

# LEARNING MATTERS



Stretch, Support, Share, Innovate

Newsletter: *Ownership*

## INNOVATE Ownership

### What is Ownership?

Ownership is students having the ability to manage their own learning, prioritise and set targets. It includes having self-respect and respect for others who support the learning process.

### Why is ownership important?

If students have ownership over their learning, their eagerness to learn is stimulated. Students with ownership value their learning more, and ownership reduces students' feelings of boredom, alienation and frustration.

### Why do students lose their sense of ownership?

- When they learn something that does not interest them
- When they have little control or choice
- When they lack the personal skills or resources needed to be successful
- When they lack adequate external supports

### What does a classroom fostering ownership look like in terms of behaviour and actions?

- Learning is both **rigorous and engaging**
- There is a balance of **complexity and clarity**: students know what is expected of them; how they will be assessed; what support is available to them if they need help; how the choices we are giving them relate to the learning objectives and criteria for assessment.
- Opportunities are provided to discuss how the learning is **meaningful** to students personally, their real life concerns and interests.
- Learning experiences offer meaningful **choices**: e.g. which form students feel will best demonstrate their understanding of a topic; a variety of topic areas to choose from for revision;

the level of the extension material they can choose from.

- Students are involved in what they learn: ask them what they already know about a topic and **what they would like to know**.
- Students can **choose how they will learn**: Individually? Peer support? Whole group? How they will approach a task.
- **Feedback** is given to students which gives precise information to students about the skills they have acquired and what they need to improve on. This enables them to take meaningful ownership.
- **Students monitor** their own learning process. They know where they need to be and are monitoring the steps they are taking to fill the gap from where they are now.
- **Students create** their own problems and questions for assessments

## STRETCH Ownership

*Enquiring minds* is a learning system that acknowledges what students already know and provides a framework for them to determine what they want to learn about a topic. It is based around an enquiry circle with 4 components:

### 1. Initiating and eliciting: What if...?



Encourage students to draw on their own lives and experiences to discover things that interest them, make them excited, curious and want to ask questions.

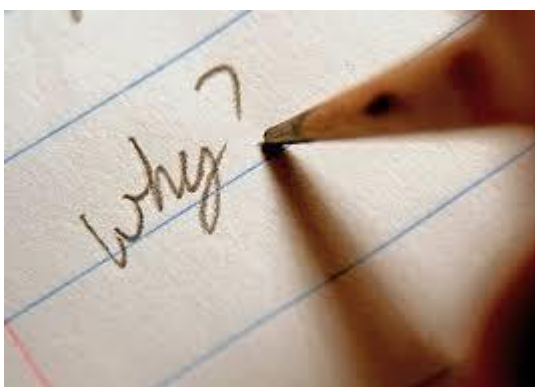
...flying was so heavily taxed that no-one could afford to fly any more?

...cars were able to be powered by water?

...people lived until they were 150 years old?

This activity allows students to explore open-ended questions and compare desirable, probable and possible outcomes.

Or try the 5 Whys..?



This is a simple technique to get students asking questions. The aim is to ask 'why' questions in response to five consecutive answers. For example: Q: Why do you exercise? A: Because it's healthy. Q: Why is it healthy? A: Because it's good for me. Q: Why is it good for me? And so on.

The technique can encourage people to examine and express the underlying reasons for their behaviour and attitudes. It promotes an enquiring stance and challenges students to examine their thinking and reasoning.

## 2. Defining and responding

Once students have identified things they are interested in and would like to know more about, the teacher's role is guiding students to advance their enquiries in meaningful ways.

Example activity - Thinking hats (Edward De Bono)

Edward De Bono's 'thinking hats' each take a different stance towards a question or problem. Students can be encouraged to put on different hats to examine a question from a variety of perspectives. For instance, white hat thinking focuses on the known facts; black hat thinking involves taking a critical stance. Students can be encouraged to analyse and document their thinking and understanding around their topic according to each of the hats.

## 3. Doing and Making

The bulk of the enquiry process includes students researching, designing and constructing in order to make a contribution in their chosen project e.g. a Time Lapse Video



### **SUPPORT Ownership**

If you want students with Special Educational Needs and Disability to value and take ownership of their learning you must:

- offer control and choice
- demonstrate flexibility and an openness to difference
- show an interest in them as individuals and offer out of class support

This means:

- negotiate and speak about tasks set
- encourage the use of different media to present ideas and make it clear that alternative ways of presenting information are acceptable

Invite out of lesson meetings – this shows you accept, understand, appreciate and are prepared to accommodate their differences.

#### 4. Communicating, presenting and evaluating

To conclude the project, students have the opportunity to create a showcase for the work they have been doing – to share their new knowledge and understanding with others. The outcome of students' enquiry could include a highly polished piece of work as the culmination of an extended period of research, such as:

- a website
- written report
- video documentary

- radio programme
- write and rehearse a play
- stage a show or exhibition
- a model
- a design portfolio
- a staged and recorded debate or argument.

This is just a brief outline of the process; more details and ideas can be found on the enquiring minds

website: <http://www.nfer.ac.uk/schools/enquiring-schools/>

### **SHARE Ownership**

At the end of last term, many of us took the opportunity to visit other lessons informally to enjoy the innovative and inspiring practice that we are often too shy to share without a gentle shove! These were completely non-judgemental so we found ourselves able to acknowledge our own struggles and learn from how others manage experiences differently.

Here is some of the feedback demonstrating how opportunities for students to assume *Ownership* are being built every day:

"The use of the confidence opinion line and taking a photo of it on the iPad for record keeping is a great idea."

*Mr Warner visiting Mr Rooney's P.E. lesson*

"Students were obviously well drilled in how to get down to work – as they individually arrived they were able to get started on their work straightaway without waiting for instructions which meant that there was absolutely no wasted time."

*Dr Smith visiting Mrs Wilkinson's Technology class*

"Getting them to think about a practical first gave them a good level of challenge and got them really engaged in the discussion and then the activity."

*Mr Singh visiting Mrs Parvez's Chemistry Lab*

"I found that the lesson gave a lot of depth to home work. The home work was definitely challenging but it was lovely to see the boys discussing their work and boys who had attempted the home work put their ideas more confidently."

*Mrs Parvez on Mr Singh's Maths class*

"Very innovative use of the Sound Meter app on the board so students are aware of their own noise levels!!"

*Mrs Beckley on Mr Rodger's Key stage 3 Science class*