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Strategic. Progression in learning power

A guided conversation for strategic leaders

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Line of argument through the slides

- Three types of progression, frequency, scope, skill.
- How work on progression deepens the impact of learning power
- The learning power progression grid for perseverance; its dimensions and phases of growth
- The online PD units cluster the suggested teaching activities by progression phase
- An overview of what we are trying to achieve

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The threads that link these slides together:

- Having 'learning power' is not enough – the task is to build learning power
- The 3 aspects of progression – Frequency, how often /Scope, in different places /Skill, how well.
- Progression in one aspect of learning - Perseverance

Aim of the discussion: To consider/explore the importance of progression and to view oneself (and people you know) through the lens of progression in Perseverance.

Objectives: By the end of the discussion participants will have explored:

- The different aspects of progression and consider the importance of progression;
- The areas of the school that can be impacted on by an understanding of in learning behaviours progression;
- The nature of progression in Perseverance;
- How well they and others they know persevere.

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Three types of progression in *building* Learning Power

• Frequency

- Aim to develop the skill into a habit that the student employs frequently, without support, as and when the need arises
- The message is 'spot students using the behaviour and point it out'

• Scope

- Aim to help students to recognise and exploit opportunities to utilise their learning behaviours in new and uncharted territory
- The message is to look out for and comment on the use of the behaviour, however tenuously

• Skill

- Aim to support students in becoming more skilled, sophisticated, nuanced in the behaviour.
- The message is to build skillfulness progressively and intentionally through the learning tasks and activities in the classroom.

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The Key message(s) on this slide:

There are three aspects to progression – frequency, scope and skill

Detail:

Frequency – developing skills into habits through repeated opportunities to exercise the skill. The teacher's role is to spot it happening and make students aware. The more students understand and are given the chance to use the capacity, the quicker they will turn using it into a habit.

Scope – the holy grail of transfer. Using skills that you have developed in one setting and applying it in another, unrelated area. For example, recognising that the perseverance, attention to detail and repeated practice necessary for solving a problem on the xbox is the same skill necessary for success in the numeracy lesson. The teacher's role is to catch students doing it and pointing it out.

Skill – much the most complex of the three. It is not enough to get students doing it frequently, nor even in a wider range of settings. Over time we want them to be doing both of those things and, critically, doing it increasingly skilfully. The teacher's role is to provide learning experiences/activities/tasks that progressively exercise more sophisticated learning skills. For example in the early stages a teacher might be providing opportunities for students to work together, to take turns and generally cooperate with their teammates, whereas later the teacher might be creating activities that call for the more sophisticated skills of consensus building and conflict resolution.

Progression in learning habits is key because..

- It extends the language of learning
 - from broad and vague to focused and precise
- It deepens understanding of learning behaviours
 - their features and scope
- It focuses task design/lesson planning
 - tasks that emphasise/enable specific feature of the progression
- It enables students to set targets for improving learning behaviours
- It feeds into report writing for parents and mentoring
- It serves to help teachers take a more forensic approach to teaching for learning

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The Key message(s) on this slide:

Progression is key to helping students to improve as learners

Detail:

For example;

- It **extends the language** of learning – taking learners (and teachers) beyond the ability to say ‘I didn’t give up’ to talking about the strategies they could employ when learning is tricky
- It **deepens understanding** of learning behaviours – putting more flesh on the bare bones of the learning capacities, understanding that, for example, using cause and effect or seeking similarities and differences are link making activities.
- It **focuses task design/lesson planning** – it enables teachers to plan activities that exercise particular aspects of a learning behaviour rather than simply operating at the level of the 17 learning capacities
- It **enables students to set targets** for improving learning behaviours – vague targets like ‘ask more questions in class’ can be sharpened into a useful target that is both memorable and achievable: ‘If my question does not tell me everything I need to know, then I’ll ask another question to seek more detail’.

What does progression in Perseverance look like?

