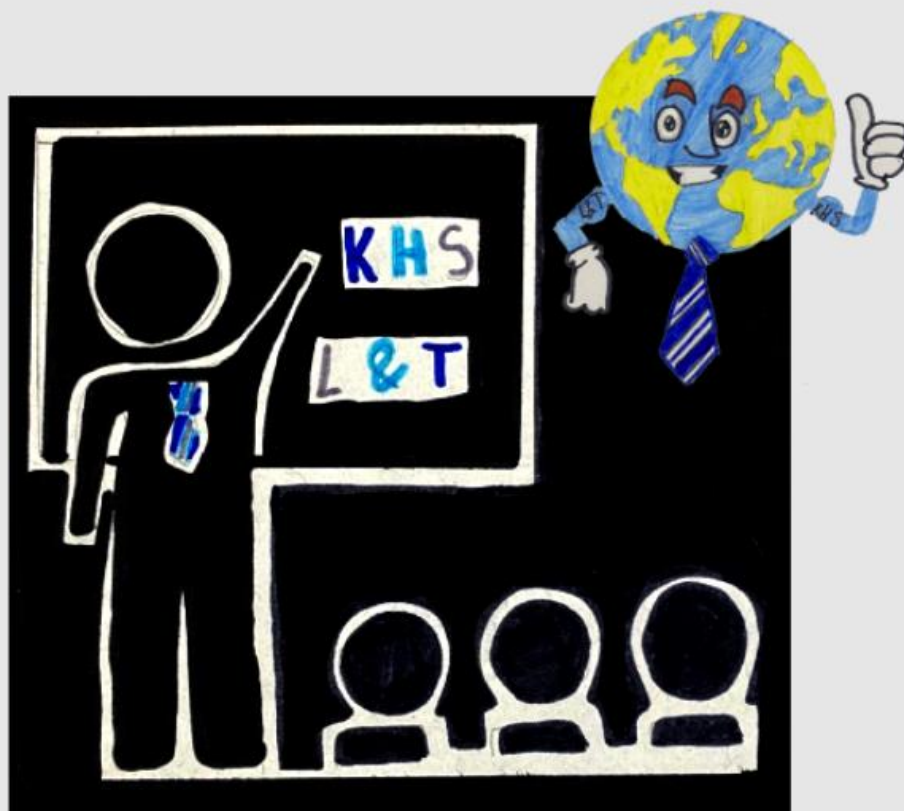


# Kirkintilloch High School Learning and Teaching Policy



Logo Design by Gemma Morrison and Taylor Dobson

**Contents**

Page 3	Introduction
Page 4	Learning and Teaching Blueprint
Page 5	Checklist
Page 6	Practical Strategies to Support Learning: Starters
Page 7	Practical Strategies to Support Learning: Learning intentions/Success criteria
Page 8 & 9	Practical Strategies to Support Learning: Questioning
Page 10 & 11	Practical Strategies to Support Learning: Feedback
Page 12	Practical Strategies to Support Learning: Plenaries
Page 12	Practical Strategies to Support Learning: Exit Passes
Page 13	Engagement
Page 14	Assessment for Learning
Page 15	Differentiation
Page 16	Learning and Teaching Toolkit
Page 17	Appendix 1

**Kirkintilloch High School**  
**Learning, Teaching and Differentiation Policy**

**Introduction**

**'No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship', Dr James Comer**

This policy has been designed and written by the Learning, Teaching and Differentiation School Improvement Group, after consultation with pupils and staff on the features of highly effective Learning and Teaching. All pupils were given the opportunity to take part in a survey about their attitudes to homework. In addition, a carefully selected group of young people from each year group was invited to take part in a pupil voice session about their learning experiences. Staff and parents also took part in their own attitudes to homework survey. We have been guided in the development of this policy by current local, national, and international policy and academic reading.

Our vision is to Dream Big, Work Hard and Show Kindness and, along with our policy of positive relationships, quality learning and teaching is at the heart of all that we do to achieve our vision.

