

What happens when I introduce Think, Pair, Share in the classroom?

Rationale

Think, Pair, Share (TPS) allows all pupils to participate and engage in their learning through discussion. The strategy is used as a means of assessment in order to check for understanding of a particular skill or concept. Braun (2017) highlights that TPS increases pupil participation and confidence by sharing their ideas with a partner. Introducing TPS in the classroom was an area I was interested in developing especially as a means of assessing pupils learning and ensuring all pupils were actively engaged in their learning (Raba, 2017). Implementing TPS has also sought to improve communication and listening skills (Brady and Tsay, 2010), which is a particular area that could be developed in my Primary 4/5 class.

Aims

The aim of the enquiry was to investigate the impact of TPS in the classroom in order to engage and assess pupils in their learning.

Methodology

The enquiry took place in a Primary 4/5 class containing 25 pupils, due to absence only 22 pupils were involved. The investigation was conducted over a three-week period with TPS used in maths lessons. The pupils were presented with questions during mental maths and given one minute thinking time before sharing their strategies with a partner. Each child kept the same partner for this process. After sharing their strategies with a partner, it was then reported back to the whole class. Information gathered was collected through close observations to the pupils' discussions and whole class feedback. A questionnaire was used to gather information on what the pupils thought of TPS before and after implementation.

Findings

At the beginning of the research, the questionnaire showed that pupils were not confident in sharing their ideas with classmates nor did they know why think, pair, share was used in the lesson. When comparing the results to the end of the research, an increased number of children felt that their learning was developed through discussion with peers and the idea of TPS was highly valued.

Before TPS was introduced more than 80% of the pupils involved did not understand why TPS was used (see appendix A) and 40% of the pupils were also unsure of whether answering questions with a partner was more effective than answering individually (See appendix B). After implementation, it was noted that children were becoming more engaged in their learning as they were able to discuss their strategies with a partner in order to share ideas and develop their learning as well as more quality answers. One pupil stated, "I didn't know how to answer that question, but after talking to my partner I now know how to do it". Hearing the pupil's feedback highlighted that TPS was having a positive effect on the learners. During the observation of TPS, I was able to collect oral feedback on how the pupils were performing with specific tasks, which allowed me to think carefully on pairing the pupils with children who were more able in order

to encourage participation and increase their confidence of children who might find it challenging.

The results gathered showed that pupils were beginning to understand why TPS was used in the lesson and how it can benefit their learning. One pupil in particular, who does not like to answer out in front of peers stated "I like answering now" after asking her why she had changed her mind she said "I can talk to my partner to make sure it is correct". This proved that confidence was being increased and learning was still taking place. During TPS participation, I could clearly see through observation that pupils who were less able were starting to understand strategies in order to answer their maths problems as the pupils were sharing their ideas with the class, giving them more ideas.

At the end of the enquiry, pupils were asked the same questions again. It was highlighted that 60% of the pupils enjoyed taking part in TPS and could suggest why we use it as part of the lesson. One pupil said "We use Think, Pair, Share so we can talk about our ideas with a partner". Nevertheless, there were still 40% of pupils who would rather work individually when answering questions and who did not like to work with a partner, as they were not contributing to the questions (See appendix C).

Conclusions

Reviewing the results of the enquiry allowed me to see how TPS has benefited the children in the classroom with regards to assessment and engagement. Undoubtedly, TPS improved pupil's participation greatly in the classroom. Not only was participation and engagement increased but the pupils were able to share their strategies with a partner increasing their knowledge on how the question should be answered.

As pupils were partnered up, it gave the pupils time to discuss different methods and ways of answering questions. By discussing their answers and methods to the class not only did the children gain new strategies, they were also becoming more involved in sharing their ideas with the class as they had time to discuss with a partner before sharing it with me. As a facilitator of TPS in mathematics, I could clearly see who was engaging and who was developing their learning. It gave good insight into children who were struggling with certain questions and who needed more challenge. As well as this, buddying up children who needed extra support with children who were more confident in answering the problems allowed for a more engaging learning experience, however, there were still a number of children who did not like to share their ideas with a partner as they preferred to work alone. In conclusion I do believe that TPS in the classroom has increased participation and can be used as a means for valid formative assessment.

Implications for Future Practice

The findings and conclusions present limitations. In order for a more in-depth conclusion, further research must be completed with more pupils over a longer period of time in order to see the benefits of TPS in the classroom. The findings also highlighted more questions based on TPS in order to engage and assess

pupils learning. One question raised was ‘ As all children do not get the opportunity to feedback to the class, how effective is TPS in the classroom with regards to assessing all pupils?’ Further investigation will increase understanding of using TPS as a form of assessment and engagement.

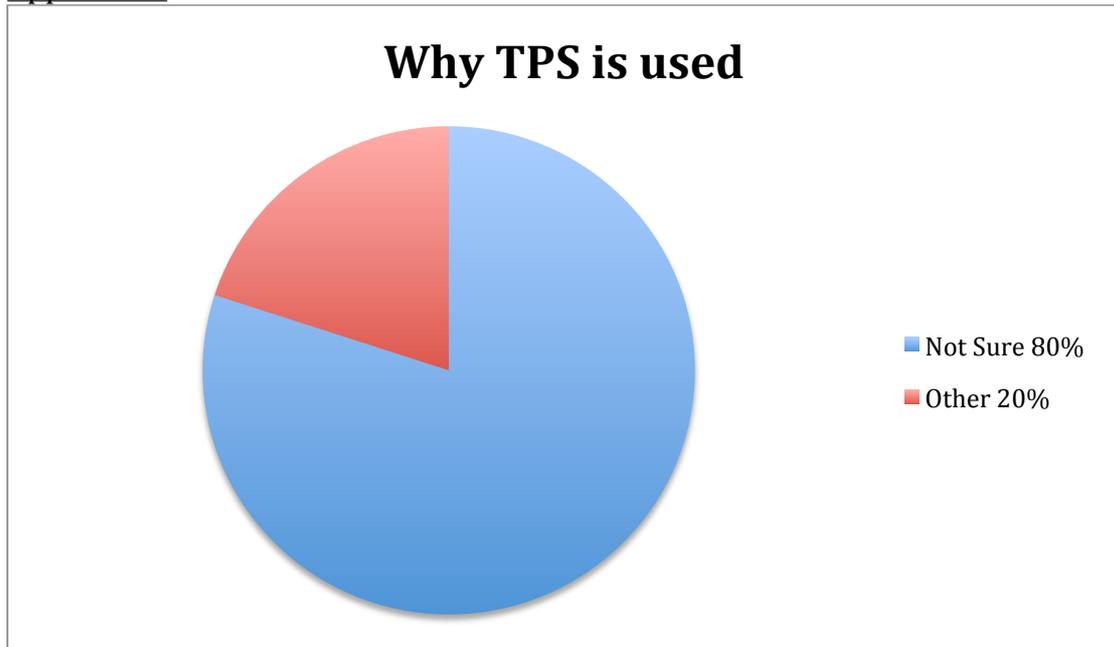
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Appendix A



Appendix B



Appendic C

Do you like working with a partner?

