



**Embedding effective teaching strategies for boys at
Wadalba Community School**

Participant Handout

Presenter:

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Overview of project:

- A significant number of boys at Wadalba Community School are underachieving and/or are disengaged in the classroom.
- This is documented through baseline data including: ELLA and SNAP, SC, HSC, common and class assessment tasks, school reports, teachers' observations and SWAT referrals.
- Literacy has been identified as a key area needing improvement
- A whole school professional learning program has been implemented to address these issues and improve the quality of the teaching of literacy and the use of specific strategies to support and engage boys in the learning process.

Tools utilised:

- Use of the Proletunity model in conjunction with action research model to ensure continuous quality improvement
- All problems with quality are opportunities for improvement
- Eight common steps:
 1. What are the initial conditions?
 2. What is the proletunity?
 3. What is the current situation?
 4. Analyse the causes
 5. Select and implement a theory of improvement
 6. Study/evaluate the results
 7. Standardise/institutionalise the improvement
 8. Establish future plans

Use of Quality teaching processes/tools to undertake each step

1. What are the initial conditions?
 - **Consensogram**
2. What is the proletunity?
 - **Group Brainstorm**
 - Problem Statement
3. What is the current situation?
 - Check Sheet
 - Data collection
 - Flow Chart
4. Analyse the causes
 - Five whys
 - Force Field analysis
5. Select and implement a theory of improvement through pilot project "Success for Boys"

Resources

- Success for Boys funding
- Success for Boys modules

- Academic mentor
- Partner schools
- KLA/Stage teams

Tools utilised by teams

- Force Field analysis
 - **Hot Potato – sharing of 3 best solutions**
 - Gantt Chart
 - SWOT Analysis
6. Study/evaluate the results
 - Review data
 - Parking Lot
 7. Standardise/institutionalise the improvement
 - Systems Progress
 - Where did we start?
 - Where are we now?
 - Where are we going?
 - Flow chart
 - How will we get there?
 8. Establish future plans
 - Systems Progress
 - Brainstorm
 - Force Field
 - Gantt Chart

DIGA (Describe, Interpret, Generalise and Apply) reflection process to be used throughout project

Useful web sites

www.allkindsofminds.com

www.idonline.org

www.guysread.org

www.help4teachers.com

www.rubistar4teachers.org/index

www.education-world

www.schools.discovery.com

www.whatworks.edu.au

www.lblesd.k12.or.us/student/behavior/events/pbs2005.php

Consensogram

What is it?

A consensogram is a statistical survey that measures the entire group's perception of effort, commitment and understanding. The question is posed by the leader in order to see the group's view on an issue.

Process

- Give each person in the group the same size sticky note.
- Determine what is going to be measured. State and write the question for everyone to hear and read.

How knowledgeable are you about boys' education strategies?

- Ask each member of the group to plot their position on a vertical axis on a scale of 1 to 10, one being very little knowledge and 10 being a high level of knowledge.



Group Brainstorm

What is it?

Brainstorming is a procedure that allows a group of people to express problems, ideas, solutions or needs.

Process

- Each person is given the opportunity to identify at least one idea at a time.
- If someone does not have an idea, they are allowed to “pass” when it is their turn.
- All ideas are good ideas and each idea is written down as it is presented.
- A recorder can ask for clarification in order to record ideas correctly.
- Each idea is written down so everyone can see the accumulation of ideas.
- People can create new ideas based on another person's efforts. This is called piggybacking.

Hot Potato

What is it?

Hot Potato is a procedure that allows small groups to brainstorm solutions to an identified problem and share those solutions with a larger group.

Process

- Each small group is presented with an issue or problem written at the top of an A3 piece of paper. Each group is given a different problem.
- One person is appointed as the ‘scribe’.
- The group is given 3 – 5 minutes to brainstorm solutions to the problem or ways to address the issue.
- At the end of the allocated time the scribe takes the issue or the problem to the next group and the process begins again. Each group must come up with new solutions. They may not repeat solutions suggested by another group.
- This process is repeated until each group has looked at every problem and the scribes have returned to their original groups to discuss the solutions.
- The process concludes with a speaker from each group giving a brief report on three of the proposed solutions.
- The information is then collected from all groups so the solutions can be shared.

What we have learned

1. Negotiate the curriculum
 - Give boys some choice in terms of content, learning activities, methods of assessment, demonstration of learning.
2. Primacy effect
 - Boys learn best in the first part of the lesson
3. Use “life reading” rather than “school reading”.
 - Let boys freely choose
 - Material builds from the familiar to first engage boys (Connectedness)
 - ‘Junk’ mail is used – a range of these materials is collated
 - A stronger link is forged between self concept and reading levels that between IQ and reading levels.
 - Boys read more readily than girls if their friends/peer group read
4. Writing
 - Most writing is done within teacher prepared templates or scaffolds
 - Boys SEE what is expected – i.e. provide actual student samples of the required finished product – copying a piece of work as a basis for comparison is valid for boys
 - Boys find open-ended tasks difficult
 - Technique of ‘chunking’ important

5. Boys like scaffolds and tools

- Use of concept maps, Venn Diagrams, Fish Bones & other Graphic Organisers – Use across all KLAs
- K – W – N – L self assessment by students of text/s– Journals / Visual Assessment overviews
- Paragraph Finders
- Rubrics
- Questioning matrixes

Conclusions from our learning...

- Allow more time for boys to think before answering questions in class
- Explicitly structure time more
- Don't lose the last 5 minutes – consolidation time is very important for boys.
- Start the lesson with a 'Take 5' approach
 - 5 things you learned last lesson – in your journal or shared on the board.
- Boys explicitly or implicitly are primarily interested in relationships
- Boys see the gender of teacher as irrelevant – They place great value on the ability of a teacher to relate to them as individuals
- “Boys learn teachers and not subjects”

Other Project tools

Surveys: A random sample of boys 12 – 14. Older students can be surveyed to provide a reflective tool for teachers.

Pre-hoc survey questions:

1. What do teachers do in a classroom that helps you with your learning?
2. What do teachers do in a classroom that makes it difficult for you to learn?
3. In any lesson, what things would help keep you interested and on task?
4. If you could change one thing in the way teachers work in this school, what would you change?

Post-hoc survey questions:

In the unit of work you have just completed e.g. TAS – Designing a Picture Theatre

1. Where there any teaching and learning activities used that were different from those used by your teachers in the past?
2. Which of the teaching and learning activities did you enjoy most e.g. mind maps, assessment rubrics, guest speaker, excursion, use of computers, etc.?
3. In this unit, what did the teacher do that matched the way you like to learn?
4. What is something the teacher could have done which would have helped you learn more about the topic?
5. Rate your level of engagement during this unit. Tick the box that most applies to you.

Highly engaged

Often engaged

Sometimes engaged

Not engaged

Other comments about this unit:

NB. We adapted these survey questions for the purpose of interviewing a focus group in order to get more information to help teachers.