

Risk Taking in the classroom

LTL Session 2

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What does the word 'risk' suggest to
you?

'Risk'

1. Endanger, imperil, jeopardise, **lose something of value**
2. Take a chance, gamble, **gain something of value**

Risk in different contexts



National standards for school leadership

- ‘Leaders acknowledge the high status, value and importance of teaching and learning...’
- ‘...and in creating a learning culture which enables pupils to become effective, enthusiastic and independent, life-long learners.’

Key leadership competency (1)

Modelling Excellence in Leadership of Teaching and Learning

- Modelling is key in setting and maintaining a culture committed to high quality teaching
- consistently demonstrates and communicates their vision, passion and commitment to high quality teaching and its impact on learning

Key leadership competency (2)

Self awareness

- aware of their personal strengths and areas for future growth and understands how own behaviour impacts on others
- aware of your own emotional triggers and identifying ways to manage these more effectively

Aims for this session

1. Consider strategies that might encourage pupils to take risks in the classroom
2. Reflect on your own willingness to take risk in the classroom and evaluate the impact of these risks
3. Consider other pedagogical approaches that could contribute to a risk taking learning culture
4. Apply these approaches to your LTL action research project

1. encouraging pupils to take risks in the
classroom

Activity A

What approaches have you used to encourage your pupils to take risks in the classroom?

- How successful were these strategies?
- How do you know?

Your feedback

An example



- **Post-it prompts**
encouraging pupils to
anonymously ask
questions about
things they find
difficult

Strategies to encourage pupils to take risks

- Model risk taking
- Remove choice when differentiating work
- Ask pupils' opinions on how tasks might be completed or how long they should take
- Give extra thinking or planning time
- Focus on the process not the product
- Use wrong answers or near misses as learning opportunities. Thank pupils for providing these opportunities
- Avoid discussing target grades/levels

Key question 1

- What role does BfL play in encouraging risk taking?
- What other factors might affect pupils' willingness to take risks in your classroom?

2. your willingness to take risks

Activity B

- Complete the ‘Things that are stopping me from taking risks in the classroom’ section on your personal outline
- Then start adding to the column ‘Things that could possibly help overcome these barriers’
- Now swap your sheets. Make further additions to the second column.

An example

- Round robin group activities – worried about negative behaviour
- Use clearer structures and instructions
- Trial with smaller well-behaved group

Key question 2

- When are you most comfortable taking risks in the classroom?
- Which particular element of risk taking are you best at?

3. other pedagogical approaches

Risk taking strategies for teachers

- Changing or stopping an activity that isn't working
- Admitting mistakes and using as points of discussion
- Asking for feedback
- Using personal anecdotes
- Extrovert (or fake extrovert) behaviour
- Showing passion/enthusiasm/reading with gusto
- Setting yourself difficult challenges in the classroom
- Getting pupils to test your knowledge/memory
- Allowing pupils to ask (relevant) questions that weren't part of your plan
- Giving greater choice (as long as challenge isn't reduced)

Activity C

- Discuss my list. What are the possible dangers and what are the potential rewards?

4. Applying to your action research project

Key question 3

- How might risk taking be integrated into your action research project?

Any other questions?