Our responsibilities surrounding learning and teaching are set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

Article 28 states **"State Parties recognise the right of children to education" and "should take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity."**


Article 29 states **"Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment."**

The following document states how Kirkintilloch High School plans to meet the aspiration of highly effective learning and teaching, developed through career-long professional learning and drawing on current educational policy and thinking.

**'Tell me and I forget, teach me and I remember, involve me and I learn', Benjamin Franklin**


## Learning and Teaching Blueprint

**Learning & Teaching the Kirkintilloch Way**




**We show that we are ready to learn by:**

- Arriving to class on time
- Meeting and greeting pupils at the door
- Engaging and motivating learners
- Coming to class with a growth mind-set and **ambition**




**We demonstrate positive relationships by:**

- Having a clean slate
- Giving first attention to best conduct
- Having manners & showing **respect**
- Taking pride in the KHS community
- **Supporting** each other to be the best
- Being **fair** & showing **compassion**




**We recognise positive behaviours by:**

- Making appropriate use of praise
- Using meaningful reward strategies
- Having public displays of pupil work
- Having **fun** days




**We establish the purpose of our lesson by:**

- Having a purposeful starter
- Having Learning Intentions
- Having Success Criteria



**We engage and challenge by:**

- Having a variety of activities
- Assessment for Learning
- Pace and challenge
- High Order Thinking
- Quality feedback
- Regular Learner Conversations
- Having **fun** in the classroom



**We reflect on our next steps in learning by:**

- Plenary tasks
- Revisiting Learning Intentions
- Revisiting Success Criteria
- Reflection and Evaluation
- Next Steps

**Checklist: does my lesson contain the following?**

	Tick
<b>Starter</b>	
<b>Learning intention/success criteria</b>	
<b>Variety of activities</b>	
<b>Differentiated resources</b>	
<b>Assessment for learning</b>	
<b>Pace and challenge</b>	
<b>High order thinking</b>	
<b>Quality feedback</b>	
<b>Plenary</b>	
<b>Exit pass</b>	

**An excellent lesson in Kirkintilloch High School should have...**

Challenge: do students have high expectations of what they can achieve?

Explanations: are students able to acquire new knowledge and skills?

Modelling: do students know how to apply knowledge and skills?

Deliberate practice: is key knowledge and skills embedded?

Questioning: are students able to think hard with breadth, depth and accuracy?

Feedback: can students think about and further develop their knowledge and skills?

[Excerpt from Making Every Lesson Count: Six Pedagogical Principles](#)

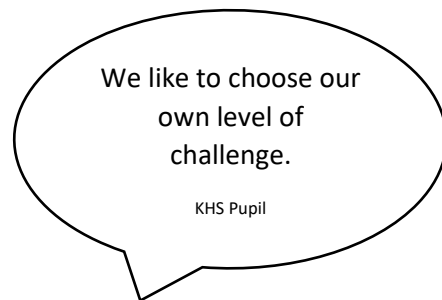
## Practical strategies to support learning

### Starters

A starter task is a staple of any lesson and can set the tone of your expectations. Effective starters are about purposeful, whole-class, interactive teaching involving all pupils. They are particularly effective when part of the routine of the lesson, pupils arrive expecting to start to work straight away. A well-balanced starter allows pupils to work independently for some of the time, but also includes teacher input. This could involve directing the learning and moving it on, differentiating the level of challenge and ensuring that the main teaching points are clear. During the pupil voice sessions, pupils stated that they liked to choose their own level of challenge.

Successful starters:

- Are planned
- Have clear purpose
- Engage all pupils
- Establish pace
- Provide challenge



Starter tasks enable staff to find out what pupils already know and understand and enable pupils to connect with prior learning, secure new learning, practise or apply skills and build knowledge and understanding.

## **Learning Intentions and Success Criteria**

Learning intentions help learners to understand the purpose of their learning. By sharing with them a lesson's learning intention, you enable them to be clear on what they will learn. Learning intentions are the basis for tracking pupil progress, providing feedback and assessing achievement.

Learning intentions are most effective when:

- They provide appropriate challenge
- They are matched to learning and teaching activities and assessment tasks.

