

2.4

Mentor links: Students can offer to share their strengths by acting as mentors for other learners. They can give specific tuition, supportive ideas/feedback or targeted advice on work skills and self-motivation.

Comfort zones: Explore the idea that people experience different degrees of comfort at different times when they are learning. In the classroom, identify three areas, each representing a degree, or zone, of comfort: 'Comfort', 'Stretch' and 'Panic'. Suggest different activities and ask students to move into the space that best represents how that activity makes them feel. For example, watching a video might move most students to the comfort zone while stroking a snake might move some of them to panic. Always end the activity with everyone in the comfort zone. Discuss what students felt and what they were able to learn in each of these zones. Good learning happens best in the stretch zone, not in a panic or when too comfortable. When students are stuck, ask for ideas of what could move them into the stretch zone. Code the zones with colours like traffic lights: red for panic, amber for stretch, green for coasting through with no effort and not picking up much learning. (This activity is based on work by Gornal, Chambers & Claxton 2008, p 17.)

Expert interviews: Set up interviews with skilful people. Students develop a series of questions to uncover exactly what the expert does (eg What preparation is there?, How do you keep your eye on the ball?, What sort of thinking or beliefs are helpful?). Students create a checklist of key aspects to imitate. (This activity is based on work by Gornal, Chambers & Claxton 2008, p 49.)

Scheduled learning conversations: These conversations can be a valuable opportunity for students to share their learning journey with you and other significant adult/s. Support students with a framework for their presentation. They extend an invitation and negotiate a 15 minute meeting time. During the meeting, the student shares growth points, concerns and achievements, shows evidence of his/her successful learning, and leads a three-way conversation where the adults ask questions and acknowledge the student's efforts.



Language that teachers can use to challenge students to achieve high standards with appropriate support

- I'm a teacher and a learner too. You probably know more about this new topic than I do. I aim to be an expert by the end of it! What tips can you give me?
- What's really important to you as a learner? What do you want to get better at?
- What do you hope to achieve this time? How will you do it?
- I'm going to model how to ... for the class. You may move off on your own as soon as you've got the idea.
- You have a real talent for ... How does it feel to ...? Remember to have that same confidence when you ...
- Let's say nothing's 'wrong' but, rather, there are just 'degrees of rightness'. How might this change your thinking?
- It's great to move outside your comfort zone—that's when the real learning happens.
- Do you understand it well enough to teach it to someone else?
- What did you use to work it out last time? Find out three ways others have done it.
- It's when you 'get stuck' that you really start to learn. What's your next step? You can do it!

This element is not demonstrated if:

- Teachers'/students' words and actions reflect an attitude of 'near enough is good enough'
- The learning intention is unclear
- Learning lacks a clear sequence and evidence of mastery is difficult to find
- Engagement in the learning process wanes before reaching the outcome
- Teachers reference students' achievements only against external norms (eg class norms) without acknowledging individual progress
- All tasks are geared towards final summative tests, without formative assessment to guide student progress

Practice check

- How do I encourage students to persist when learning gets tough?
- Do I provide opportunities for all students to learn and achieve to a high level?
- How do I make the learning intention/s of each lesson clear to students?
- How do I challenge individuals and acknowledge initiative and progress?
- What procedures are in place to help students move forward when they encounter problems?



If you do things well, do them better. Be daring, be first, be different, be just.

Anita Roddick

believe all