



EACH ONE, TEACH ONE



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Learning to learn and the 5 Rs

The 5 Rs is an application that was inspired by Guy Claxton's 4 Rs which were meant to replace the three traditional ones.¹ Successful learners are considered to be Reflective, Responsible, Reasoning, Resourceful and Resilient. It is a means to move a student from being teacher dependent to being independent. It proposes that the teacher becomes a learning coach allowing the teacher to guide the students whilst providing feedback and encouraging them to stretch themselves. It is an opportunity for both the teacher and the students to be creative together.

I am a teacher of RE, and we decided that the 5 Rs were to be piloted with one of my Yr 8 Re classes (2 hours per week).

Year 8 Streisand

In St. Angela's, all form classes are called after high achieving women from various areas of the world arena – past and present. 8 Streisand are named after Barbara Streisand, and they are a unique class!

The academic profile is as follows:

CATS averages: 106 (Verbal), 104 (Non Verbal), 107 (Quantitative)

So what is it exactly that makes me describe them as unique?

The answer lies in the dynamics of this class. As a class, they actively demonstrate reliability, listen actively, share openly and willingly, exhibit flexibility, treat each other respectfully, support each other and most important of all are completely cohesive – so a dream class all in all!

I introduced the idea of learning to learn and the 5 Rs to the class before we started our two new units for that half term – Confirmation and Anointing of the sick. The girls readily embraced these learning techniques.

As expected, they all started at bronze level. (The 5 Rs are categorised into bronze, silver and gold² – see diagram on next page.) Some of them were very quick to move to silver. Bronze level means that they were still teacher dependent and needed to be reminded from time to time about the 5Rs. I have 8 gifted and talented students in this class. I mention this because at times it was difficult to distinguish the gifted and talented from the rest of the class. They all rose to the challenge with great gusto. Most of them are now at a solid silver level (moving steadily towards gold) – which means that they use the 5Rs naturally. Although I can safely say that only a few of them are at a solid gold level, their progress has been rapid (to say the least). If we had been working on the 5Rs for the whole year, it is safe to assume that they would mostly be on gold

Resilient Learners

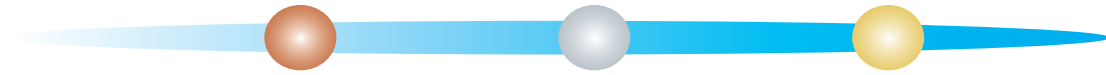
Dependent

Independent



Stick at it

You can stick at most things for short periods of time. You are prepared to ask for help when things get difficult and then will have another go



Have a positive attitude

With some encouragement you are prepared to give most things a go. You find setbacks frustrating but with help will try going forward. You are learning to find positive things in whatever you are doing



Find & sustain interest in what they are doing

You can be easily distracted however you are aware of this. You need someone to start you off and to check on your progress from time to time. You will do things if you really want to or are told to.



Set targets & practice

You have begun to set yourself targets and are trying to work towards them; you focus on what you are told to do. You are beginning to realise that practice is important and will practice when you are told to.

Recreation of the 5 Rs explained slide

While working through the units of Confirmation and Anointing of the sick, I often had to leave subtle reminders prompting them to recognise the 5Rs were using. These reminders were slowly phased out as they girls started to use the 5Rs naturally. The plenary was a good time to randomly check recognition of these vital skills of learning. The girls were effectively learning to learn.

Task

Let's understand poverty around the world with biscuits

- Biscuits represent money
- 2 groups — **HAVES** & **HAVE NOTS**
- Distribution of biscuits — 80% & 20%
- Out of the 20%, 10% is owed to the **HAVES**
- **HAVE NOTS** — try to justify to the **HAVES** why you cannot pay them back
- What has happened to drain your resources?
- Do the **HAVES** take payment plus interest?