Success criteria are the measures used to determine whether, and how well, pupils have met the learning intentions. They describe what success looks like.

### **How to write Learning Intentions**

- Devise Learning Intentions and Success Criteria at the same time, when possible, to ensure they match.
- Distinguish between Learning Intentions (the what) and the Success Criteria (the how)
- Make sure that the intention describes the learning and not the task
- Use positive, learner-friendly language

### **How to generate Success Criteria:**

- Avoid describing the task as the Success Criteria
- Think in terms of 'strategies for success' and 'evidence for success'
- Devise strategies that require pupils to 'perform their understanding'
- Make sure that the criteria focus on the understanding and not the process

### **How to share Learning Intentions and Success Criteria with pupils:**

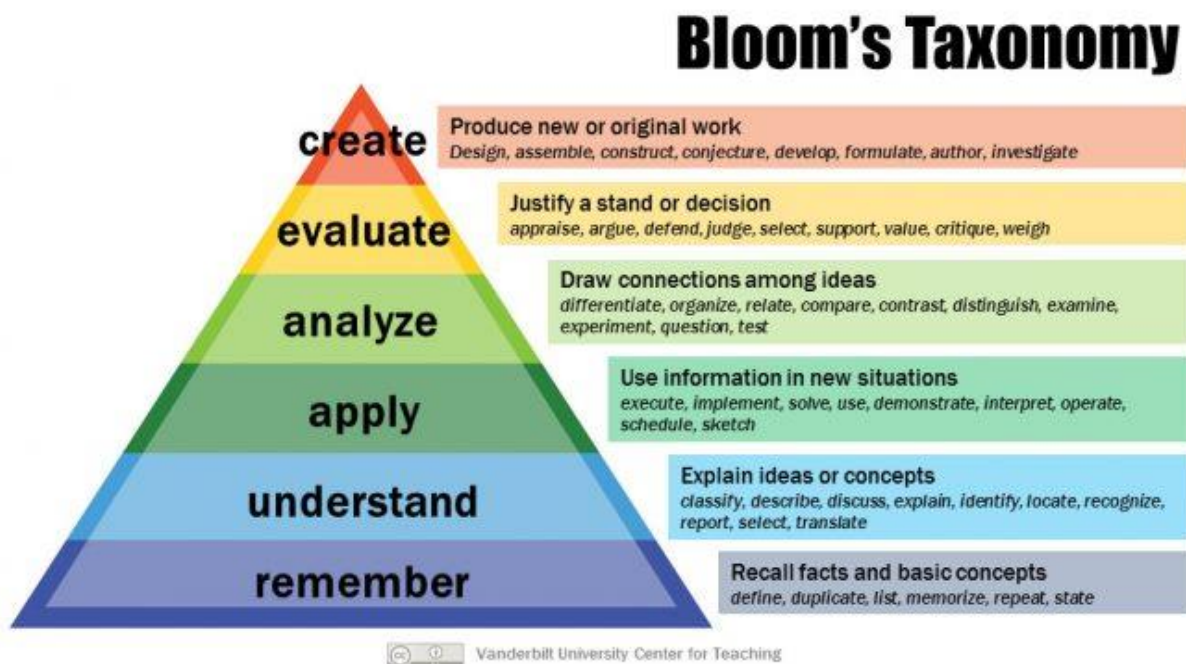
- Flag up the Learning Intention at the start of the lesson
- Display Learning Intentions during the lesson
- Involve pupils in identifying/creating the Success Criteria
- Use different Success Criteria and have different groups undertake different tasks
- Never forget that we learn by having conversations

## Questioning

**‘The most valuable thing a teacher can impart to children is not knowledge and understanding per se but a longing for knowledge and understanding, and an appreciation for intellectual values, whether they be artistic, scientific, or moral. It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge. Most teachers waste their time by asking questions that are intended to discover what a pupil does not know, whereas the true art of questioning is to discover what the pupil does know or is capable of knowing.’, Albert Einstein**

Questioning is essential to enable pupils to make progress in their learning. It allows teachers to have formative assessment in their daily classroom practice, integrating questions that encourage discussion and cooperation. Successful questioning can help teachers to find out where young people are with their learning, revealing existing knowledge, gaps in knowledge and any misunderstandings.

