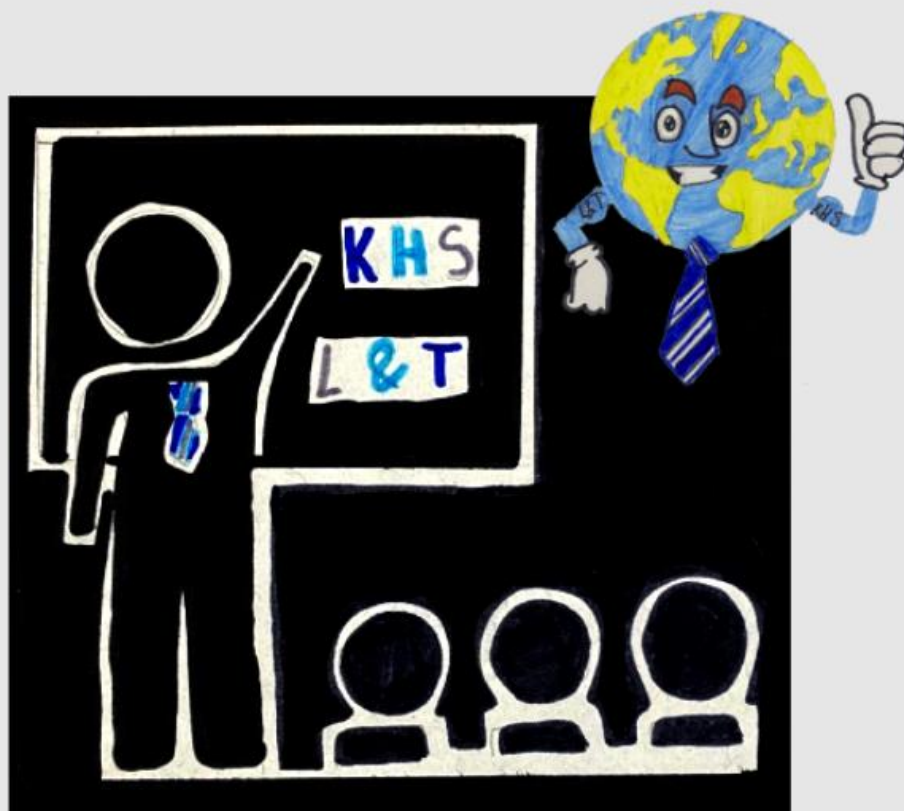


Kirkintilloch High School

Learning and Teaching Policy



Logo Design by Gemma Morrison and Taylor Dobson

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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:

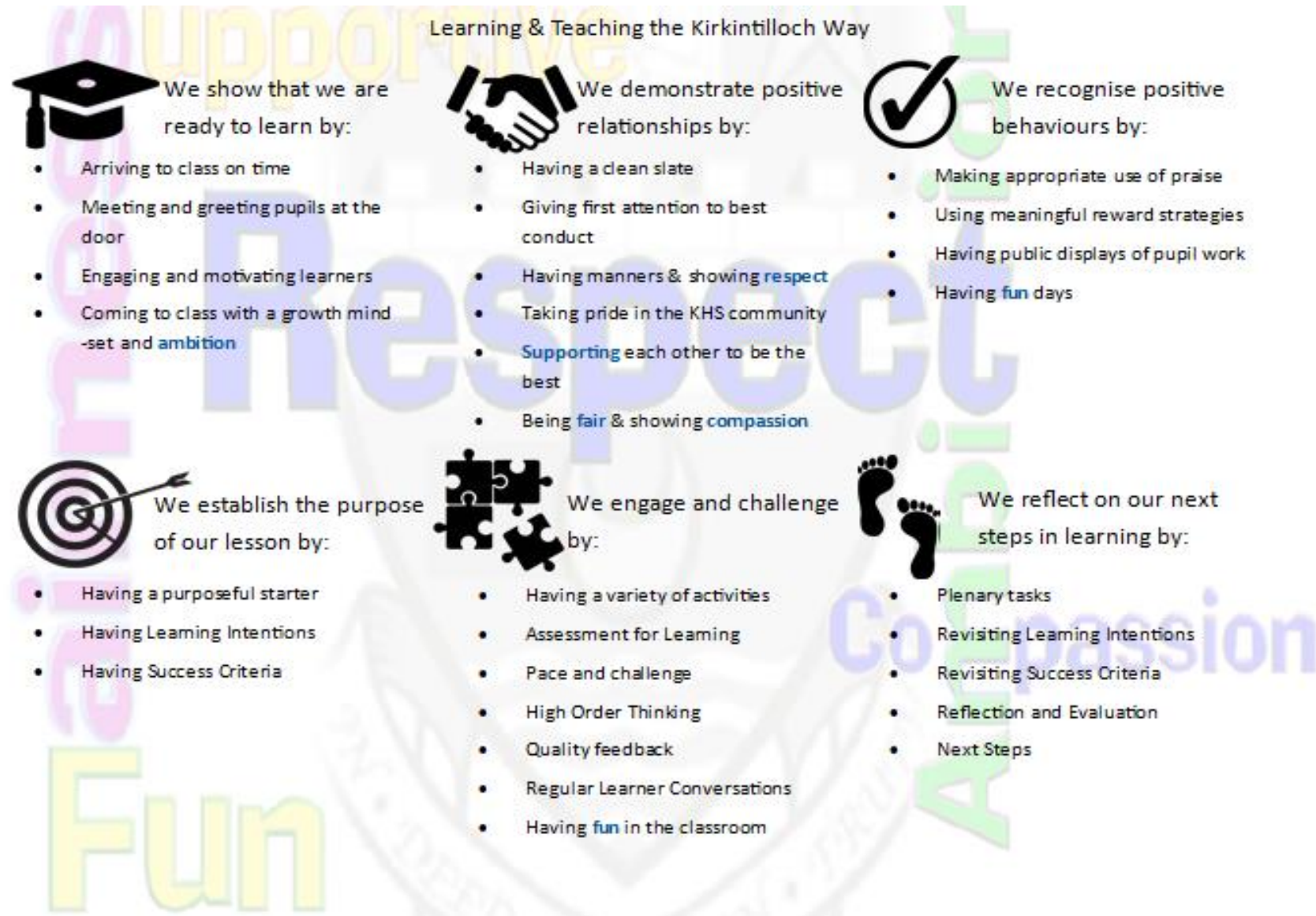
Article 28 states **“State Parties recognise the right of children to education” and “should take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child’s human dignity.”**

