of the less vocal students.
CULTURAL KNOWLEDGES
Are diverse cultural knowledges brought into play?

Explanation:
Cultures are valued when there is explicit valuing of their identity represented in such things as beliefs, languages, practices, ways of knowing. Valuing all cultural knowledges requires more than one culture being present, and given status, within the curriculum. Cultural groups are distinguished by social characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, race, religion, economic status, or age. Thus, their valuing means legitimating these cultures for all students, through the inclusion, recognition and transmission of this cultural knowledge.

Devaluing of cultures is apparent when curriculum knowledge is constructed and framed within a common set of cultural definitions, symbols, values, views and qualities, thus attributing some higher status to it.

Continuum of practice:

Different cultures equally valued in all curriculum knowledge, such that the concept of a dominant culture is excluded in both its content and form.

Stronger valuing in curriculum knowledge, by acknowledgment and recognition of multiple cultural claims to knowledge, and perhaps some activity based on an aspect of this, though still within the framework of a dominant culture.

No explicit recognition or valuing of other than the dominant culture in curriculum knowledge transmitted to students.

Example:
A year 11 modern history class we observed was engaging with the issue of 'the stolen generation'. This class was largely made up of white-Anglo middle class students.

The coverage of this topic is not mandated within the Queensland modern history curriculum. The Queensland Modern History Syllabus lists a number of thematic units which need to be covered during the course of two years. One of these units is 'Imperialism and Racial Conflicts and Compromises'.

The teacher of this class situated 'the stolen generation' within this unit. He commented that he saw understanding the issues around the stolen generation as an essential component in the reconciliation process. During the course of the lesson, he drew on a number of texts written by Aboriginal people, including the Aboriginal singer/song writer Archie Roach. The students discussed a number of these texts and considered why saying 'sorry' is an important and controversial issue within contemporary Australia.
INCLUSIVITY

Are deliberate attempts made to increase the participation of students of different backgrounds?

Explanation:

Inclusivity describes the degree to which non-dominant groups are represented in classroom practices by participation. Non-dominant groups are identified in relation to broad societal-level dimensions of social inclusion/exclusion.

Lack of inclusivity is apparent when the students' backgrounds are ignored and they are treated as an homogenous group. This often results in some groups being unable or unwilling to contribute.

Continuum of practice:

Example:

Most classrooms in Queensland public schools are very inclusive places because of the focus that there has been in Queensland on matters of social justice. The majority of innovative classes demonstrate inclusive practices. However, very traditional classrooms do not preclude inclusivity.
NARRATIVE
Is the style of teaching principally narrative, or is expository?

Explanation:
Narrative is identified as a sequence of events chained together. The use of narrative in lessons is identified by an emphasis in teaching and in student responses on structures and forms. These may include the use of personal stories, biographies, historical accounts, literary and cultural texts.

Expository is identified as an emphasis on written, non-fiction prose, scientific and expository expression both in lesson teaching and student responses. Examples are descriptions, reports, explanations, demonstrations, documentaries.

Example:
In one year 6 social science class a teacher was dealing with the sensitive topic of racism and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies. He provided a detailed description of his childhood experiences in a small provincial city. He gave a very clear account of this story through a child's eyes.

He then told the class about his recent visit to an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander museum in his childhood town. It was only then that he came to understand the difficulties and oppressions which Aboriginal people in his town had faced. He spoke of racism, and of that of the townsfolk, which was a product of the lack of knowledge about historical issues relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

This narrative was a very powerful device for demonstrating the impact of racism on a child's interpretation of the world. It was clearly more powerful than many an exposition on racism.
GROUP IDENTITY
Does the teaching build a sense of community and identity?

Explanation:
Group identity in contemporary social theory emphasises the need for schools to create learning communities in which difference and group identities are positively recognised and developed within a collaborative and supportive classroom community. This requires going beyond a simple politics of tolerance.

A classroom which manifests this ideal is one where differences and group identities are both positively developed and recognised while at the same time a sense of community is created. For example, in a given classroom, Aboriginal identities are given positive recognition in classroom practices and representations; Aboriginal students and teachers are given opportunities to pursue aspects of the development of Aboriginal identities and cultures; all class participants value this as a positive and legitimate aspect of their classroom community; and racism is challenged within the classroom, school, and wider communities.

Continuum of practice:

There is strong sense of community within the classroom; positive recognition of group identities; and a supportive environment for the production of difference and group identities.

Some evidence of community exists within the classroom; some recognition of difference and group identities; and no support for the development of difference and group identities.

No evidence of community within the classroom; no positive recognition of difference and group identities; and no support for the development of difference and group identities. Students are all treated as individuals.

Example:
This is one element of the productive pedagogies model which is rarely seen. Interestingly, one of the best examples of recognition of difference we have seen was provided by a student. In a year 11 English class the assessment involved students presenting a tutorial to a small group of their peers on one of the themes in 'To Kill a Mockingbird'.

In one of these tutorials, which contained 5 students (3 males and two females) and the female class teacher, one of the female students presented a tutorial on the differences between women's rights in the 1930s and the 1990s. Throughout the tutorial the student drew on the experiences of the female students and teacher to explain their attitudes to the issues she was raising.

What these students and teachers thought was treated as important because they were female. The difference between their attitudes and that of the male students was clearly recognised, even though the, male students were quite supportive of the female students' views.
CITIZENSHIP

Are attempts made to foster active citizenship?

Explanation:
Citizenship acknowledges that in a democratic society all individuals and groups: have the right to engage in the creation and re-creation of that democratic society; have the right to participate in all of the democratic practices and institutions within that society; have the responsibility to ensure that no groups or individuals are excluded from these practices and institutions; have the responsibility to ensure a broad definition of the political includes all relationships and structures throughout the social arrangement.

Citizenship is present in any classroom in any subject domain when the teacher elaborates the meaning of such citizenship and facilitates its practice both within and without the classroom.

Continuum of practice:

The practice of active citizenship is obviously prevalent and evident in practices and in relationships between students and the teacher, and students and students, and in some instances will involve active participation in contemporary issues external to the school.

Example:
In a primary school all students were involved in a referendum to determine if the canteen would sell packets of chips. The process by which the 'yes' and 'no' cases were articulated and publicised modelled closely the referendum process observed by the children in the broader community.

Posters outlining the arguments for and against were placed around the school and lunch time debates were held to ensure that all children were involved and informed about the issues. After an extended dialogue within the school, ballot papers were distributed and a secret ballot was organised.

This example is indicative of a productive pedagogy across the school rather than simply located within one classroom.
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