

Using Transitions Effectively To Maximise Learning Time

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Key Points

How to **use** transition times to increase learning opportunities, rather than just **manage** them. Focuses on the use of chants as ways to embed key number facts, as the children move around the classroom.

Purpose

What were your reasons for doing this development work?

Now in my third year of teaching, I wanted to look at how to use transition times effectively to maximise the progress in my classroom. I identified that my children would benefit from a more rapid recall of basic number facts, and so selected this as the focus of my transition times.

Who were the identified target learners?

As the Year 2 teacher, my target learners were Year 2. However, this could be used across all year groups.

What were your success criteria?

I selected key aspects of our Maths curriculum which I believed most of the children needed to consolidate, namely their number bonds to 10, 20 and their 2, 5 and 10 times tables.

Assessment based on a number facts test, taken at the beginning of Spring term, to see which key facts children were missing.

Informal assessment ongoing in class.

What did you do? (What success criteria did you use?)

I looked into Maths Mastery techniques, where children chant during transition times. I decided to contrive my own, using rhyme to help the children pick up the numbers quicker. (see below)

I mapped out week-by-week focuses on the objectives, beginning with two weeks on number bonds to 10, followed by two weeks on the 2 times table, 2 weeks on the 5 times table, 2 weeks on number bonds to 20 and 2 weeks on the 10 times table. At the end of each week we had another test to see how much they had retained.

I believed by using a consistent and repetitious approach, the children would succeed in 'overlearning' these number facts, where they might have struggled to recall them before.

For the number bonds to 20, I used a different voice for each pair of bonds, varying the accent and the pitch, to call the two matching numbers – "20, 0", "19-1".

For the number bonds to 10, I used the attached rhyme, with accompanying actions.

What specific teaching resources did you use?

Number bonds to 10 and 20, and the "number bond rap" I had written.

Outcomes and Impact

What has been the impact on pupil learning and teaching?

I am far more conscious of transition times than before. I use each moment the children are moving around the classroom to chant something, whether it is the words to a poem we are trying to learn or some number facts. I find I am managing less behaviour issues as the children move from carpet to table, and it is a useful tool to measure how long they should be taking to get their books out, a pencil ready etc.

I have disseminated the chants to Year 1 and they have begun chanting their number bonds to 10.

After weeks of repetitive chanting my children are now able to recite their number bonds to 10 and 20 nearly flawlessly. We had some success with their times tables I have decided to continue this into the following term. The children can finish the chant themselves and in a separate context, tell me two pairs of numbers which equal 10 and 20 with fairly rapid recall. Without the aid of numicon, children are beginning to use their number facts to solve calculations with multiplication.

The greatest impact is on the children's number bonds, which they are now considerably more confident on than before.

Evidence of impact on pupil learning and teaching/leadership

I no longer plan mini-Maths sessions around number bonds to 10, 20 or times tables – this daily practice is covered during our transition times.

Fewer classroom incidents recorded in our Behaviour Book.

Before I began this case study, the children completed number bond sheets and

times table grids. We then repeated this at the close of the case study. The results were as follows:

Number bonds to 10 (mixed addition/subtraction), all 20 calculations correct:

73% to 100%

Number bonds to 20 (mixed addition/subtraction), all 20 calculations correct:

30% to 93%

2 x table, just multiplication:

37% to 67%

5 x table, just multiplication:

27% to 60%

10 x table, just multiplication:

50% to 81%

Observations of the children have shown that they use the rhymes to help them solve calculations – one particularly low-attaining child mutters it under their breath. When we play the rapid recall game “Ping Pong”, far more children are able to join in the game than previously.