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Persevering	1) Dealing with 'stuckness'	2) Managing the learning environment	3) Self talk	4) Dealing with challenge	5) Orientation to goals
Embodies	Unphased by being stuck, knowing they have the strategies to overcome	Manages own learning environment independently with a positive learning-value system	I look out for new strategies to help me learn/understand	Seeks out and relishes challenging activities knowing they have the skills and emotions to make them successful	Sets and amends long term life goals
Organises	Takes risks underpinned by relevant strategies. Analyses failures and mistakes positively to better understand	Overcomes and manages any external discouragement, negativity, peer pressure	I get organised to ensure everything gets done	Systematically plans longer term/substantial projects	Sees current goals in a wider/long term context. Willing to change immediate goals in the face of setbacks.
Values	Is curious about mistakes. Uses written and verbal feedback effectively	Has worked out ways to help them through the hard slog of practice	I keep going because I'm interested in this goal I know I can overcome this	Uses relevant strategies to deal with setbacks and outcomes. Uses planning tools to avoid obstacles	Makes given goals their own. Creates clear achievable end goals. Thinks of challenges as their goals.
Responds	Initiates own prompts to get unstuck. Maintains positive emotions. Knows why they are stuck	Uses distractions positively. Knows what to avoid	I stay positive even when it's hard	Anticipates the risks of more challenging activities	Accepts external sources of goals (from teachers/parents). Times with double goals.
Receives	Uses suggested prompts and resources to get unstuck	Aware of what distracts them and tries to control it	I learning can be a struggle. It's okay to find things hard. I have the power to get it	Resists the inclination to give up easily. Gives up easily. Covers content support. But still by having too much to do	Has a sense of what they want something to look like. Visualises end results.
Lacks	No coping strategies	Prone to be distracted. Put off by lack of resources. Sensitive to negativity	I don't like being wrong. What's the point of effort if I think learning is easy	Gives up easily. Covers content support. But still by having too much to do	Little sense of ends or goals or working towards something purposefully

- Ask yourself:
- Where are you now?
- Where is your child?
- Are they 'getting better' at it?
- Why are they?
- How do you know?



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The Key message(s) on this slide:

This is one example of progression in a learning behaviour, in this case Perseverance. Read it from the bottom upwards, from unskilled in the bottom, grey row to highly skilled in the top, orange row.

Detail:

Consider:

- Where are you now? – Think about yourself. How effective are you at Managing distractions? Dealing with Being Stuck? Etc. Are there some aspects of your lives where you are better than others?
- Where is your child? Do the same for your own child. Look at their perseverance behaviours through the lens of this map of progression.
- Are they 'getting better' at it? Do your instincts suggest that your child is slowly becoming more skilful over time?
- Why are they? Have you any idea why they are getting better (or not)? Is it simply because they are getting older? Is it because of the learning experiences they are experiencing? Is it a 'natural' development, or does it need intervention?
- How do you know? A tough question, because at this stage you probably have no idea ! But at least with the map, we can begin to ask the question.

Teaching activities are structured to help the up-skilling of learning behaviours

Lacks	Receives	Responds	Values	Organises	Embodies
I can't, I won't	'Show me. Tell me'	'I'll try'	'I see why'	'I make sure I do'	'I can't not do this'
Adopt a character (ages 4-10) Adopt a character – real, imaginary, human or animal – who exhibits the best features of persevering with being stuck. Talk about the character until your children become familiar with its attributes. When you have set a group to work on a particular task – numeracy, reading, writing etc., leave this character (actual or pictured) on their table as a reminder of 'what to do when you don't know what to do'.					
Show an animation (ages 4-10) 1 minute animation to illustrate an aspect of Perseverance. Use it to talk about trying other ways to achieve what you want to do. It's about shifting responsibility for learning to the learner. Make your own class animations for different aspects of Perseverance.					
Try a quick activity (ages 8-12) NB: Please read Perseverance for Resilience. A 5 minute activity to introduce students to broad ideas of stuck and perseverance					

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The Key message(s) on this slide:

Teachers need to intervene in order to help students to become more skilful at Perseverance. The online materials help them to do this.

Detail:

The online aspects of the blended learning programme have lots of teaching ideas, carefully differentiated so that teachers can target the development of particular aspects of Perseverance. In this case, the image shows the first 3 of 10 teaching ideas to use with students who are in the grey, 'lacks' phase to help them to move into the 'purple' phase.

By growing students' learning power we will be working to...

- build students' learning characters
- turn their learning capacities into learning habits
- turn dependent into interdependent learners
- develop lifelong learners

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The Key message(s) on this slide:

Summarises the importance of considering progression

Detail:

Progression puts the ***Building*** into Building Better Learners.