Variety of teaching strategies

**English:** Students had some struggles around deliberate use of precise vocabulary when writing their advertisements. I planned a lesson where we collected cereal boxes and magazine ads, read out and analysed the advertising identifying the language used and its effect. Then, we wrote out some ads without any specific vocabulary, read it out and discussed the effect this has on the audience. [For example:](file:///D:\_Ljiljanas%20Files\Ljiljana%20Study\SEMESTER%20TWO\eFolio\website\files\Student%20development2.jpg) Full of sultanas, dried fruit and coconut flakes. Then, using different colour marker pens we inserted the specific vocabulary demonstrating deliberate use of language, read the ad out again and discussed its effect now. Students writing improved a lot after this activity. Below-level students used the [same colour](file:///D:\_Ljiljanas%20Files\Ljiljana%20Study\SEMESTER%20TWO\eFolio\website\files\Student%20development4.jpg) coding in their books to help with the writing. This helped visually as they could see ‘what words go where and why’, as one of them said.

Colour coding helped students with constructing compound sentences too. Students were mainly confused about the use of circumstance in sentences and this is one [example](file:///D:\_Ljiljanas%20Files\Ljiljana%20Study\SEMESTER%20TWO\eFolio\website\files\Student%20development4a.jpg) of a lesson where we jointly constructed some sentences and took a deeper look at them. Students were asked to just tell me a sentence as they would normally in their everyday talk. We then analysed, fixed, reconstructed these sentences. At level students in particular found this activity helpful because they realised that compound sentences are not some type of speech they have to craft somehow – instead, it is refining the way we talk normally.

Although some students understood this, some still did not. I replanned the lesson and did the following:

Students had a task to write an explanation using compound sentences – extension group had a challenge to write some complex sentences too. I then did a micro lesson with the students who were unsure. Using classroom posters, I represented this [sentence structure](file:///D:\_Ljiljanas%20Files\Ljiljana%20Study\SEMESTER%20TWO\eFolio\website\files\micro%20lesson%20for%20BL%20group.jpg) as a [formula](file:///D:\_Ljiljanas%20Files\Ljiljana%20Study\SEMESTER%20TWO\eFolio\website\files\micro%20lesson%20for%20BL%20group1.jpg) and explained again giving verbal examples. Students then wrote some sentences on the board as a joint construct, then they wrote some on any topic on their write and swipe boards. They checked those for each other.

**History:** Students had an opportunity to learn how to pose inquiry questions. As this was completely new to them, I taught using the slow release model. First, I read out the topic sentence then brainstormed some key ideas. Then I modelled a think-aloud around asking a question that will lead my enquiry in a certain direction, toward a specific result. Then I wrote it out on the board.

Then, I repeated this whole process but this time we did it together as a whole class. Students brainstormed key ideas and then shared the questions they would ask and I wrote them [on the board](history%20lesson-model%20inquiry.jpg). We went through those questions to see if they would lead us to the specific result. If not, they were not good questions to ask. It was just as important to learn what was a bad question as it was what makes a good one.

Students then had the task to write a paragraph about this explaining the influence or effect of a significant person or event on Australian society at the time. They wrote one paragraph as a pre-test and I marked it. Overall, the main message did not come through. I sourced a [‘Metaphor’ graphic organiser](metaphor%20graphic%20organiser.jpg) and adapted it to suit my lesson. I handed out two of these to each student and projected one on the smart board. I [modelled using this organiser](metaphor%20graphic%20organiser-model%20use.jpg) but students gave me the information to write in. Then, they created one of their own, which they used to help with writing TEEL paragraphs. We repeated this activity two more times – one time we concentrated on using historic terms, second time we concentrated on editing and information.

Using iPads and laptops, students conducted a historic investigation of Brisbane. Using an old map of Brisbane Town from 1884, they familiarised themselves with the few building that were built at the time. Then, using Google Earth, we ‘visited’ all those places in Brisbane to check what is there now, what has changed, what has stayed the same. This generated a lot of excitement and discussion around continuity and change.

**Science:** We have [science investigation boards](science%20investigations%20boards.jpg) in the classroom and at the start of every term, after I introduce the unit, students fill out post it notes and stick to the boards. These are: what we think we know (blue), what we want to learn (pink or red) and what we have learned (green).

Students then participate in a research lesson using iPads, Laptops and books to find answers to *each other’s* questions, never their own. At the end of each research lesson, students go to the board and find answer to their question. If they want more information (and most of the time they do), they have to ask their peer to further explain. This way, two students learn about that particular matter.

During our animal adaptations lessons, students were working in pairs on investigating adaptations of various animas. They could chose from set animals or their own interest. Students took half a session (about 30 min) to research and take notes. Then, each pair presented to the rest of the class reading from their notes and showing pictures they saved on the screens. They became experts on that particular animal. Students enjoyed this activity very much, were amazed at what they found and generally learned a lot.

Students participate in investigations on a regular basis. One such example is investigating camouflage and the reasons why animals have adapted physically to hide in their natural environment.