

## **What happens when we introduce Think, Pair, Share in the classroom?**

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### **Group 3I**

#### ***Rationale***

Children in primary schools are likely to be seated in groups to encourage both social and academic interaction. However, this does not necessarily mean they work together. The concept of Think, Pair, Share was chosen as my group had found that throughout all of our classes we had some children who were continuously unwilling to share their ideas and responses in the classroom.

There has been extensive research into Co-operative Learning to show it has many benefits for all learners (Goodwin, 1995); (Cortright et al, 2005); (Lujan and DiCarlo, 2005) . Think, Pair, Share (TPS) is a Co-operative Learning strategy designed for pupils to reflect on a subject before voicing their thoughts. Its purpose is for the child to think about and clarify their own responses and mentally rehearse how to communicate them to others (Holcomb, 2001). TPS has been shown to get students more involved in class discussion and improve on the quality of their answers (Rowe, 1974). Additionally, Think, Pair, Share builds on improving children's self-esteem which is tied to their confidence (Goodwin, 1999).

#### ***Aims***

The aims of this enquiry were to investigate:

1. The impact of Think Pair Share on children's learning in my class.
2. The impact of Think Pair Share on children's confidence to speak out within the classroom.
3. Does the impact of this enquiry support or challenge the use of Think Pair Share in the classroom?

#### ***Methodology***

Black and William (1998) state that assessment can be any activity which both teachers and students undertake to gather information that can be used to improve teaching and learning. From this definition, assessment can include classroom discussion, observations and questionnaires. During this enquiry, in order to study the impact of Think Pair Share, a questionnaire was given to pupils before conducting research to give initial evidence on pupils' confidence and social and communication skills.

This enquiry took place daily over a four week period in a Primary 2 class of 8 boys and 8 girls. Additionally participation observation measured the number of children voluntarily raising hands both before the use of Think, Pair, Share. This helped me see who dominates discussion, who avoids and what type of answers are given.

Think, Pair, Share was implemented across all curricular areas, particularly IDL and numeracy. The different learning experiences through these subjects allowed me to assess and observe the children's ability to respond to the technique across all areas of the curriculum. The participation observation was carried out by posing a question to children for them to share in their pairs. Children were given one minute thinking time before two minutes sharing times with their partners. Children were then asked to report back to the class about their discussion giving either their answer or their partners. Information was gathered

by counting the number of hands raised to answer the question, before and after TPS was introduced. All Think, Pair, Share questions given to children were based on higher order thinking skills for more in depth responses.

At the end of the enquiry period, the children were given the initial questionnaire again. This was to determine the impact of Think, Pair, Share on their confidence and social and communication skills.

### ***Findings***

When comparing notes from observations of children raising hands from the beginning of the enquiry to the end, there was a clear indication of increase in children's confidence to answer questions in front of myself and their peers.

Conversations within the learning environment became more meaningful as children had become more focused on the aspect they were discussing. The partners for Think Pair Share were changed a number of times to allow children to socialise with others. From observation it was clear that children in need of more support were easily influenced by children of higher ability and understanding of the question and could therefore explain their answers clearer. The following quotes stem from discussion with the children.

Prior to implementing Think Pair Share:

- "I don't like answering out because I might get the question wrong."
- "I get nervous when being picked to answer a question."
- "I don't answer because someone else will answer it better."

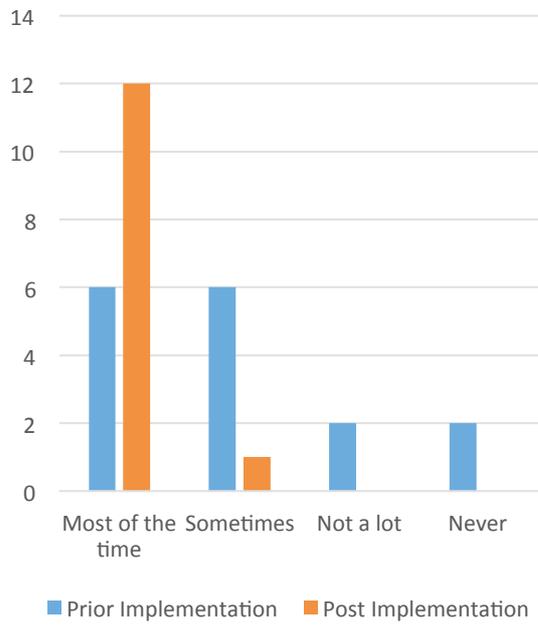
After implementation:

- "I enjoy using Think Pair Share because I can check with my partner if my answer is correct before I tell everybody."
- "I feel more confident answering a question after talking about it with my partner."
- "Think Pair Share means I can ask my partner more questions about the work and understand it more."

