

1 Creating Teaching & Learning Resource Book

Raising the expectations bar in your classroom

Challenge: How can I ensure that high expectations result in improved classroom outcomes?

Summary

This tool focuses on the need to ensure that there are consistently high expectations of all your students. It consists of a series of reframes of questions/statements arising from commonly encountered classroom issues, and is designed to help you make the link between what you say, your underlying classroom expectations and the outcomes that stem from this.

Who can use it?

Teachers, classroom assistants, leaders.

Intended outcomes

- To reinforce to students the notion that high expectations are a major feature of your classroom
- To encourage your students to achieve success by aiming high in all aspects of their work and behaviour.

Timing and application

The reframes included below should be built in to your lessons, and are not intended to be taught in a discrete manner. They are essential messages that can be weaved into your lessons, helping to build up a consistency of message. Together, they will build a more purposeful atmosphere for learning.

Resources

Writing materials.

Extension

The exercise can also form part of a valuable joint CPD programme with some like-minded colleagues, helping you address this key issue as part of a classroom support group. Colleagues could observe each other teach and note down questions or statements that could be the subject of reframes that are worked through together at the end of the lesson.

The Creating Teaching & Learning Toolkit pages

Page 85–91

Cross references to Essential Briefings book

Coaching p. XX

Giving learners a voice p. XX

Target setting approaches p. XX

Learning Resource Raising the expectations bar in your classroom

- 1 Read through the table below, noting the issues, questions/statements, reframes and the key messages (the latter for teacher use only). The questions represent commonly heard responses by teachers to day-to-day classroom issues. Note that the questions/reframes are not presented as examples of *inappropriate* things in themselves for teachers to say, rather they can be qualified in the way indicated in the reframe column to convey more powerful messages about learning.

ISSUE	QUESTION/ STATEMENT	REFRAME	KEY MESSAGE
Overall principles	You've worked really quietly today – thanks for that! (to class)	I've enjoyed your efforts to stay on task quietly today. I'm hoping that will help you to do well in this subject, but remember that sometimes we need to have more people contributing to class discussions too	Success is about more than working quietly!
	Don't forget, we always need to prepare work neatly, don't we? (to class)	High quality work in this subject is neatly presented – but it's also thorough and well structured	Neatness is not the key to success
Achievement	Well done – level 5. Good work Lee-Roy, keep up the good work (to a willing year 8 boy)	Lee-Roy – great to see another level 5. Let's see if you can aim for a 6 next time by giving more background to the characters you write about. We'll be doing an exercise on that soon.	You can do better by focusing on weaknesses
	I was pleased with your test results 7R – you're one of my favourite groups! (to class)	Here's a breakdown of your marks on the last test. Good overall and you're one of the strongest performing classes in Year 7 – but can you have a look and see whether you achieved what you and I expected you would?	Performance is about individuals not groups
Target setting	I think you should be able to get a grade C in this subject (to coasting Year 10 girl)	What do you think would be an easy target grade and what would be a harder one to aim for in this subject?	Learners need to have ownership of targets
Homework	You missed homework again – that's an automatic detention for you! (to disaffected but quite bright year 11 boy)	Missing homework will prevent you from reaching your target in this subject – I understand you need a C to get into college, is that right?	This subject has relevance to all students
Effort	This work looks rushed! (to a keen girl that tends to work at break-neck speed)	Let's think about why you spent so little time on this task – can we talk through why you made this decision and what we all can do next time to help you be more thorough?	Everyone can work on their weaknesses