

Journey into Danger!

LVT/PBL year 6 project

St Michael in the Hamlet Primary School

June 2012

Evaluation and reflection

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Overview and objectives

The objective of this project was to introduce the practical application of the LogoVisual Thinking kit in the classroom to the teaching staff of St Michael in the Hamlet Primary School.

By devising a project that would involve all the year 6 children and their teachers over a two day period it was felt that an effective evaluation of the power of LVT could be made and from this could develop discussions about how to introduce the approach to other year groups in the context of the achievement against curricular learning objectives.

LVT is one of a number of creative approaches to learning that use visual and tactile elements to develop thinking skills in a social context that is also promoting of collaborative learning. The effectiveness of this approach is based on the focus it places on language and its primacy in the thinking and learning processes.

It was decided that a problem based approach should be used for this project and by placing the children in small working groups of four or five we were able to establish the idea of the benefits of their working collaboratively to devise unique solutions to a problem as well as planning for the successful completion of a range of tasks.

By using the LVT core process to structure and support meaning making in the early planning work we were introducing the children to the use of the thinking tools as well as to the ways of thinking that are supported by this approach.

From this thinking beginning the tasks of the project took the children through writing for meaning and communication tasks (plans and journals), through maps, diagrams and pictures to ICT in the form of PowerPoint and on to the presentation and scripting skills involved in the creation of a short film. The whole process was to be represented by a poster that was then the focus of a presentation to the class. The films

have been put in to DVD format to enable them to be used for criterion referenced peer assessment at a later date.

Reactions of the children – some observations

The responses of the children to the project were, as one would imagine, quite varied as were the levels of synergy across the different groups. Children from both the classes were very accepting of the new way of working for the most part and the benefit of using the LVT kits was apparent in the quality of the discussions that took place as the children set about making their master plan of survival and escape.

What was apparent across the groups was the sense of commitment to the completion of the tasks. That some tasks suited the predispositions of some children within their group better than others was clear - as were the ways in which the groups managed that situation for the benefit of the quality of the group output. Observations follow that were compiled in reflection of the experience:

- There was a buzz of directed conversations in the classes and all the children became involved in one way or another in the multiple tasks that they were asked to complete.
- There were groups where natural leaders emerged and performed well in that role, some perhaps not knowing, until they reflected on what had happened after the completion of the work, that they had that capacity.
- The unwillingness of some children to work collaboratively was exposed by the nature and demands of this project. It was noted that in these (very few) cases there was evidence of this negative predisposition from their level of participation in other aspects of school life.

- There were several instances where children found the need to negotiate with peers very difficult at first but given the appropriate guidance and support made great progress in that respect as the project progressed.
- Some instances were noted where spontaneous and very effective peer support was given to children who seemed to have lost their way and needed refocusing.
- It was noted that there were several instances where children whose confidence is low in writing were able to apply themselves vigorously and shine in tasks that needed other skills.

Visible outcomes

- One of the advantages to the teacher in the use of LVT is that the thoughts of the children are visible to them as well as to the other members of the group. This enables any supporting intervention by the teacher to be sharply focused and also allows for monitoring and evaluation of the group effort.
- In general the children responded very well to the tasks. They seemed to appreciate the different ways of doing things and the resultant work showed commitment and effort.
- The mix of written work, art work, the construction of the posters, the PowerPoint and the scripting and shooting of the film produced some interesting responses in forms that could be shared.
- The posters contained interesting and creative ideas and visual presentations of the different tasks and a degree of excitement was generated even if some of the posters showed signs of having been rushed a little towards the end.

- In order to assess the true worth of the posters we need to see the quality of the presentations to class by the groups based on the posters to see what this shows in terms of both commitment and achievement.
- The videos were very immediate and in some ways benefitted from being done in one take – again work could have been done on refining the end product but this might have lost some of the verve that was evident in many of the contributions. The edited videos could be used as a resource for peer assessment work were the children to be given guidance on the assessment objectives and graded statements of attainment.

Collaborative working

The children reacted to the idea of collaborative working in several different ways –

- There were those who looked at this project as an opportunity to work creatively and welcomed the chance to work in a different way. Some of these children were already predisposed to looking at learning in this way, others had to feel their way in but were ultimately successful in taking a full part in the proceedings.
- There were a few children who were reluctant to join in at first and found the challenge of collaborative working very difficult to cope with. Feeling that they are being required to think in a different and an unfamiliar way made some of the children uneasy at first; the unwillingness or the inability to share ideas was another issue that some groups had to overcome.
- Working in this way can leave some children feeling rather exposed and uncomfortable, especially if they lack language confidence, experience in using the language of negotiation or experience in using language to articulate

their learning at all. Some issues arose amongst children whose confidence in their reading for meaning and writing to inform skills was low.

The future

The successful use of LVT in this limited project has begun the development of a skill base in the school that can now be developed.

The learning dispositions that are promoted by creative approaches to learning are skills that need to be mastered over the long term. The challenge lies in successfully promoting the development of these skills across the child's school experience.

Suggestions for 'Phase 2'

Some or all of the following objectives could be addressed:

1. Embedding the use of LVT into the practice across KS2 – projects devised that look at the use of LVT in year 5 – benefitting the children in that year and widening the LVT skill base.
2. The examination of the value of LVT in foundation subjects, science and literacy – how can the approach be used to address National Curriculum Learning Objectives?
3. An investigation in to the use of LVT in the delivery of the SEAL programme.
4. Development of the practice in KS1. Working with year 2 to establish that LVT and the thinking that it promotes is valuable in the KS1 setting.
5. Developing the use of complimentary creative learning and problem solving techniques such as De Bono's Thinking Hats.

