

## **The use of checklists, two stars and a wish, think for pink and green for growth in the classroom.**

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### ***Rationale***

Over the years, the objectives of assessment have progressed, and whilst formative assessment is not a relatively new format, according to research (Black & William, 1998) it has become a more valuable and efficacious means of improving student learning. The curriculum for excellence (CfE) recognises the crucial role formative assessment can play on pupils' achievements (Scottish Government, 2011). Peer assessment, if used correctly, can enhance, and improve pupils involvement in their approach and understanding. It can improve communication skills, critical thinking skills and improve the pupil's ability to self-reflect. Bryce (2014) suggests providing detailed feedback frequently is more effective than summative assessment as it is instant and more meaningful to the pupil because the task is still fresh in their mind, whereas summative assessment isn't as relevant as it's not done instantly.

One form of peer assessment is the two stars and a wish method. This involves a peer finding two positives and one thing that could be improved. John Hattie's (2012) meta-analysis on feedback states Vygotsky's (1978) research that social interactions plays a primary function in the approach to effective teaching which is directly connected to peer-assessment (Bennett 2011). When this procedure is applied in a formative manner it helps pupils help each other recognise their good and not so good points (Topping 2009). I believe by introducing this method into my classroom, pupils will become reflective and positive contributors within their own learning.

### ***Aims***

The aims of this enquiry were to explore children's ability to provide meaningful feedback and to identify whether children use their feedback to improve their work.

### ***Methodology***

Prior to beginning the enquiry, a questionnaire was used to explore pupils' attitudes of peer assessment where they were encouraged to give honest feedback. The questionnaire comprised of six closed and open-ended questions (*see table 1*). For the purpose of the enquiry, pink for think and green for growth was not used as the pupils were unfamiliar with this but were aware of two stars and a wish. The enquiry was conducted over a four-week

period in a Primary 5 class which consisted of twenty-seven pupils during Literacy lessons. Following each lesson all pupils engaged in peer assessing each other within their groups, with a selected group of six being the focus of the enquiry. When peer assessing, the pupils were kept within their literacy groups and put into pairs or trios. This was managed according to their capabilities so that when marking their peers work, they had already completed this and could check this against the success criteria. The selected six pupils for the enquiry were chosen as they were deemed to be the pupils who would benefit the most from this assessment.

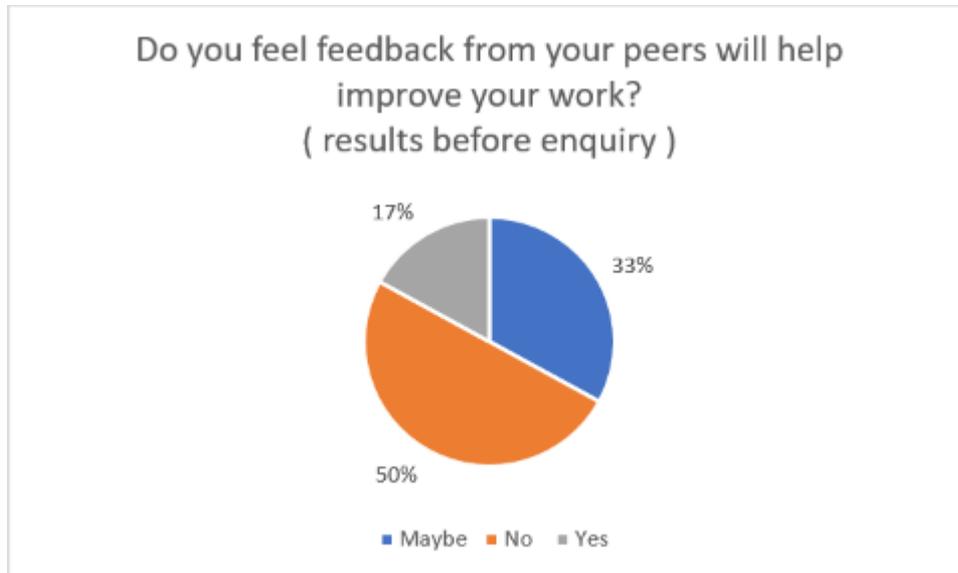
The method of two stars and a wish and checklists were implemented into daily writing and taught writing tasks in the hope it would increase attainment and determine whether pupils would provide meaningful feedback to each other, which they would then take on board to progress their learning. The pupils would identify the two stars and a wish by referring to the success criteria which was discussed at the beginning of the lesson and displayed for them on the whiteboard. If their peers had met the success criteria, they would use the two stars to highlight this by providing positive comments about their work. Their wish was used to assist the next steps their peers required on how to progress and improve their work, such as if they had missed capital letters or full stops. As well as providing written comments, pupils would also discuss what feedback they had provided to their peers verbally.

### ***Findings***

After the enquiry, data was collected to help determine the impact peer assessment had on the six pupils selected for the enquiry. Prior to the enquiry the children were provided with a questionnaire, which asked them questions about peer assessing. The questionnaires provided were anonymous to allow children to have the opportunity to speak honestly. The results from the table and pie chart below indicate that pupils are aware of what peer assessment is and are familiar with two stars and a wish. However, they were not confident that feedback from their peers would help them improve their work with 50% saying no, peer assessment would not improve their work.

Table 1  
Questionnaire prior to two stars and a wish being used.