Effective questioning is closely tied with an understanding of Bloom’s Taxonomy. Bloom is known for developing the taxonomy of higher-level thinking questions which was eventually published in 1956. The taxonomy provides categories of thinking skills that help teachers formulate questions. The taxonomy begins with the lowest level thinking skill and moves to the highest level of thinking skill. The framework was updated in 2001 and is shown below:



According to Dylan Wiliam, the pupils who actively take part in a lesson, are engaged, and put up their hands to answer questions, are ‘actually getting smarter. Their IQs actually go up.’ Therefore, not only the questions that are asked, but the way we ask these questions is also critical. A solution to this is to make use of a random name generator or, if you prefer a more low-tech resource, lolly sticks with pupils’ names works just as well.

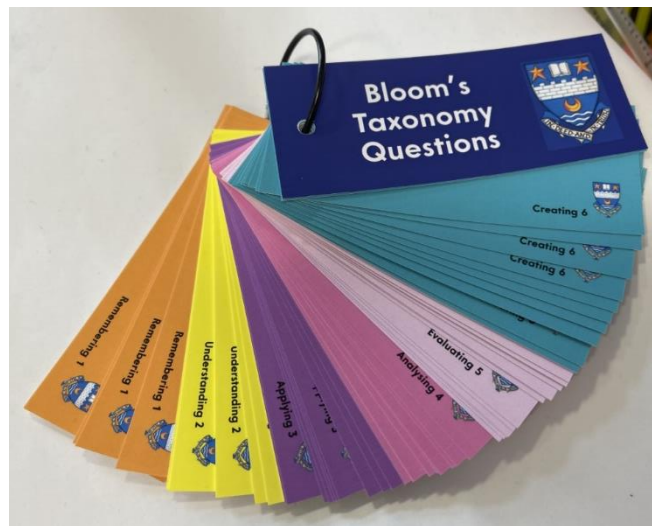
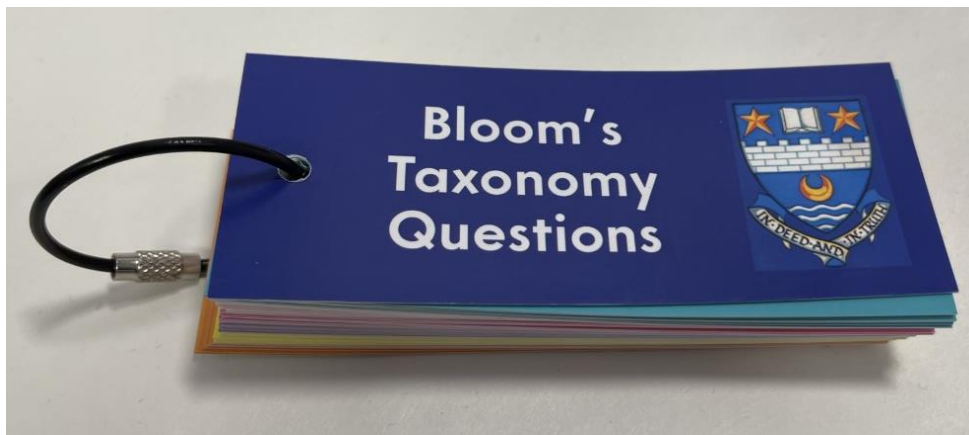


## Questioning

- Cold Call
- No Opt-Out.
- Check for understanding
- Probing Questioning
- Think Pair Share
- Say again - but say it better.
- Whole Class Response



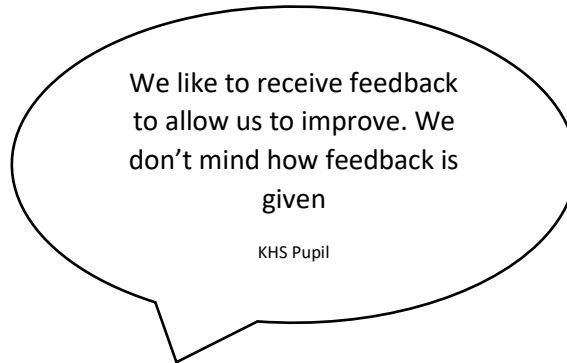
The Bloom's Questioning Fan, shown below, could be used to plan good quality, high order thinking questions.



