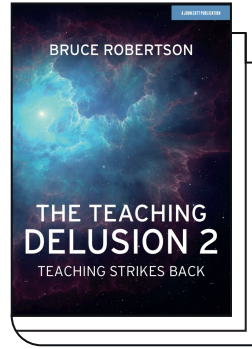


PEDAGOGICAL DELUSIONS

Delusions are beliefs in things that aren't true. They are surprisingly common in education and can be a big issue in schools, particularly when lesson observation feedback is based on them. It is important we call these out, to support everyone ensure we're on the right track.

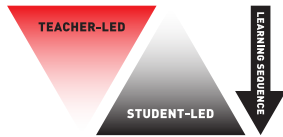


As professionals, there is an obligation to ensure we are teaching using the most effective pedagogy we can.



→ 01 | The Student-led Learning Delusion

In the early to mid- stages of learning anything new, research is clear: teacher-led pedagogies are usually more effective and efficient than student led-ones. This doesn't mean lecturing — it means direct-interactive teaching. Student-led approaches can have an important role to play, but usually later in the learning sequence.



→ 04 | The Differentiation Delusion

Differentiation doesn't mean different students in the same class learning different things, in different ways. This isn't manageable for teachers and will likely lead to avoidable attainment gaps. Think of differentiation as offering appropriate support and challenge to everyone, in pursuit of common learning goals.

→ 06 | The Closed Questions Delusion

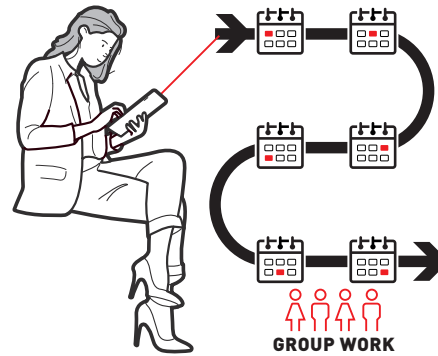
Open questions aren't necessarily better than closed questions (but nor is the reverse true). Both open and closed questions are important formative tools. Closed questions are good for targeting specific knowledge and understanding; open questions help explore knowledge and understanding more broadly. A blend of both is usually best.

→ 09 | The Written Feedback Delusion

Students need feedback to learn, but that doesn't mean this has to be written. Written feedback tends to have a low impact:time ratio – time-consuming for the teacher, with little effect on students' learning. Verbal, interactive feedback is often more useful for students and more time-efficient for teachers.

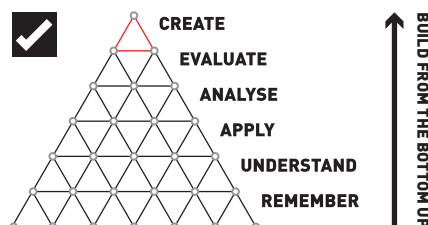
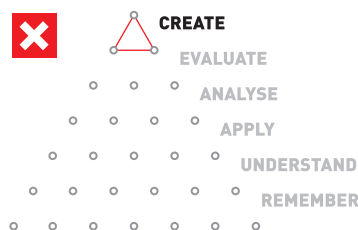
→ 02 | The Behaviour Delusion

There is nothing more destructive to learning than poor student behaviour. School leaders need to accept this and take responsibility for standards. Support teachers — don't blame them. Help them teach students how to behave. Ensure there are clear rules and proportionate consequences. Good behaviour makes for happy students and staff.



→ 07 | The Higher-Order Thinking Delusion

Bloom's Taxonomy, often represented as a pyramid, shouldn't be interpreted to mean the top (higher-order thinking) is more important than the bottom (knowledge and understanding). Both are important. **HIGHER-ORDER THINKING REQUIRES SECURE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING.** Develop the bottom and work up – don't trivialise or ignore the sections that support everything above.



→ 03 | The 'Active' Learning Delusion

Students *should* be active in their learning. However, this means actively engaged i.e. thinking about specific content. Active doesn't mean moving around the room for no apparent reason or being busy for the sake of it. **PRIORITISE THINKING** in lesson planning and delivery and trust that enjoyment will come from success.

→ 05 | The Group Work Delusion

Group work can be very effective to help students learn. However, its design and positioning in the learning sequence needs to be carefully considered. We don't need to see it in every lesson. Usually, it's best in the mid- to late-stages, once knowledge and understanding has started to develop.

→ 08 | The Textbooks and Worksheets Delusion

Textbooks and worksheets aren't old-fashioned and can be very powerful teaching resources. High-quality textbooks support literacy development; high-quality worksheets can help students demonstrate and consolidate their understanding through thinking, writing and practice. Use them to support direct-interactive teaching.



→ 10 | The Motivational Messages and Praise Delusion

The most effective motivator is the experience of success. Showing students how to succeed and supporting them achieve are the best things we can do to motivate. Motivational messages (such as 'You can do it!') will have little impact if success is elusive. The same is true of praise — use it, but make sure it's sincere and proportionate.