Question	Pupil 1	Pupil 2	Pupil 3	Pupil 4	Pupil 5	Pupil 6
Do you know what peer assessment is?	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	I think so, yes.
What is Peer Assessment?	It's checking someone else's work.	It is when you check peoples work for capital letters and things like that.	It is when you mark another person in the classes work.	We tried it last year. I had to check another person's work.	It's when you check someone else's work.	Checking someone in the class, it's checking their work
Do you feel 2 stars and a wish/your peer assessment checklist will help you with your own daily writing tasks?	Yes. I think it will make me start checking my work.	Yes. I can check if I have done my work right.	Yes, I can check the list and my work to make sure it's done right.	Yes.	Maybe, like with capital letter and that.	Sometimes.
Do you act on your next steps?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do you think you would pay attention to your peer's feedback?	Don't Know.	Yes, I think so.	Yes, I think so,	No.	No, I don't think so.	No, I don't know.
Do you feel feedback from your peers will help improve your work?	No	No	Yes	No	Maybe	Maybe



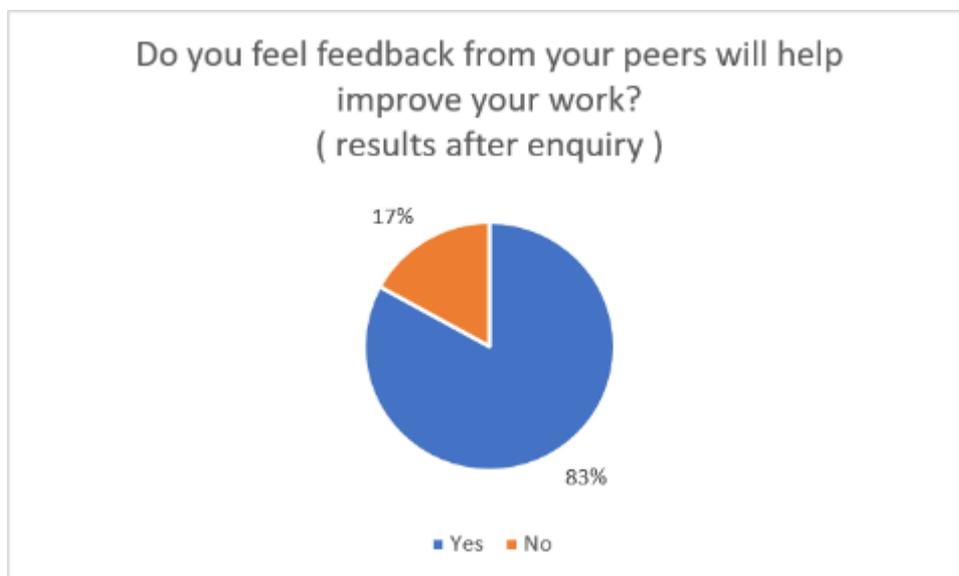
From the table and pie chart shown below, 83% of children who took part in the enquiry felt that two stars and a wish has significantly helped them improve their work as well as become more confident when assessing their peers. From the six pupils who took part, five feel more confident writing feedback to their peers using two stars and a wish, with just one pupil saying they still found it difficult writing a wish.

Table 2. Questionnaire following enquiry.

Question	Pupil 1	Pupil 2	Pupil 3	Pupil 4	Pupil 5	Pupil 6
Do you feel peer assessment has improved your work?	No.	Yes.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
If yes, in what ways? If not, why?	The comments they wrote, I already knew, and sometimes they never write a wish.	I sometimes forget things and the person marking my work reminds me.	It helps me with my work, like I can do things I should be doing.	I check my wish and try and change this next time.	I might have forgot to put something in, and they tell me.	I check my work more than I did before.

Do you feel confident peer assessing?	Yes.	Yes.	Yes.	Yes	Yes	Yes.
If so, why?	I know what to look for now.	I check it against the checklist.	I know what to say now.	I remember from my own work what to check.	I didn't know a wish before and now I do.	I'm ok with stars but sometimes not the wish.

Pie chart 2 following enquiry.



From the questionnaire, one child felt they already understood what was expected of them and how to achieve this, therefore the two stars and a wish didn't help them. From the children, 83% felt feedback from their peers has helped them and 100% felt more confident peer assessing each other.

Whilst the results suggest confidence within the group has increased, upon further observations and discussions within the group and examining written comments in jotters, it became clear that whilst some of the children were relating their comments back to the success criteria, others were writing comments such as, 'great presentation' or 'neat handwriting'. Furthermore, two out of the six children who had received written and verbal feedback did not show progression in their work, even despite the same wish being written and advised on more than one occasion. When discussing this further, it became apparent that the same children knew what their core targets were, however continually forgot these whilst working.

## ***Conclusion***

The evidence from the enquiry suggests that the pupils' enjoyed peer assessing each other and gained confidence within their own learning. Data collected would indicate pupils' who read their peer assessment comments, and acted upon them, demonstrated progression within their work by achieving more of their core targets. Whilst the questionnaires display children who aren't fully confident assessing their peers, they are more confident when assessing two stars in work, therefore more work would need to be done to build their confidence when assessing their peer's next steps. Initially, most of the children found it difficult assessing their peers and couldn't think of positive comments to write. However, after receiving guidance, and through peer assessing more, they began to build up their confidence in doing this. Overall, peer assessment has an important role in class to ensure children understand their own targets and have opportunities to learn how and what they can do to achieve these.

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

The enquiry shows that children can be active leaders in their own learning. They can read over their peer's work and have the confidence to check the work against the success criteria, using this as a guide to complete their two stars and a wish. Peer assessing is something I intend to develop within my class, whether this be two stars and a wish, verbal comments or pink for think and green for growth. The implementation of two stars and a wish has provided pupils with the opportunity to develop a technique they can use to help them progress within their learning, demonstrating the importance of AiFl strategies.

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