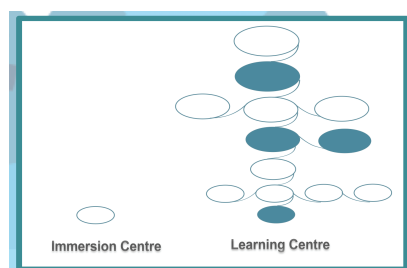


Immersion Centres

Learning in the *Phase One* of the learning process is facilitated through both 'immersion centres' and 'learning centres'. Immersion Centres are representationally simple compared to the complexity of learning centres but do not confuse simplicity in representation with importance.



Immersion centres are designed to do so much more than 'hook' the learner or provide opportunities for 'tuning in'. They are implemented as the critical first step in the learning process. Their significance can not be underestimated. Immersion centres are designed to check assumed schema, activate related schema, introduce new schema loosely, promote self discovery and the development of hypotheses, collect baseline data and introduce the 'so what challenge'.

It is through the Immersion Centres that learners are 'set up' for the successful acquisition and integration of new learning. Learners will not successfully acquire and integrate new learning if the prerequisite knowledge is not in place. Consequently, the first step in designing successful instruction involves checking for prerequisite schema by activating long term memories and collecting baseline data.

ASSUME nothing!

It is critically important to unpack the learning outcomes that will be addressed with your learners to determine the specific knowledge, understanding and skills you intent to teach. It is also imperative that all prerequisite knowledge and skills be identified. Too often we assume that our learners have the prerequisite schema for new learning and this is not the case. Learners then experience intrinsic (complexity) cognitive load because they are unable to connect their new learning to old. Remember...just because you taught it, does not mean they learned it!

Imagine I am going to focus some new teaching and learning on narrative. I want my year one learners to know and understand the following schema:

Setting: time and place

Characters: goodies and baddies; inside and outside traits

Plot: problem, complications, resolution

I ASSUME my learners already know about setting including place and time; characters that are goodies and baddies; I believe they will need to learn more about traits and how these are depicted through text, images and dialogue; I think my learners know problem and resolution but need to learn more about complications and their role in a story...

Given the schema I am planning to address, it is important that learners have in fact consolidated the foundational knowledge I assume they have. If they have not, they will surely experience cognitive overload and their ability to learn what I am planning to teach WILL be inhibited.

It is also key that I find out if my learners know what I THINK they DO NOT know. Learners have a right to be challenged! In the words of John Hattie, '...one years growth for one years input'. We must always remember that we do not teach curriculum...we teach kids:)

ASSUME nothing– I will use immersion centres to check the schema my learners have stored in long term memory. I want to know what they do and do not already know and understand.

Discovering Story Books By Children For Children

When you want to think of ideas of your own, it can help to look at examples!

- Explore the story books made by some children your age.
- Use the organiser to guide your discoveries and your thinking.

Discovering Story Books by Children				
discoveries <small>things events in the story plot</small>	strengths <small>S</small>	weaknesses <small>W</small>	so what ideas <small>SW</small>	
Story 1				
Story 2				
Story 3				

them to write books for their buddy class. In exploring books created by children, they will see that their challenge is a realistic one. As importantly, exploration of narratives will help them activate long term memory schema so that they can more effectively retrieve what they actually know. It is not sufficient to simply invite learners to share what they know about a narrative. This is often the approach taken when teachers use the KWL (What do you know? What do you want to know? What have you learned?) tool to collect baseline data. Research indicates that learning is best retrieved when using cues similar to those used when the learning was stored (Thomson & Tulving, 1970/1978.) By directing learners to share what they know specifically about setting, characters and plot (see bullet points in discoveries section), long term memory is activated in these areas and learners are better able to access stored knowledge.

Discovering Fairytales				
	discoveries	S <small>strengths</small>	W <small>weaknesses</small>	SW <small>so what ideas</small>
setting				
character				
plot				

offer them a more specifically framed organiser as this may provide the ‘cues’ needed to activate prior knowledge.

Before we move on, I would like to address the S.W.SW component of this organiser. The S (strengths) and W (weaknesses) sections, invite learners to share an opinion. This promotes emotive engagement. The final SW (‘so what’ ideas) section links the learning to the learner. Learners are invited to consider how they might USE what they know. The inclusion of these sections and this thinking promotes germane cognitive investment in the learning and problem finding. As learners analyse, evaluate and synthesise, they are provided an opportunity to develop these thinking skills.

discovering Story Books by Children

Alexia 26/10/18

evaluation	discoveries	strengths	weaknesses	so what ideas
samples	characters setting events in the story (plot)	S	W	SW
Story 1 Friends and special	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plot → changed over time Miss Cheeta only 22 spots in the beginning an gave 2 spots LH some pages didn't have words Delane broke story up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> creative problems sharing is caring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yeah could have been YEAH! AB some weren't colored in completely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> thought of a spread out spread out
Story 2				
Story 3				