Overview of the project

| Managing an Expedition A PBL sequence | |
|--|---|
| Overview <p>Using a PBL sequence the goal of this medium term plan is to facilitate groups of learners in the creation of their own poster presentations or PowerPoint presentations. These will be used to allow the children to share with the whole class the work they have done in their working groups on the Expedition Project at the end of the sequence.</p> <p>Contributory to the finished presentations will be two and three dimensional art, written work in a variety of forms and the possibility of some aspects of performance including music.</p> <p>There will be the integrated use of ICT equipment for capture and replay of performance as well as for research and presentation in a variety of forms.</p> <p>A variety of creative learning methodologies will be used in order to support the strengthening of learning dispositions. These approaches will also allow the children to see the relationship between thought and the collaborative use of language.</p> | Learning dispositions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reciprocity – <i>the social aspects of learning including</i> - interdependence, collaboration, listening and empathy, imitation.• Resilience - <i>the emotional aspects of learning including</i> - absorption, managing distraction, noticing, perseverance.• Resourcefulness – <i>the cognitive aspects of learning including</i> - questioning, making links, imagining, reasoning capitalising on resources.• Reflectiveness – <i>the strategic and self managing aspects of learning including</i> - planning, revising, distilling, meta-learning. |

Managing an Expedition

| Tasks | Methods | Products |
|--|---|---|
| <p>Concept and purpose</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - of the expedition – what question does this expedition aim to answer? <p>Research and resources needed.</p> <p>Steps to completion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the components of the project and what does it entail? - What jobs need to be done, and in what sequence, to achieve completion? <p>Roles and responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - allocation of jobs within the group <p>Methods of showing products</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How should this be presented when it is complete? | <p>Creative Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orientation - card sorts. - Initial planning and operational decision making – LVT. - Problem solving - Thinking Hats. - Creative decisions - Thinking Hats. | <p>Group Poster or P/Point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A1 sheet or PowerPoint containing a coordinated mixture of words and pictures that chart the progress of the project for the group. - Emphasis on the process and decisions that were made and how they were made. - Groups use this to talk to the whole group about there journey (both the learning journey and the expedition) |
| | | <p>2D/3D art work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners choose medium and style to represent an aspect of the expedition in graphic form or a 3D piece. - Presented alongside or integrated within the poster/ PowerPoint as appropriate. - Music? |
| | | <p>Written work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Series of journal entries – the day to day events of the expedition with comments. - Interview script – performed and captured on video. - Creative piece (prose, poetry, article ...) - Reflection on the process of doing this project. |

Developing shared learner/teacher language

(from Claxton, G., 2011, *The Learning Powered School* Bristol: TLO)

Essential to the success of this project is the attention to the language that is used by the learners and the teachers

| Do you speak Learnish? | Nudging adventurousness | Nudging Leading |
|---|--|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did you do that? 2. How else could you have done that? 3. Who did that in a different way? 4. Which are the tricky bits? What's tricky about them? 5. What could you do when you are stuck on that/ 6. What would have made that easier for you? 7. What else do you know that might help? 8. How could you help someone else do that? 9. How could I have taught that better/ 10. Where else could you use that? 11. How could you make it harder for yourself? | <p>Just give it a try How could you make that more interested/exciting/risky? Choose a topic that's going to stretch you</p> <p>Nudging self-awareness Does this way of working play to your strengths? How could you organise things to help you learn better? What qualities of mind would it help you to strengthen?</p> <p>Nudging connecting What does that remind you of? What do you know that might help? What would be a good analogy for that?</p> <p>Nudging self evaluation Tell me about that What are you not so pleased with? What do you like best about that? How could you do it differently next time? What would 'even better' look like?</p> | <p>How could you help the group work better? What would you suggest if you were in charge? If you were to take the initiative, what would you do?</p> <p>Inquisitiveness That's curious What's odd about that? What does that make you wonder? What do you want to find out? How else could you do that?</p> <p>Crafting What do you need to practise a bit more? What would you need to do to improve that? What could you tinker with?</p> <p>Capitalising What could you use to help with that? What could you use as a tool to help you? What are you going to need?</p> <p>Transferring Where else could you make use of that? Where could you apply what you have just learned?</p> |

Appendix 2

Session Plan

| | Wednesday | Thursday |
|--------|--|--|
| AM | Introduction and orientation (LVT 1) Designing the plan of survival and escape. | Review and reflect Groups looking critically at the progress made so far – what has been achieved, what needs extra work – any change of plans. Check against task list. |
| Target | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed plan of escape written out collectively. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Journals complete Other completed pieces collected and poster construction taking place. |
| AM | Writing Journals/diaries. (Task 2) Personal reflection on the efforts – to consolidate the work of the previous session and move deeper into the project. NB Process writing – one draft? | Continued construction |
| Target | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early drafts of journals, some may be complete Evidence of progress with other tasks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Posters – need final touches only Films – shot and ready to go Journals completed Art work completed PowerPoints where used to be nearing completion |
| PM | Planning the presentation (LVT 2) Who does what – plans and discussions in respect of the tasks. Beginnings of creative work | Completion of poster and preparation for presentation to the rest of the class |
| Target | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed work plan – written out Evidence of progress on the tasks | All tasks should be completed at this stage and posters displayed ready for presentation. |
| PM | Construction: Work on the tasks in earnest at this point | Presentation time – groups present their posters to the rest of the class in turn |
| Target | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tasks allocated Evidence of progress on all tasks Journals completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each group can present their poster and/or their film |