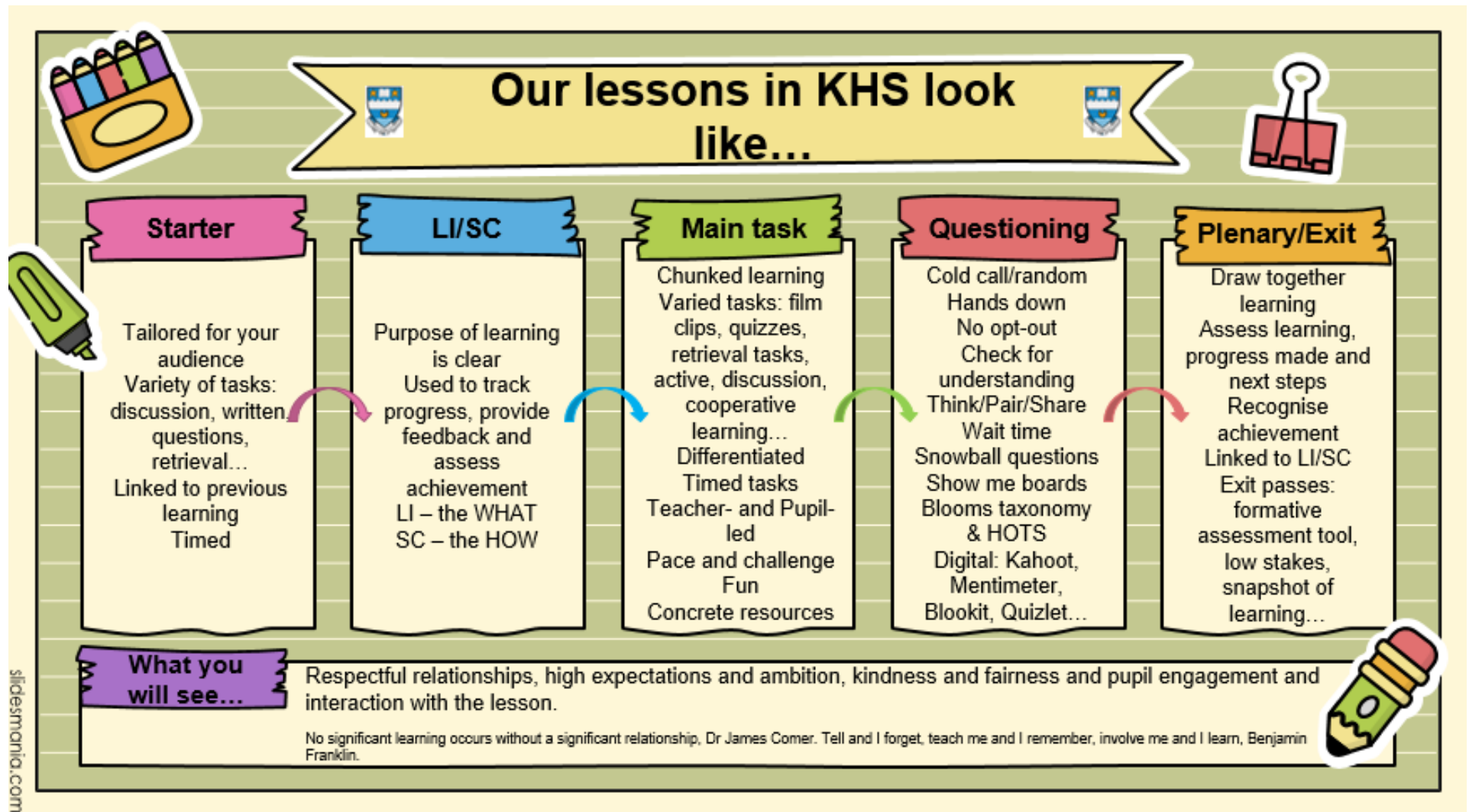
Article 29 states **“Education must develop every child’s personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child’s respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.”**

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





Checklist: does my lesson contain the following?