## Feedback

**‘Feedback in the classroom can be defined as information allowing a learner to reduce the gap between what is evident currently and what could or should be the case’, Hattie and Yates (2014), Using feedback to promote learning.**

In the pupil voice sessions, pupils identified that feedback was important to them to improve. They didn’t mind how this was delivered, receiving it was the important factor.



Hattie and Yates provide the following quick take-aways related to feedback in the classroom:

- Praise is a common form of feedback, but it is often unhelpful.
- Effective feedback is a common denominator of many of the top ten influences on achievement.
- Three Feedback questions:
  - What is the goal?
  - What progress is being made?
  - What is the next step?
- When errors are welcomed, feedback is more effective.
- Feedback is different at different levels of mastery:
  - Novice level: immediate feedback,
  - Intermediate level: alternative strategies,
  - Advanced level: self-regulated learning.

Put simply, the Education Endowment Foundation, 2021, states that effective feedback needs to be specific, accurate and clear, pinpointing the precise achievement or areas needing improvement.

Our pupils stated that relationships were important, where there are secure and trusting relationships, pupils feel comfortable and encouraged to share views. Where there are sound relationships, pupils are more open to feedback from their teachers.

The following infographic is an overview of seven things to remember about feedback:

7

## EL Takeaways

# Things to Remember About Feedback

**1** Feedback is not advice, praise, or evaluation. Feedback is information about how we are doing in our efforts to reach a goal.

*Grant Wiggins, p.10*

>> <<

**2** If students know the classroom is a safe place to make mistakes, they are more likely to use feedback for learning.

*Dylan William, p.30*

**3** The feedback students give teachers can be more powerful than the feedback teachers give students.

*Cris Tovani, p.48*

**4** When we give a grade as part of our feedback, students routinely read only as far as the grade.

*Peter Johnston, p.64*

**5** Effective feedback occurs during the learning, while there is still time to act on it.

*Jan Chappuis, p.36*

**6** Most of the feedback that students receive about their classroom work is from other students – and much of that feedback is wrong.

*John Hattie, p.18*

**7** Students need to know their learning target – the specific skill they’re supposed to learn – or else “feedback” is just someone telling them what to do.

*Susan Brookhart, p.24*

Source: The collective wisdom of authors published in the September 2012 issue of Educational Leadership: “Feedback for Learning.” (Volume 70, Issue 1)

## **Plenaries**

Plenaries provide an opportunity to draw together, summarise and direct learning. So that pupils focus on what is important, what they have learned the progress they have made and their next steps.

Plenaries should:

- Occur at a strategic moment in the lesson but should always feature at the end.
- Draw together the learning of the class and the individual
- Summarise the learning so far
- Consolidate and extend learning
- Direct pupils to the next phase of learning
- Highlight not only what has been learned but also how it has been learned
- Help determine next steps in learning

They should be planned as part of the lesson and should link to the LI& SC. They can be used for a range of different purposes, enabling the teacher to review the lesson's objectives, assess the learning and progress to help to plan next steps, recognise achievements of pupils.

Plenaries enable pupils to remember what they have learned, deepen, and extend their learning, gain a sense of achievement, understand the progress that they have made, communicate their learning.

## **Exit Passes**

Exit passes are a great way to document pupil learning, check for understanding or emphasise the main point(s) of a lesson. They are a formative assessment tool that give teachers a way to assess how well pupils understand the material they are learning in class. It is also an informal and low stakes way to gauge pupil progress, a snapshot of learning. A well-designed exit pass can show if a student has a surface level or deep understanding of the material and can highlight gaps in knowledge and misconceptions to the teacher, enabling them to focus a future lesson on filling the gaps and righting the misconceptions.