Thinking Discoveries

Examples

Thinking	Discoveries	S	W	SW
Story #1 Friends Are Special By Delane Clark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> plot → changed over gave 2 spots LH Miss Cheeta only had 22 spots in the beginning an some pages didn't have words Delane broke story up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> creative problem character didn't give up an sharing is caring creative resolution friendship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> some weren't colored in completely Yeah could have been YEAH! AB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> change setting throughout 5 p r e d 22 spots 1 detail 1 detail
Story #2 Little Town by Amy McMillan Caitlin Murray	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> every picture → in my town there was a → friends an every 2nd page is blank (paper) 22 is on every page an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> font different have lots of details colouring was real an 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> change the setting from 2 (Gina) 22
Story #3				

Organisers for Baseline Data Collection

•learners may complete an organisers by themselves, they might use a scribe to record on their behalf or the organiser can be inserted into a software package so that the learner can record his responses aurally. Alternatively, you can complete an organisers with the entire class as seen in the image on the right. In this case, you will record each learner's response along with their initials. This is done for both accountability and evidence purposes.

Obviously, this latter option makes it much more difficult to truly learn what your children do and do not know as there are only so many opportunities to share knowledge with 30 + children contributing. You might also decide to scribe for small groups of 5 or 6 children during a 'teacher centre'. This would enable you to provide the support required for younger or less able children while still providing a greater opportunity for each child to share.

If your learners neglect to show that they know and understand what you 'assumed' they would, provide a more specific organiser to 'cue' them further. If learners are still unable to share the prerequisite schema, you will need to move back before you move forward. You will shift your approach to 'learning centres' (see presentation on Learning Centres for more information).

Depending on how long it will take for learners to grasp this prerequisite knowledge or skills – you may need to revise the outcomes you originally intended to address.

While we are certainly accountable to what the curriculum is directing us to teach, we must temper this – always - with what our learners are capable of learning.

There are a number of additional means of collecting baseline data during the immersion stage of the learning process. The following pages will share a few of these examples.

Baseline Thinking About

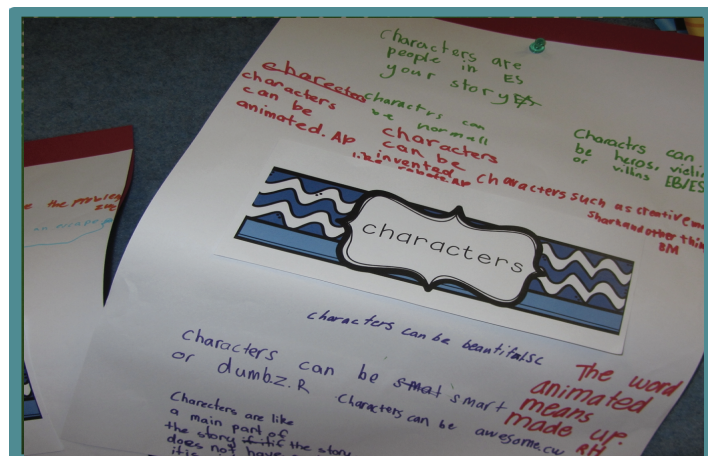
Character **Setting** **Plot**

- On the paper provided brainstorm everything you know about the focus area
- Carousel to each table and read what your friends have recorded
- Add any new ideas in your team colour

(You may not repeat anything already written. Include a tick beside anything your team agrees with.)

The 'Carousel' strategy is an effective one, as learners are able to use the brainstorming of others in their team as cues for their own long term memory retrieval.

- charts outlining a specific concept are placed at tables
- learners sit in teams at each table; each team has a specific coloured pen
- team members brainstorm what they know about the concept using their specific team pen colour; each learner initials contributions
- teams 'carousel' to next chart, read what their classmates recorded about the concept on the chart and add new ideas about the concept using their team pen colour; if they agree with a recording they may 'tick' it in their pen colour
- learners use the knowledge of their classmates and team to cue their own stored schema