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

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:

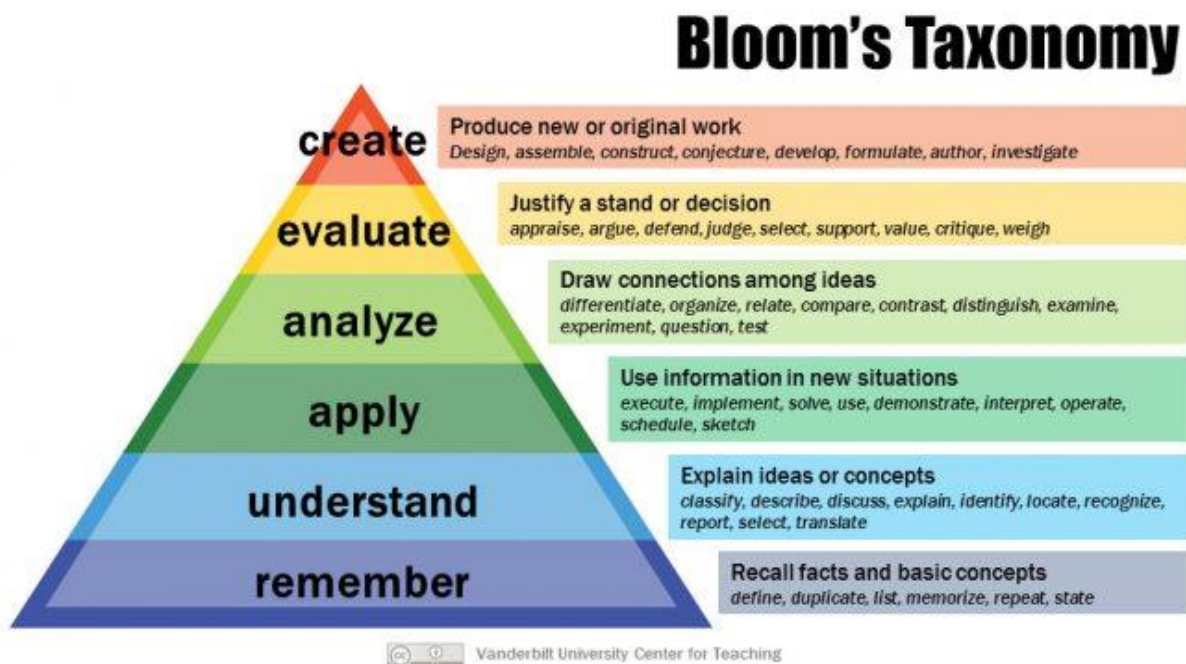
- Flag up the Learning Intention at the start of the lesson
- Display Learning Intentions during the lesson
- Involve pupils in identifying/creating the Success Criteria
- Use different Success Criteria and have different groups undertake different tasks
- Never forget that we learn by having conversations

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.

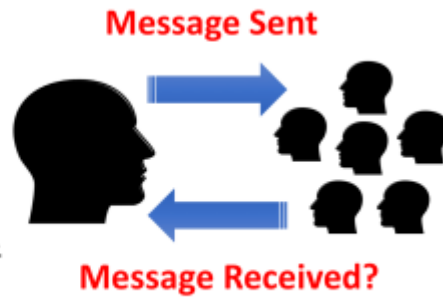
Effective questioning is closely tied with an understanding of Bloom’s Taxonomy. Bloom is known for developing the taxonomy of higher-level thinking questions which was eventually published in 1956. The taxonomy provides categories of thinking skills that help teachers formulate questions. The taxonomy 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:



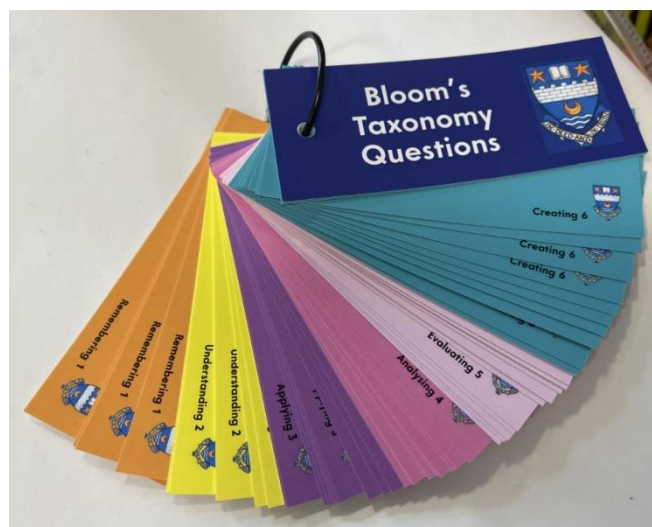
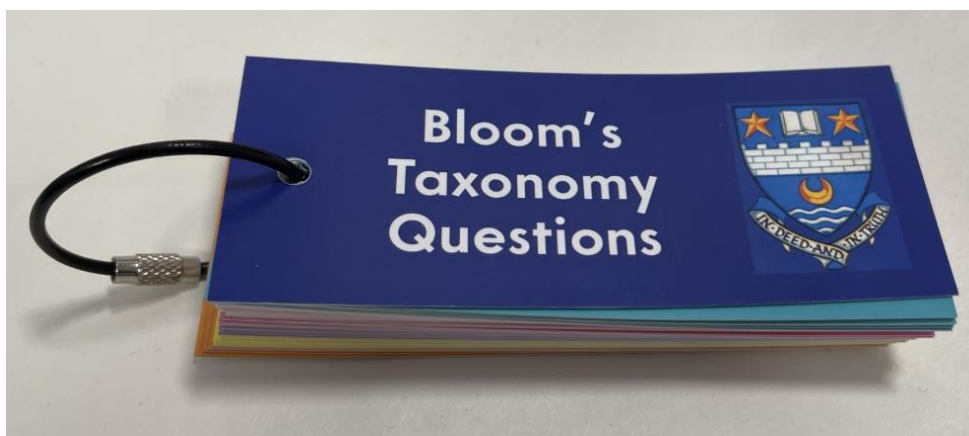
According to Dylan Wiliam, the pupils who actively take part in a lesson, are engaged, and put up their hands to answer questions, are ‘actually getting smarter. Their IQs actually go up.’ Therefore, not only the questions that are asked, but the way we ask these questions is also critical. A solution 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