## Engagement

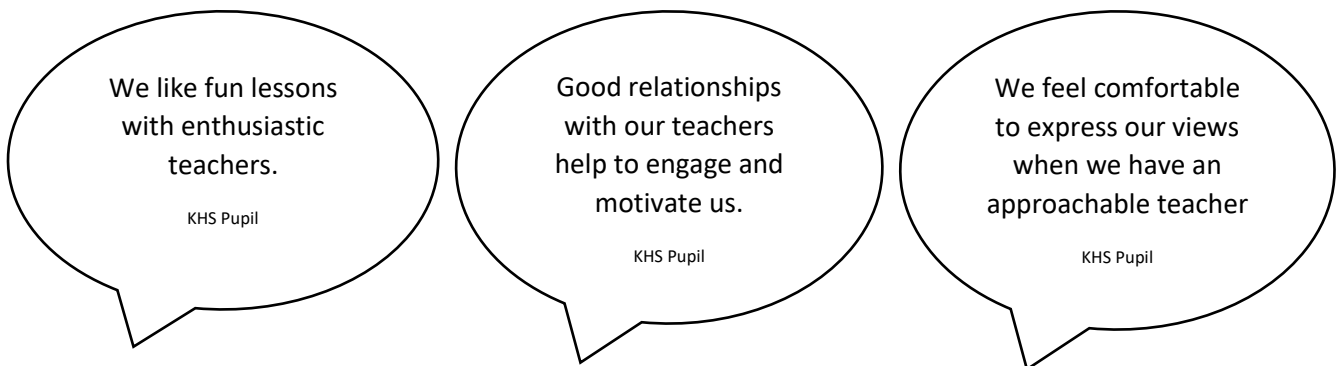
Engagement is how we measure the depth at which a pupil is interacting with a lesson. Engagement is crucial to learning. The more engaged a pupil, the more they study, absorb and learn.

The Leuven Scale of Active Engagement is a 5-point scale that enables professionals to measure a young person's emotional wellbeing and involvement. Emotional wellbeing and engagement in class are linked, the happier a young person is in your class, the more likely they will learn. Happy, emotionally healthy, confident young people tend to learn more and develop more quickly.

Appendix 1 shows The Leuven Scale of Active Engagement.

Through the pupil voice activity, our pupils were able to identify how important sound and trusting relationships are to their ability to engage in class. They stated the following factors that are key to their engagement and motivation:

- A good lesson is one where there are good relationships with their teachers
- They enjoy fun lessons where their teacher is enthusiastic
- Where there are secure and trusting relationships, they feel comfortable to share their views
- It engages them when their teachers are pleased to see them
- They are motivated when they can set their own goals and targets
- Praise engages and motivates them as does a teacher who they respect and who pushes them to do their best



Engagement is more likely to happen if:

- The task doesn't outlast the pupil concentration span
- The task is immediately accessible to all
- The task immediately captures interest
- Expectations are clear
- Teacher intervenes to help maintain engagement

## Assessment for Learning

Assessment is fundamental to improve learning. There are two major types of assessment that should be used within a classroom setting: formative and summative.