In this task I am using:

R _____, R _____, R _____



My first impressions: it immediately became very apparent to me that when we do not put a ceiling on what students are expected to achieve, the sky is the limit. Contemplation is the mother of brilliance. The girls blossomed in 'their' lessons facilitated by me – their learning coach and imagination, creativity and intuitive thinking became the order of the day. In short, as soon as the girls understood the expectations – the world became their oyster. As the pearls of learning trickled out, I soon found myself an apt student of my students. To them, no problem was too great or small. On this note, I must include our whole class policy of 'Don't come to me with a problem if you do not have two solutions to it' – an idea inspired by the words of Alastair Smith. The girls were eager to learn, enthusiastic, willing participators and were ready to undertake any task put forward to them by me. The girls' progress in RE was phenomenal. This became obvious in the various assessment projects and presentations they undertook.

As a teacher, I found myself on a learning curve. It has been observed that our default teaching mode is the mode which we were taught, but we work in a different world and must embrace its challenges. Our world is fast paced and always changing. We are required to facilitate, integrate, co-ordinate, participate, delegate, advocate and illuminate. We work with possibilities that are endless. We learn together with our students and teach them to question, investigate, find their own voice and make them want to change the world. I have now started using the 5Rs with my year 7s and my year 9s. As I spiral with my students into the global whirlpool known as change, I too consider myself a work in progress.

Methods

After sometime, it became necessary to move 8 Streisand a new challenging level. It was important to ensure their complete understanding of the 5Rs and what better way than 'each – one - teach – one'. (Alastair Smith³). The basic idea is to share what you know with others. In doing so, the student-teachers are renewing their own knowledge of the 5Rs. It also promotes a high standard of written and spoken literacy. In order for students to play the part of a teacher successfully, it was important that they understood what it meant to explain something well and to be responsible for someone else's learning. This meant a rollercoaster of organising, preparation, administration and coaxing.

When I first announced my plans, 8 Streisand were filled with trepidation. This soon gave way to eager anticipation and a barrage of questions. It was decided that 8 Streisand would be teaching the 5Rs to all the six year 7 form groups simultaneously during their PSHE lesson. The date chosen was 23rd March 2009. To start of with, the girls got into six friendship groups. I opted for friendship groups for several reasons. Firstly, I trusted them implicitly to work very well no matter which group they found themselves in. Secondly, I believe that as friendship group they planned to congregate in each others houses to work on this project over weekends. Thirdly, I felt that they had a great deal more chemistry working within their friendship groups and that in turn would enhance their performance within the classroom.

The girls then spent an hour devoted to the creation of their lesson plan. They used the school's learning cycle which I had explained. This consisted of a starter, activation phase, demonstration phase and the plenary. The girls in their groups created their power points and e-mailed them to me for feedback. These power points evolved into a good lesson after 2 drafts. I then got each of the groups to show their power points to the other five groups. They gave each other feedback. This led to the 3rd and final draft. Finally, each of the 5 groups was given time slots in their lunch breaks to do a practice run.



We worked together on the language of teaching. We also discussed the nature of questioning, open and closed. We identified the use of VAKT and we experimented with the kinaesthetic activities. This practice run was vital as the preparation built up their confidence. In addition, the girls were responsible for their own organisation and management of resources (although I provided all resources).

On 20th March, we got the call from Ofsted that they were due to inspect St. Angela's on 23rd March, our 'each one, teach one' day! We decide to proceed with our plans.

Our whole school PSHE lessons takes place on Wednesdays, period 5. Having taken a short 15 minute lunch break, the girls all congregated in my classroom. They were then assigned a year 7 form group and proceeded to set themselves up in the designated form classroom. One group was placed in the observation room where their entire lesson was recorded for posterity and future learning. At the start of the lesson, the form tutors introduced the girls to their respective form groups. The lesson on the 5Rs then commenced.



A sample slide from one of the lessons



Year 8 Streisand.

'In St Angela's, everyone's a teacher.'