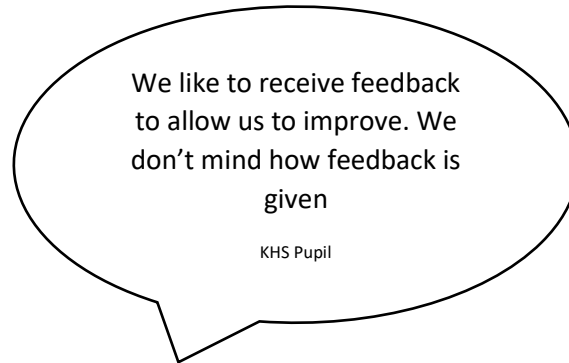
The Bloom's Questioning Fan, shown below, could be used to plan good quality, high order thinking questions.



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.



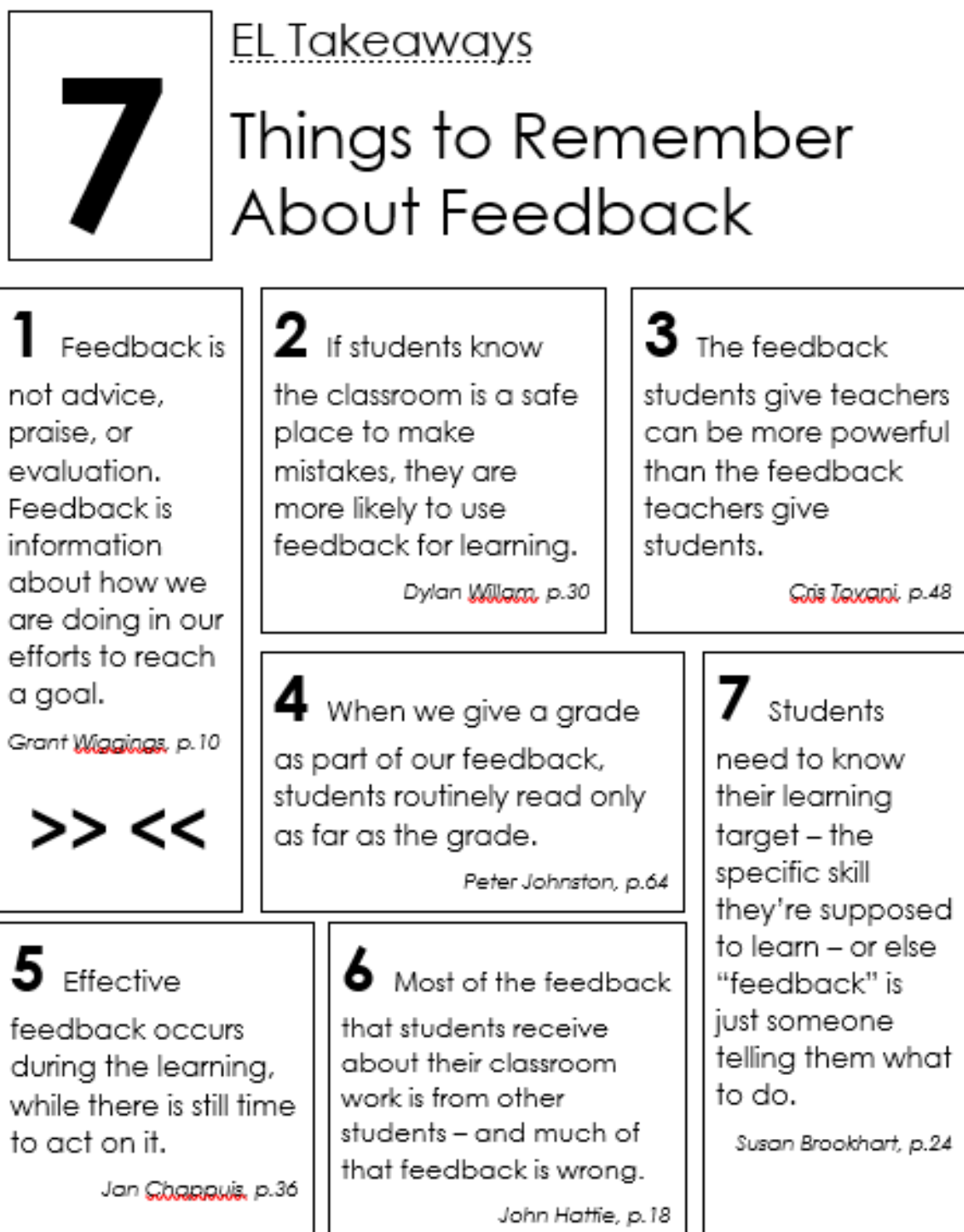
Hattie and Yates provide the following quick take-aways related to feedback in the classroom:

- 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:



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

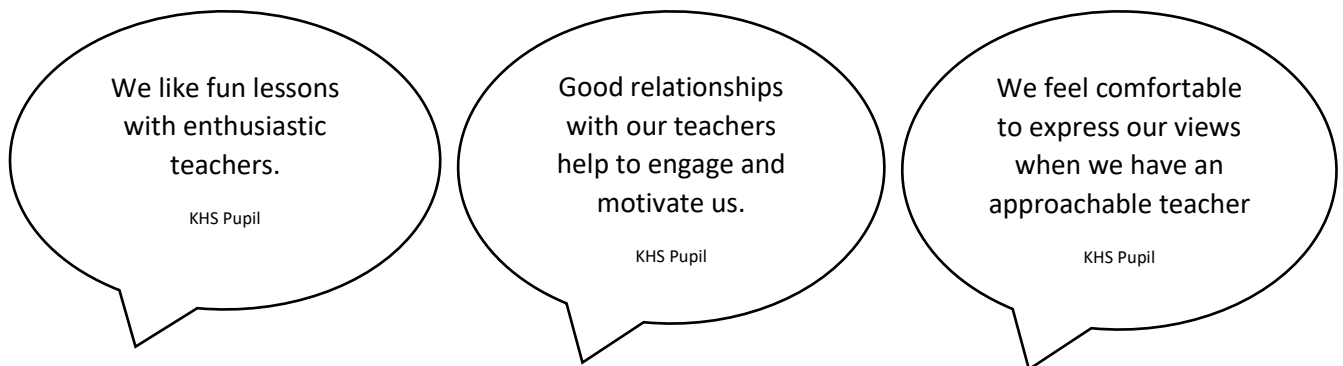
Engagement is how we measure the depth at which a pupil is interacting with a lesson. Engagement is crucial to learning. The more engaged a pupil, the more they study, absorb and learn.

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.

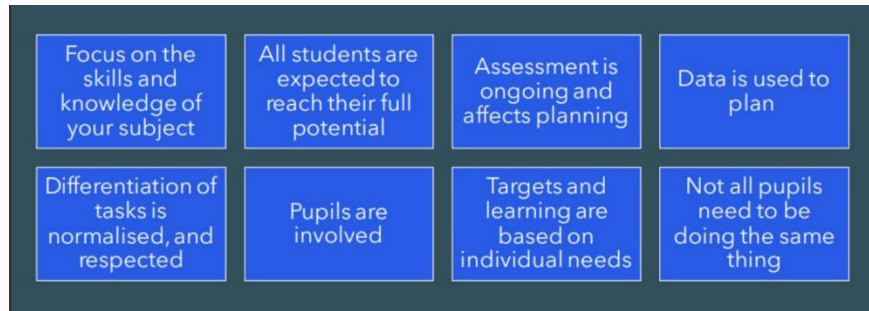
When we **formatively** assess pupils, we are trying to get information that we can use to help pupils right away. We are looking for general trends that can inform your decisions.

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 learning and teaching to meet individual needs. This can be considered in planning, the wording of learning intentions and success criteria, resources, instruction, questioning, class activities and in assessment. Differentiation allows for multiple pathways to ensure that pupils have equal and appropriate access to the curriculum.



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

Peer and Lesson Observations

An integral part of Learning, teaching and assessment is the ability to share good practice, self-evaluate and ensure the highest standard for all young people. This is a supportive process which allows an opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively and observe colleagues from completely different subjects.

Some of these benefits include:

- Discussion of your teaching
- Sharing of good practice
- Sharing reflections
- Seeing students in a different learning environment
- Learning about a range of different approaches to learning and teaching

Before the trio observation

A trio planning meeting will take place, this will allow all people involved to speak about a focus for the Trio, for example differentiation. The trio will then identify a challenge question from 2.3 HIGOS which links with their focus.

During the observation

The observers in the trio will each visit the classroom, 25 minutes each (triangulating). The teacher being observed may wish to provide a lesson plan, although this is not a requirement. The observers will take notes on the lesson, thinking of options moving forward to feedback to the teacher being observed. The observers will meet to discuss and write up their feedback, as soon as possible.

After the observation

Time is given to the trio to feedback each other's lesson observations. This is supportive conversation which allows time to share good practice as well as feedback on next steps.

Other lesson observations

In addition to the trio observations, there will be time given across the year for SMT and PTC observed lessons. These work in the same way as above, with two members of SMT working together during a term and two members of our PTC colleagues working together during another term. Each member of the team will visit a classroom for 25 minutes each, swapping mid-way, with feedback being provided by the teachers own PTC or link SMT.

Appendix 2 shows the framework and paperwork that accompanies the peer and lesson observations.

Whole School Homework Strategy

Work has been carried out to create a whole school homework strategy that supports departments to create their own departmental strategy. This ensures that homework is being applied consistently across departments. The one-page whole school strategy can be seen in Appendix 3 and more detailed information about homework in Kirkintilloch High School can be seen in the Kirkintilloch High School Homework Strategy.

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.