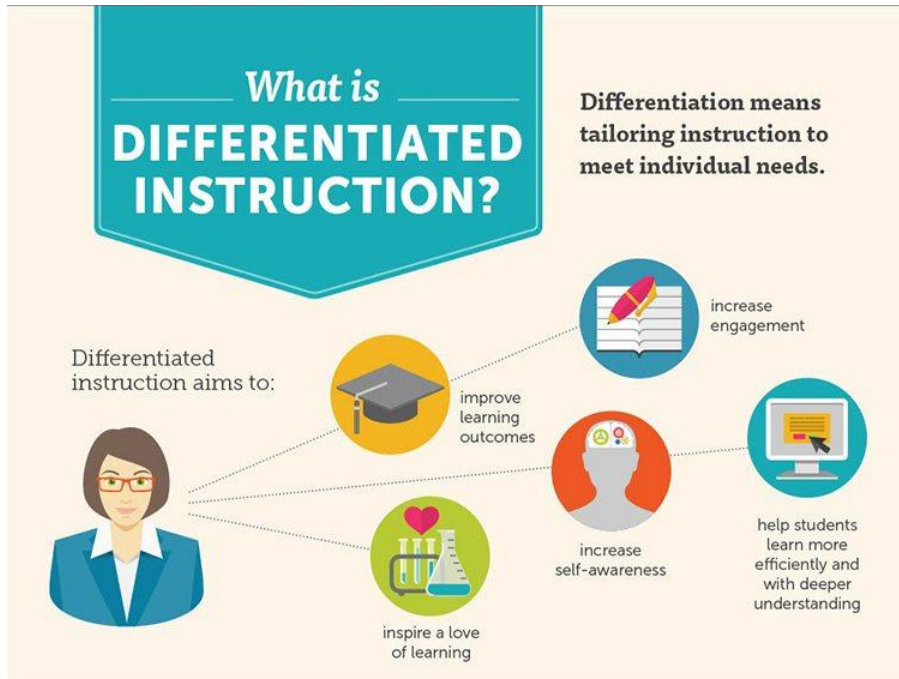
When we **formatively** assess pupils, we are trying to get information that we can use to help pupils right away. We are looking for general trends that can inform your decisions.

Assessment is for Learning Strategies (AiFL) are used to show pupils what they have achieved in their learning, what they need to do to improve and how they can go about achieving this. Pupils are assessed by their teacher and are taught how to assess themselves and their peers. Some AiFL strategies used include thumbs up, no hands up, lollipop sticks, 2 stars and a wish, traffic lights and learning partners.

**Summative** assessments tend to be more comprehensive and formal with more questions to more reliably know what pupils do or don't know. These might be end of chapter/unit assessments where you are not planning on returning to the topic immediately, but still need to measure what pupils have learned. In the Senior Phase, the marking of summative assessments should be done in conjunction with our Moderation Policy.

## Differentiation

Differentiation means tailoring instructions to meet individual needs. Differentiated instruction allows for multiple pathways to ensure that pupils have equal and appropriate access to the curriculum, with a variety of classroom instruction techniques and assessments.