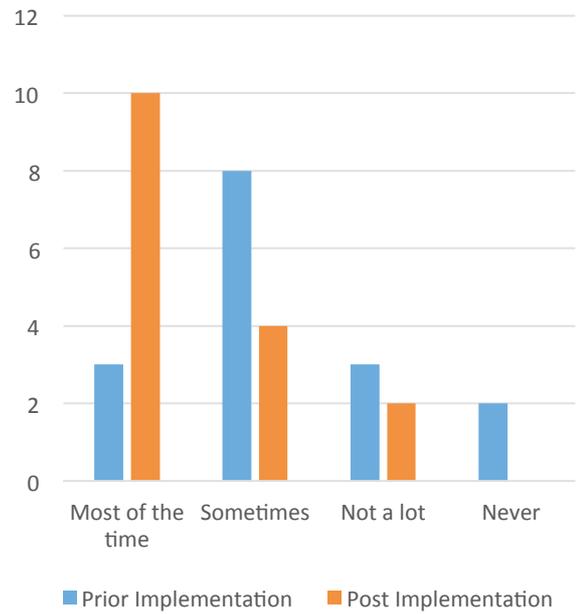
When comparing data from the questionnaires the number of children who advised they felt more confident answering out rose considerably. More children were happy sharing answers with a partner before answering out to the rest of the class. A higher number of children raised their hand when answering out in class. Finally, more children raised their hands because they knew the answer.

The results are as follows:

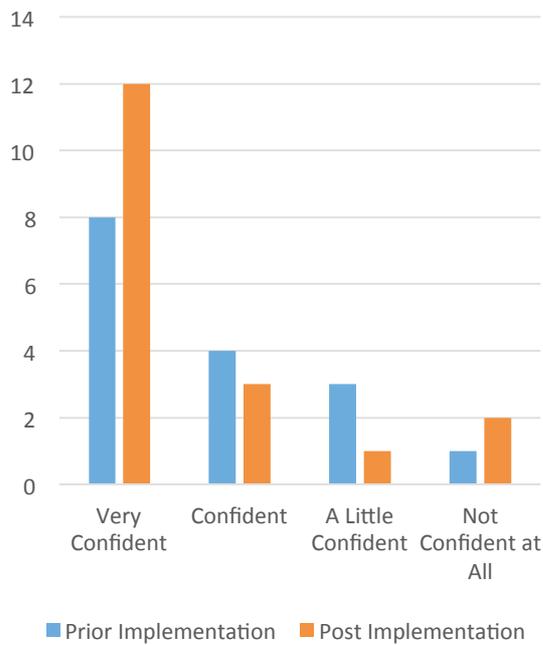
### How often do you raise your hand to answer in class?



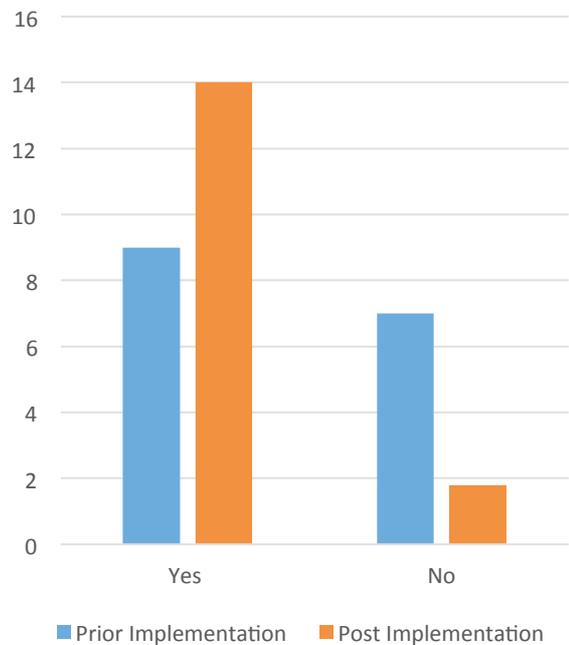
### I put my hand up when I know the answer ...



### How confident are you when answering out in front of the whole class?



### I enjoy sharing my answers with a peer before I tell the whole class.



### ***Conclusions***

From the results it can be concluded that introducing Think, Pair, Share into the classroom can be beneficial in developing confidence and communication skills of pupils. It has increased participation for many children in my classroom and can allow for more valuable answers as the children were able to have thinking time and reflect on their response before answering to the class. This technique is deemed more beneficial when children were posed with good quality questions which they could respond to.

However, despite the many advantages to children's confidence and social skills, it did not show progression within the pupil's learning. From this, it is suggested that the period of enquiry should be extended to check for impact on children's learning and to fully understand the benefits of the Think Pair Share technique.

### ***Implications for Future Practice***

As a result of this enquiry, I will continue to use Think Pair Share as a co-operative learning tool in the classroom. I believe that the technique enhances children's confidence and promotes collaborative learning in the classroom. I feel the results would have been greater if the enquiry took place over a longer period of time. The results could be affected as some children may not have been engaged in the initial questioning period and therefore would not have voluntarily joined in with discussion and raised their hands.

Additionally a future question that could be researched would be to investigate the results of children having the same partner over a period of time. This would be interesting to compare the results from both studies to see the progression in confidence and social and communication skills.

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