Showing What I Already Know!
Baseline Work

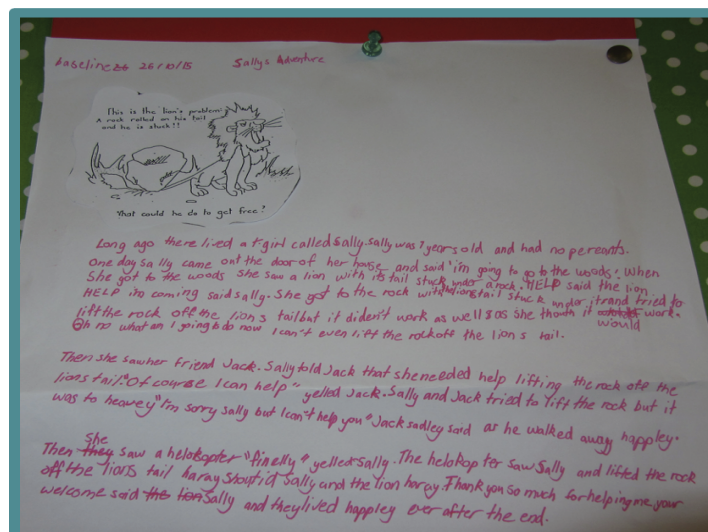
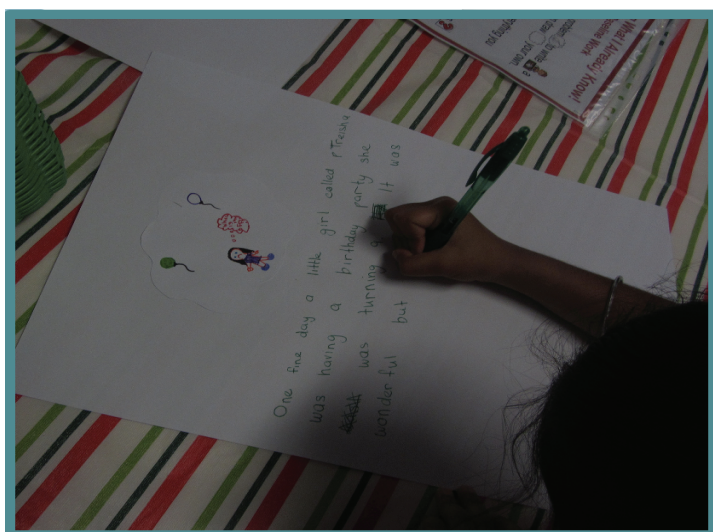
- 1 Pick one **1** story bubble problem to write **1** a story about OR you can draw **1** your own.
- 2 Write **1** a story and show everything you know about stories.
- 3 As a group **1** talk **1** about your wonderings **1**? then record **1** them on the 'post it' notes **1** provided.

Give It A Go...

The most effective way to find out what a learner knows and can do is to give them an opportunity to show you before you have 'taught' them anything!

In this Immersion Centre, learners were invited to write a story and include what they know about characters, setting and plot. Note – this immersion task was not introduced until the others were completed. As learners

engaged in reading narratives for children by children; and as they engaged in the Carousel opportunity, long term memories were activated. This activation enabled learners to access what they truly already knew. Learners often know a great deal but are not provided enough prior stimuli to activate their knowledge!



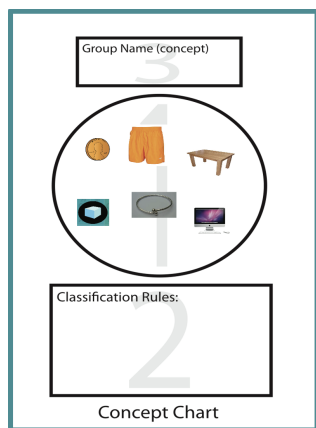
Concept Grouping

A learner's conceptual understanding can be checked through the use of a 'Grouping' activity.

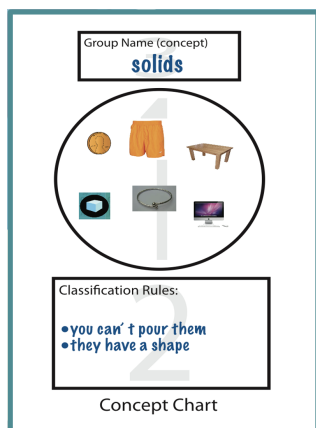
Another powerful strategy that can be used to check consolidated schema involves 'Grouping'. Students are provided with images that represent membership in a diversity of categories or classes. They are invited to group the images that they believe belong together. They are then invited to share their 'membership rules'. This strategy will enable both teachers and learners to see the concepts that are and are not possessed by the learner.

Let's explore an example...

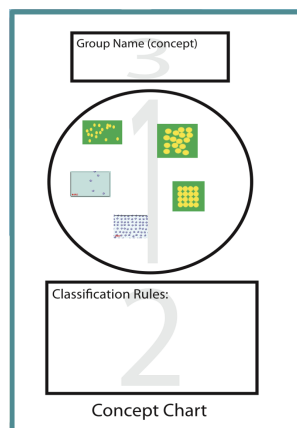
Learners are provided with a number of images to cut out. They are then invited to group the images and share their membership rules. Once this is complete they are invited to group again, and again, and again, until they have exhausted their grouping ideas.



