Teaching for Mastery Lesson Design at High Oakham Primary School

A Primary Case Study

Teaching for Mastery Lesson Design Work Group

One of the biggest challenges facing schools as they adopt a teaching for mastery approach is how to design lessons. Working collaboratively with practitioners from across the East Midlands the project, we began by identifying the key features of mastery, before exploring a route through a lesson, that allowed teachers to link these together in a coherent manner. Essentially we were looking at how to turn theory into outstanding classroom practice. Though our research often went much wider than what is captured here in these case studies, each participant school was asked to focus in on one aspect of lesson design, how it has been incorporated into classroom practice, and the impact it has had on learners.

Overview

Samantha Pregon is a Year One teacher and shared Maths Lead at High Oakham Primary School. Samantha took part in the East Midlands West maths hub Mastery Lesson Design Workgroup 2017/18. The Lesson Design workgroup has had a positive impact on the planning, teaching and learning in mastery maths lessons. Most importantly, because it has enabled the children to move forward in their learning together. She explained:
“In our school we wanted to move away from the traditional style maths lesson and integrate the mastery approach. We had already made some big changes across school, such as each year group is following the White Rose Small Steps Guidance as a starting point to deliver the curriculum and all teachers have adopted mixed ability teaching so that all of our children can excel in maths to achieve their full potential”.

What we did at High Oakham Primary School

To begin with, Samantha began with changing the structure when planning her own maths lessons. Every lesson started with an Anchor Task, which enabled the children to engage in rich discussion based on a ‘real life’ problem posed. The lesson then moved through Guided Practice, which gradually builds on the learning so that the children can move together towards the objective in small steps, hoping that no one is left behind. When the children became more confident with the focus they would move onto some Independent Practice, this would entail the children using the skills gained throughout the lesson to access further reasoning and problem solving activities. Samantha also changed the planning format she had been using so that each of these areas was a key focus. This allowed Samantha to really think about the differentiation in each part of the lesson. She had to think about how she was going to support any struggling learners but also challenge the rapid graspers who got it quickly.
Samantha then started to consider the elements that went within a mastery maths lesson. She decided to focus on the just one of these elements in her planning, this was using different ‘representations’. When teaching addition and subtraction, Samantha introduced the children to the part-whole model.
Previously, when faced with missing number addition and subtraction calculations some of the children really struggled to understand what they needed to do to find the missing part. By using the part-whole model with her class alongside simple addition and subtraction calculations when all the children needed to do was to find the answer, the children became more comfortable with what each part of the calculation/ model means in order to make the whole or find the total. Then when moving onto missing number calculations, the children were more confident with what they needed to do to work out the answer, many would even draw their own part-whole model to help them to find the missing number.

Summary and next steps

At High Oakham Primary School, we are going to continue to implement mastery style maths lessons and build upon this across the whole school. The next steps are to deliver the lesson structure of a mastery maths lesson with all staff and encourage staff to begin to incorporate some of the elements that go within this when planning.

More Information

For more information about this project, or other workgroups and opportunities available through the East Midlands West Maths Hub:
Visit our website: http://www.emwest.co.uk
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