Appendix 2

Peer Observations Kirkintilloch High School

Observation 1: Link DHT

- Using planning template
- Observations take place from Sept - Dec
- GTCS standards agreed via focus
- Time protected for feedback to be given and next steps agreed for cycle to repeat
- On a cycle – 2 colleagues from each link dept each session



Observation 2: Principal Teacher

- Using planning template
- Observations take place from January - March
- GTCS standards agreed via focus
- Time protected for feedback to be given and next steps agreed



Observation 3: Peer

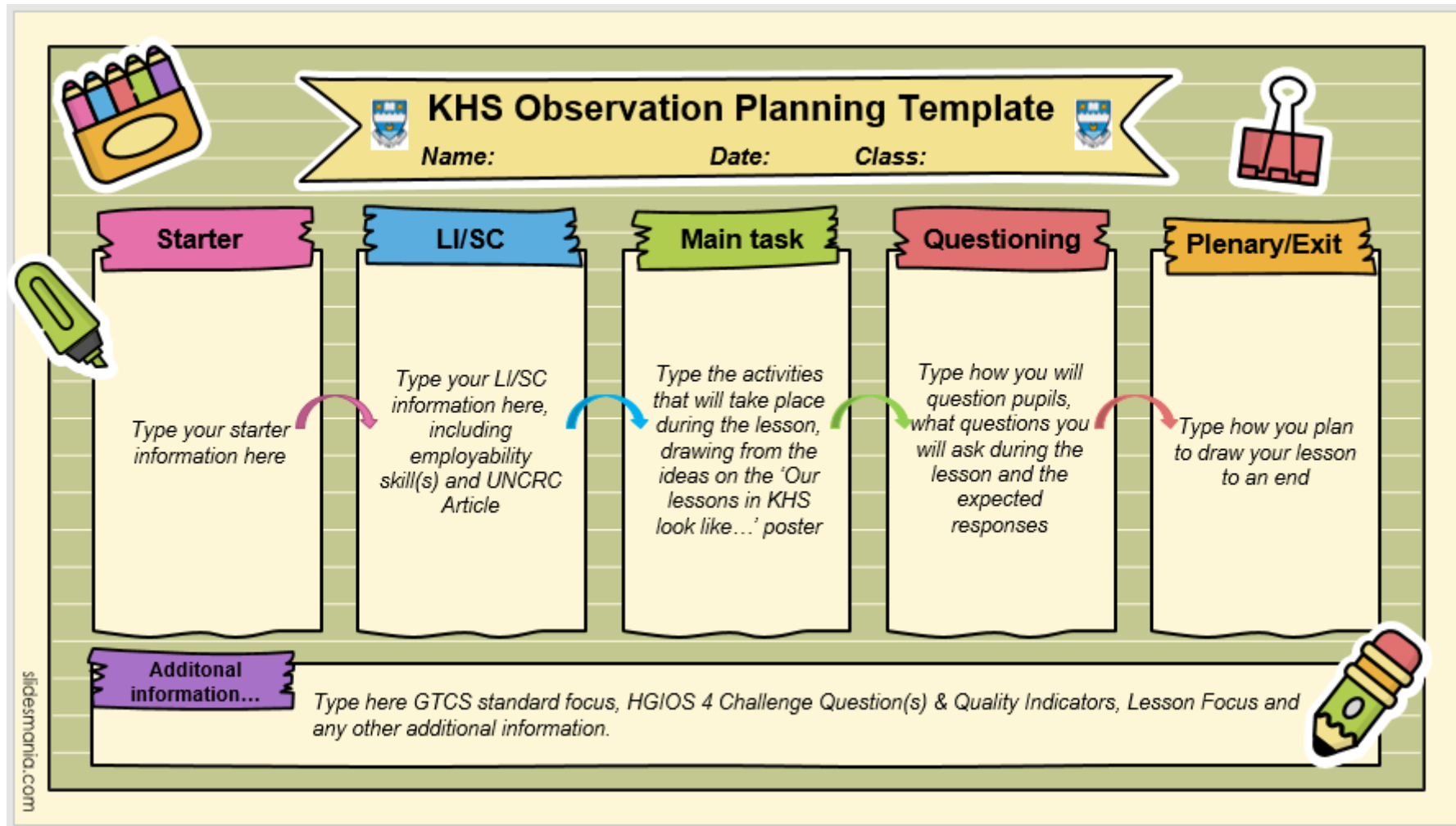
- Using planning template in TRIO
- Observations take place from April - June
- Time protected for supportive conversation to take place before observations and after (a period each)
- Helps identify a focus for next observation

Rationale:

"Self-evaluation should be a useful process that is rigorous and enables you to be critically reflective about yourself as a professional and your practice." GTCS

- Opportunities for IDL
- A focus given which allows for growth
- Learning from peers
- Building confidence in the ability to self-evaluate

KHS Peer Observation – Planning (to be completed prior to observed lesson)



The template is a planning sheet for a lesson observation. It features a header banner with the KHS logo and the title 'KHS Observation Planning Template'. Below the banner are fields for 'Name:', 'Date:', and 'Class:'. The main body consists of five vertical columns, each with a colored header and a large text area for notes. The columns are: 'Starter' (pink header), 'LI/SC' (blue header), 'Main task' (green header), 'Questioning' (red header), and 'Plenary/Exit' (orange header). Arrows connect the bottom of each column to the top of the next. A sixth column at the bottom is labeled 'Additional information...' (purple header) and contains a large text area. The template is decorated with various icons: a set of colored pencils, a paper clip, a green pencil, and a large pencil at the bottom right. The watermark 'slidesmania.com' is visible on the left side.