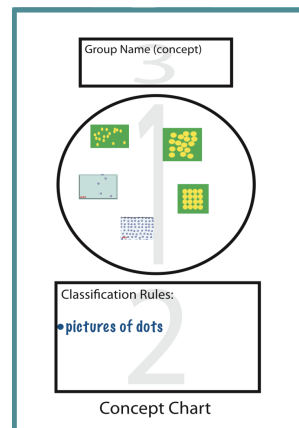
The learner groups the images he believes belong together...



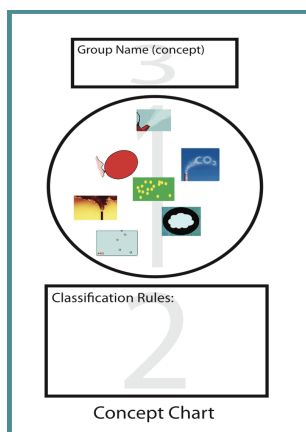
...the learner then outlines the membership rules and names the group if possible...



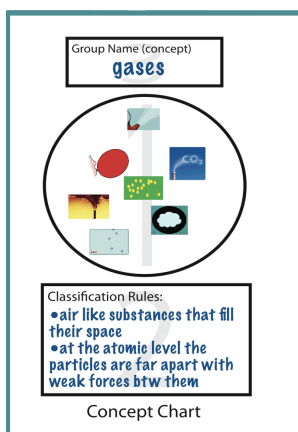
The learner groups the images he believes belong together...



...the learner then outlines the membership rules and names the group if possible...



The learner groups the images he believes belong together...



...the learner then outlines the membership rules and names the group...

This learner is showing the consolidation of much different schema to the groupings made by other learners.

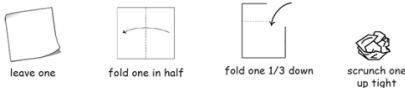
You must have a way to evidence these groupings if you are to truly use this activity to guide instructional design. Ideally, learners will be taught how to photograph their groupings and save them into their own folder. This 'grouping' strategy should be implemented again at the 'stop and think' stage of the learning and compared to the baseline evidence.

The teacher can also group images and invite learners to 'guess the grouping rule'; learners can also do this with their classmates.

Think strategically about the images you choose for this learning experience. Include those you believe your learners will group to show consolidated concepts; include images that represent new learning – that which you intend to ‘teach’.

Investigating Air Resistance Force

1 As a team take four A4 pages :



2 Follow the instructions on your organiser to guide your investigation.

3 Record your wonderings on the chart paper provided in your team colour.

Exploring Air Resistance Force

Discoveries	Will they take the same time to fall? Explain your thinking.	Time Taken to fall	What did happen?	Why?	
Objects				Prediction	Actual
full paper	When you test, make sure you drop from exactly the same height for each.				Read Info. Sheet
paper 1/3 folded					
paper 1/2 folded					
paper scrunched in tight ball					
What is air resistance force? <input type="checkbox"/> contact force <input type="checkbox"/> non contact force					

Cross Class Chart

Investigating Buoyant Force

1 As a team predict and then test each item (in the order of your organiser) to see if it sinks or floats.

2 Use the organiser 'Exploring Buoyant Force' to guide your discoveries and your thinking.

3 Record your wonderings on the chart paper provided in your team colour.

Exploring Buoyant Force

Discoveries	Will it Float (F) or Sink (S) ?		What happened?	Why?	
Objects	Prediction	Actual		Prediction	Actual
ping pong ball					Read Info. Sheet
golf ball					
paper clip					
mandarin with peel					
mandarin without peel					
cork					
your choice					
What is buoyant force? <input type="checkbox"/> contact force <input type="checkbox"/> non contact force					

Cross Class Chart

It is also during the immersion centre experience, that learners are provided with opportunities to make discoveries and hypothesise. Their hypotheses will be tested as they engage in the learning centres that will follow. These opportunities respect the philosophy behind true 'inquiry' learning.

All baseline activities should be provided again at the conclusion of the extension and refinement phase of learning. For those who have received professional learning on the think!nQ real learning process, baseline tasks are provided after the 'investigation' stage at the 'stop and think' stage of the learning process.

Learners should then be provided the opportunity to compare their baseline thinking to that which has developed over the course of their learning journey.

I will end the way in began...Immersion Centres are implemented as the critical first step in the learning process. Their significance can not be underestimated. ASSUME nothing and always check what you think they already know and what you think they do not yet know. While there are many ways to do this, I have shared the following strategies:

- Framed organisers (loosely framed; then more specifically framed should learners require more cuing or should you wish to check greater depth of knowledge)
- Carousal
- Have a Go
- Concept Grouping
- Pure Inquiry to discover and hypothesise (pure inquiry left to its own devices can result in inaccurate schema construction and 'fluffing about'; it is critical that it be used as a springboard for 'teaching' needed concepts and skills and as an approach to promote authentic self discovery and purposeful questions)