What we have learned

Good feedback is the key to successful learning. The each one teach one initiative was concluded with student feedback and form tutor feedback (all on the WWW/EBI model). We also had feedback on our young teachers, 8 Streisand themselves.

- The initiative was phenomenally worthwhile – 8 Streisand reconnected with the 5Rs and the year 7 had begun to understand the 5Rs
- The initiative was a real example of co-constructing the curriculum
- It was humbling to see such expertise
- It is a model which revealed when student and teacher really share an awareness, it leads to heightened learning
- Students really saw how responsible they are for their own learning
- It provided vital insight for students into the work / career of a teacher
- Students gained insight into differentiation, classroom management and the fact that you learn 98% of what you teach
- Students understood that everyone is a potential genius
- It was a real pity that Ofsted did not see it!

I learnt all about the SRs which I never knew about before. I enjoyed everything especially the beads task and the role play.

7 Dench

I learnt about reflective learning and reasoning. I liked the plays and the marble and spoon exercise. I'd like to know more about brains.

7 Sawalha

I learned how to explain information in a way that they'd understand. I also learned that teaching is very hard work. It takes a long time to prepare; teaching takes a lot of dedication!

8 Streisand

I learned that while we were teaching, we were learning to learn. And it is true; you do learn 98% of what you teach

8 Streisand

I learned to be more confident, about leading jobs and the group when necessary. Most importantly, I learnt to co-operate and take everyone's point of view on board. I learned about team work.

8 Streisand

To smile more, it really goes a long way and it makes you feel comfortable in front of an audience. I've also learnt that being a teacher is not just talking and telling us about a topic, a lot of work goes into teaching

8 Streisand

Rather than patronising students, we should really push their learning. Learning to learn is an excellent scheme because it allows students to think for themselves; at times the curriculum can be very restricting. We were amazed at the ability of our year 7 class. Some of their thoughts and ideas were really advanced. Not only were they able to construct a very sophisticated distinction in their reasoning, they were also able to make links. Their level of maturity and understanding was amazing. This just shows that by classing someone as less able, we in fact have an effect on their esteem. We must really build on their ideas and stretch their abilities.

8 Streisand

Excellent progress has been made and different learning styles have been applied. Excellent classroom management practised. Each section of the SRs has been explained very well with examples that relate to their daily lives.

Mrs. Ali (Form tutor Year 7 Sawalha)

Where do we go from here? In the next term, all lessons delivered to year 7s in PSHE will include the 5Rs. These lessons will be monitored by the students of 8 Streisand and myself. As for Streisand, the 5Rs are becoming a natural part of their learning. In fact besides RE, they use the 5Rs in Geography, History and English. Their confidence and understanding of the 5Rs has led to their delivery of a marking inset to teaching staff which was considered to be a great success.

- We hope to roll out the 5Rs as a whole school initiative in the next academic year, starting with Year 7 and Year 10 inductions.
- We will have a staff induction.
- To adapt the usage of the 5Rs in our lesson observation sheets.
- To involve our students more into working with the 5Rs.
- To have more students trained to do formal lesson observations on the 5Rs.

As you can see, we have plans for the next academic year and it very much includes the 5Rs. The usefulness about learning is that it generates new ideas. Having students reflect with us on the nature of learning is the most powerful next step we can take towards continuous learning. This is an exciting opportunity for the whole school. The process of learning itself linked with skill and content is the most important step. Individualisation of learning leads to learning journeys. These learning journeys will take the rest of our lives. So let's take that journey together.





- 1 Building learning Power, Claxton Guy (2002)
- 2 For more insight watch Mark Lovatt, deputy head of Cramlington Community School explaining the levels in the 5Rs.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ChUIMDF7-LA>
- 3 Each One Teach One is a literacy programme pioneered by Frank Laubach, a Christian Evangelical missionary in the Philippines in the 1950's.
- 4 Please see our learning cycle on page 2
- 5 Visual, Auditory, Kinaesthetic and Tactile