KHS Observation Planning Template

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Starter
Type your starter information here

LI/SC
Type your LI/SC information here, including employability skill(s) and UNCRC Article

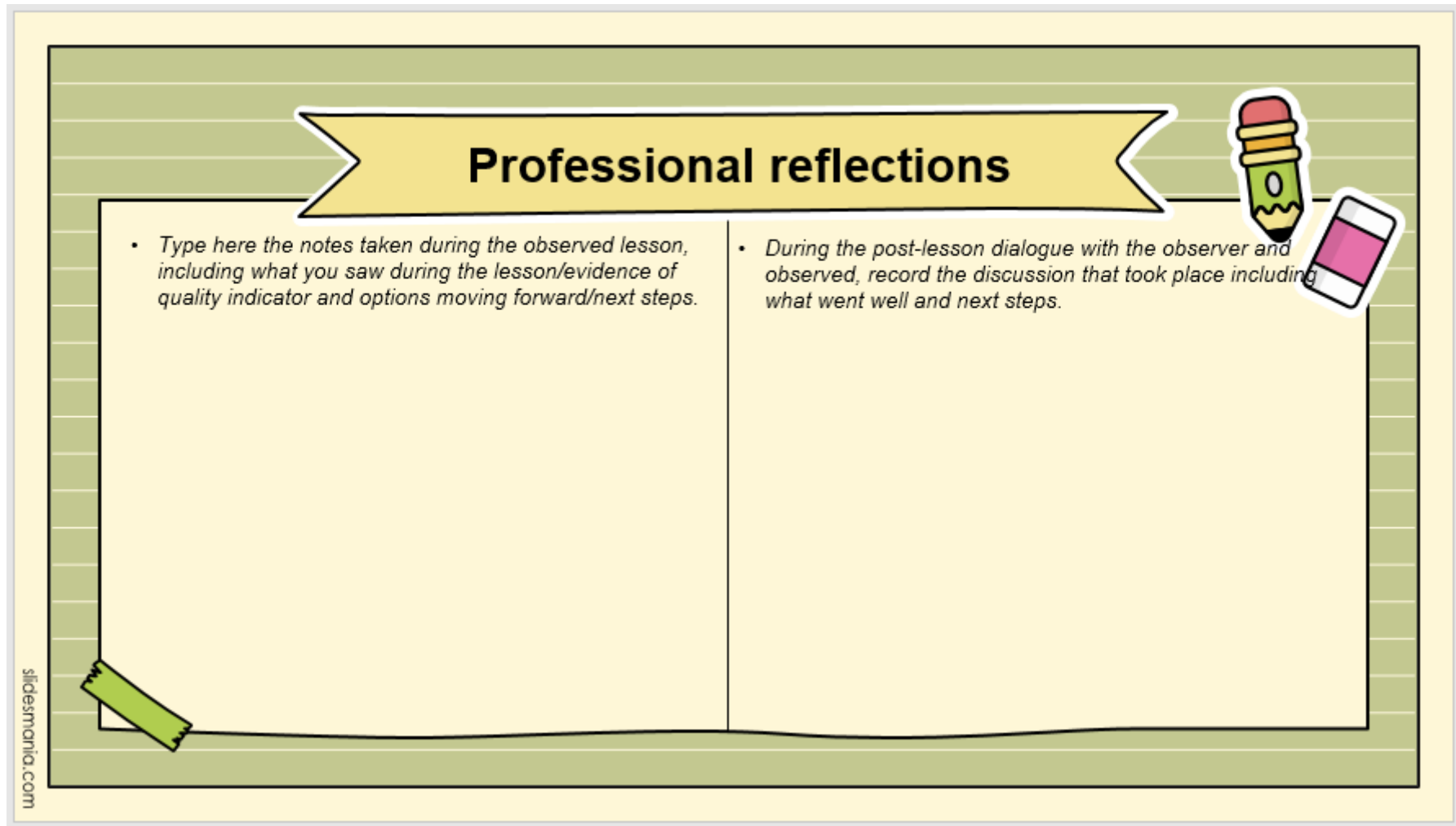
Main task
Type the activities that will take place during the lesson, drawing from the ideas on the 'Our lessons in KHS look like...' poster

Questioning
Type how you will question pupils, what questions you will ask during the lesson and the expected responses

Plenary/Exit
Type how you plan to draw your lesson to an end

Additional information...
Type here GTCS standard focus, HGIOS 4 Challenge Question(s) & Quality Indicators, Lesson Focus and any other additional information.