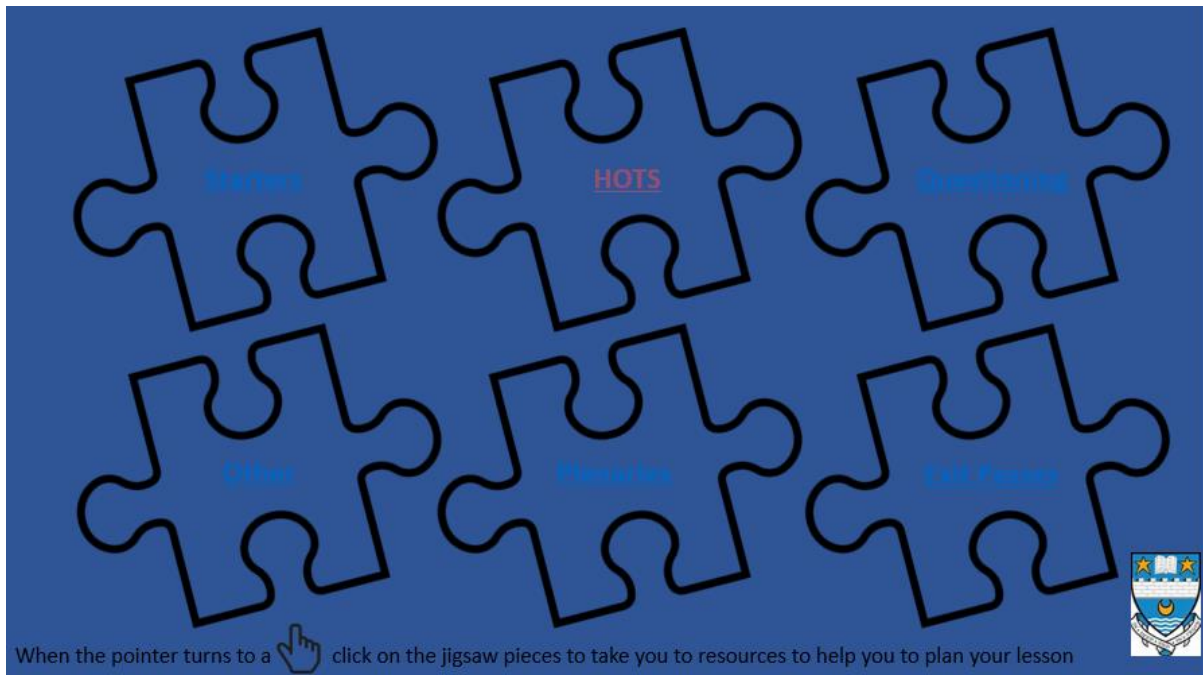


Differentiation:

- Should be proactive: Teachers should anticipate the learning needs of students and tailor lessons to fit. The learning opportunities should be robust enough to challenge every student in the class, but not so challenging that students are feeling overwhelmed and frustrated and shut down.
- Often includes group work, but not always: An effective differentiation strategy is to group students heterogeneously, not homogeneously. Students can bring both strengths and weaknesses to the activity and work together for the benefit of all students. There are times when whole-group teaching is effective and can be followed up with small group and individual activities designed to meet students' needs.
- Is more about formative assessment than summative: In a differentiated classroom, you don't wait until the end of a unit to see who mastered the information. Assessments should happen all throughout the learning process. This style of teaching allows the teacher to design and adapt lessons that make the most of every student's potential and attend to weaknesses as they arise.
- Should have multiple activities and assessments: One size does not fit all and there should be a range of activities and assessments that allow students of all levels to demonstrate mastery of information. Clear objectives help to create meaningful assessments that are tailored to individual students' needs.
- Should be pupil centred: effective learning experiences are based upon student interests and filled with engaging and relevant activities. Teachers who differentiate, build upon the diversity of student's learning foundation. They modify and adapt activities/assessments to push students for maximum growth while including opportunities for student voice

## Learning and Teaching Toolkit

The Learning, Teaching and Differentiation School Improvement Group have developed a digital toolkit to support colleagues in Kirkintilloch High School with the planning of lessons. This was a collaborative process where teachers were asked to share the resources that they use successfully to engage and motivate our young people. The resources were then collated to create the toolkit, which can be accessed via the Staff Resources section of the KHS network. This is an evolving resource that can be added to throughout the academic year.





## Appendix 1

### Leuven Scale of Active Engagement

Level	Engagement	Examples
1	Extremely low: the child shows hardly any activity	No concentration: staring, daydreaming; An absent, passive attitude; No goal-oriented activity, aimless actions, not producing anything; No signs of exploration and interest; Not taking anything in, no mental activity
2	Low: the child shows some degree of activity which is often interrupted	Limited concentration; looks away during the activity, fiddles, dreams; Is easily distracted; Action only leads to limited results.
3	Moderate: the child is busy the whole time, but without real concentration	Routine actions, attention is superficial; Is not absorbed in the activity, activities are short lived; Limited motivation, no real dedication, does not feel challenged; The child does not gain deep-level experiences; Does not use his/her capabilities to full extent; The activity does not address the child's imagination.
4	High: there are clear signs of involvement, but these are not always present to their full extent	The child is engaged in the activity without interruption; Most of the time there is real concentration, but during some brief moments the attention is more superficial; The child feels challenged, there is a certain degree of motivation; The child's capabilities and its imagination to a certain extent are addressed in the activity
5	Extremely High: during the observation of learning the child is continually engaged in the activity and completely absorbed in it.	Is absolutely focussed, concentrated without interruption; Is highly motivated, feels strongly appealed by the activity; Even strong stimuli cannot distract him/her; Is alert, has attention for details, shows precision; Its mental activity and experience are intense; The child constantly addresses all its capabilities: imagination and mental capacity are in top gear; Obviously enjoys being engrossed in the activity.

Version 1      October 2022