

**A small group of colleagues met to discuss techniques which encourage pupil motivation. After listing strategies, the team of colleagues observed each other teaching and fed back before each selecting another colleague in the school to observe – someone who was felt to be especially motivational. The following is a list of the strategies and techniques which were identified as being particularly effective.**

Consistency of approach to classroom management – a simple system working towards rewards and sanctions – and sticking to it! Displaying this in a visible place in the classroom is a good idea.

A simplified version of the classroom rules stuck into books for less able students.

Dialogue with colleagues; proving that staff talk to each other; regular conversations with tutors. Contact with parents – good and bad.

Bell work: ensure that there is a challenge for students as soon as they arrive – or a challenging question for them to consider. Which is the odd one out? Why has been it said of such and such that ..... Try to phrase it as a challenge. Can you work out...? May involve students writing an answer on a mini white board or sticking a post-it note with a suggestion on the board. Work which challenges higher order thinking skills may not always invite written answers – liberates some students.

Kinaesthetic – get students out of seats to put answers on the board, talk to another student etc.

Use countdowns before tasks need to be completed: use real minutes not teacher minutes!

Differentiation – extension and support materials.

Questioning techniques: time to think about answers; warn less able/less confident students that you will be asking them. Give pupils two minutes to think of answer and choose who you want to respond.

“No hands” rule so that everyone expects to be asked.

Try to put things into a practical, “real” context: hot seat students – or be hot seated as the teacher. Ask students to put questions to you on post-it notes on the board. This saves seas of waving hands and you can also weed out inappropriate answers! Post-its may also reduce the “threat” of answering questions as well as placing the responsibility squarely on everyone’s shoulders!

When giving comments, ensure that targets are clear and expect pupils to record these targets and refer to them later. Ensure that students have the opportunity to respond to marking; perhaps the week’s “optional homework” could be to look up or learn spellings or improve on a recent piece of work.

An edge of competition may be useful! (Boys against girls working in pairs on a past paper.)

Make the work relevant to every day life; introduce some scenarios that the pupils may recognise.

Tests/quizzes maybe sometimes be done in pairs to reduce intimidation, encourage collaboration.

Walt and Wilf!

We

Are

Learning

Today

and

What

I'm  
Looking  
For.

Remember the importance of the “twinkle”! Have a laugh if at all possible.

Make the assessment objectives and mark criteria explicit at various points: “that level of detail is needed to gain grade A”; “explaining your evidence – PEE – is needed to gain more than level X” etc.

Get some pupils to prepare feedback to a task on an OHT.

Use mini whiteboards; these are useful for pace – can move on even if not all pupils have finished an exercise. Can also reduce the stress of answering and encourage everyone to answer. “Hold up your whiteboard” with nods – and shakes! – to all pupils.

Ideas from a previous lesson can be written onto sugar paper, then cut into individual ideas. These can then be sorted into order/paragraphs on the board as a class to assist with the planning of writing.

Pupils teaching each other: good to have this as part of the process.

Evaluate why something worked and why it didn't.

Anticipate common mistakes; this depersonalises errors and keeps them fresh in pupils' minds as they start to work.

Go through the process of preparation with pupils – plan work with them.

Add urgency: this is coming off the board in three minutes (and mean it!) etc.

Differentiation: it isn't always possible to use materials; approaches are also essential – and often more flexible.