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KHS Peer Observation – Evaluation (to be completed post-observed lesson)

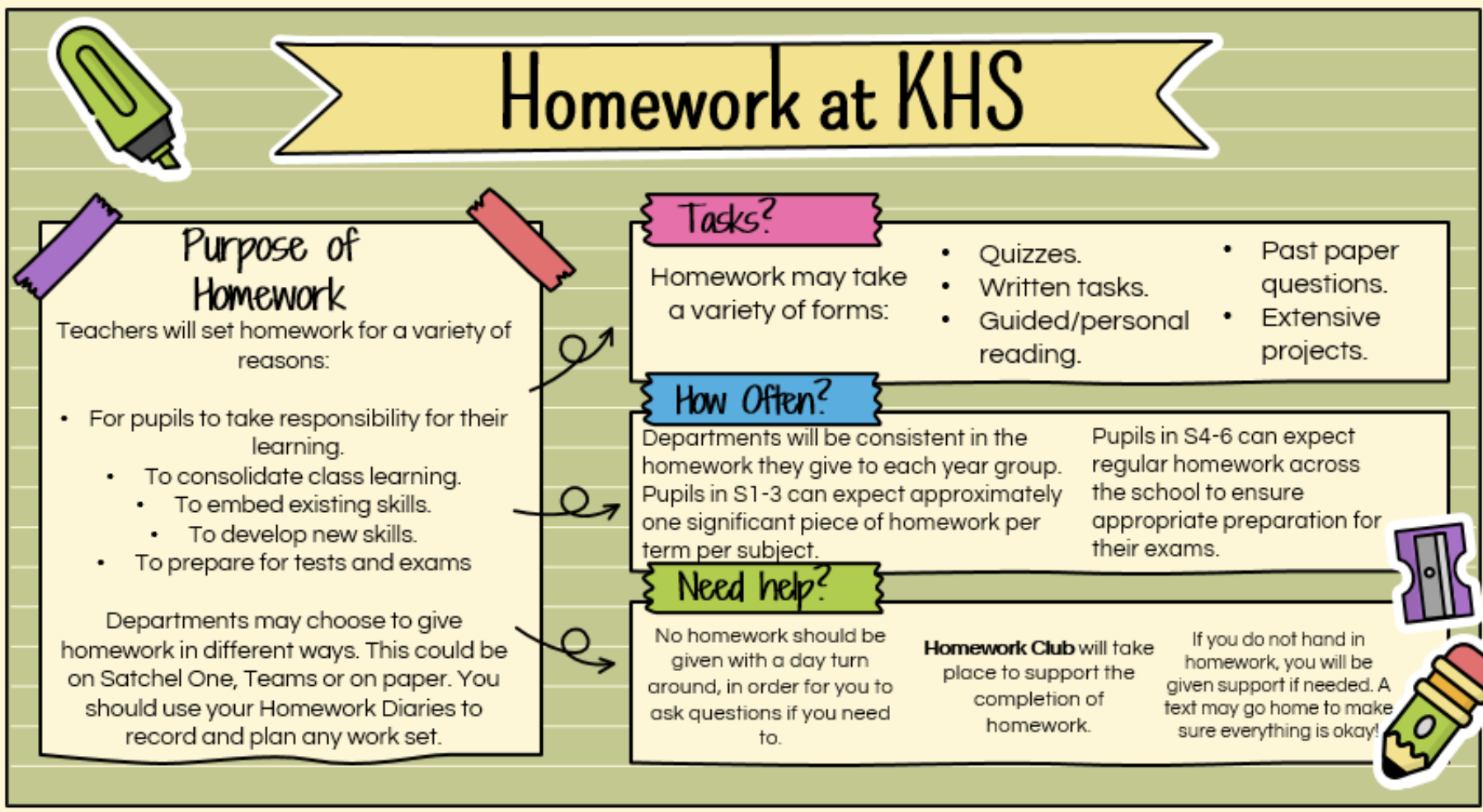
The form is titled "Professional reflections" in a yellow banner. It is divided into two columns for notes. The left column is for notes taken during the observed lesson, and the right column is for notes from the post-lesson dialogue. The form is decorated with a green pencil and a pink eraser in the top right corner, and a green pencil in the bottom left corner. The background is a light green with horizontal lines.

Professional reflections

- Type here the notes taken during the observed lesson, including what you saw during the lesson/evidence of quality indicator and options moving forward/next steps.
- During the post-lesson dialogue with the observer and observed, record the discussion that took place including what went well and next steps.

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Appendix 3 – Whole School Homework Strategy



The infographic is titled "Homework at KHS" in a yellow banner at the top. It is decorated with a green highlighter at the top left, a purple pencil sharpener at the bottom right, and a green pencil at the bottom right. The content is organized into four main sections: Purpose of Homework, Tasks?, How Often?, and Need help?.

Homework at KHS

Purpose of Homework

Teachers will set homework for a variety of reasons:

- For pupils to take responsibility for their learning.
 - To consolidate class learning.
 - To embed existing skills.
 - To develop new skills.
- To prepare for tests and exams

Departments may choose to give homework in different ways. This could be on Satchel One, Teams or on paper. You should use your Homework Diaries to record and plan any work set.

Tasks?

Homework may take a variety of forms:

- Quizzes.
- Written tasks.
- Guided/personal reading.
- Past paper questions.
- Extensive projects.

How Often?

Departments will be consistent in the homework they give to each year group. Pupils in S1-3 can expect approximately one significant piece of homework per term per subject.

Pupils in S4-6 can expect regular homework across the school to ensure appropriate preparation for their exams.

Need help?

No homework should be given with a day turn around, in order for you to ask questions if you need to.

Homework Club will take place to support the completion of homework.

If you do not hand in homework, you will be given support if needed. A text may go home to make sure everything is okay!

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Version 1	October 2022
Version 2	January 2024
Version 3	May 2024
Version 4	November 2024