

How do we get them going?

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As a music department, ticks and crosses are just not appropriate for a huge amount of the work we do. Instead we collate work on tapes which students record on to at key stage 3, and CD/MP3 files at key stage 4. This way they get feedback not just from their teacher but from parents and, more importantly, their peers. Wanting to show others the work they've done is a huge motivator and students have become adept at standardising

themselves against their classmates and friends.

We are setting up a website where they can upload their tracks anonymously under pseudonyms to offer up for public appraisal/grading and to showcase best practice. They can also download other people's tracks to their MP3 players or mobiles as ringtones. They can grade themselves against music streamed online and, of course, everything else on their iPods or MP3 players.

The first time I heard "Yeah, but my riff is much clearer than the new Black Eyed Peas track, Miss!" I nearly choked.

Teacherskills

I've started doing quite a bit of self-assessment as part of my plenaries using my interactive whiteboard. At the end of one lesson in which Year 7 learned to look up Bible references, I allocated each pupil a number and then called up three areas on the interactive whiteboard. They were:

- I can do this easily and teach someone else how to do it.
- I can do it if I take time and

'Wanting to show others the work they've done is a huge motivator'

care and usually get it right.

- I need to see my teacher for a bit more help as I can do this but find it really hard.

Pupils then drag their number to the appropriate place that they are working at. They are honest because the numbering system means they feel anonymous, but I know who is who and quickly assess them. **leviosa**

- I use straight up honesty and phrases such as "I want the best from you, and if I give you a hard time it's because I believe you can do better". For students who believe they are

in the wrong group but don't want to work "because it's boring/too easy", I point out that nobody will know they're in the wrong group if they don't do the work. I also give as much personal attention as possible. And rewards — simple sweets, five out, small classroom jobs — to show interest in them, but only when they have worked beyond normal levels. **TinyTim**

- Just this week we gave our Year 5s a questionnaire, attempting to find out their individual learning styles. I feel it was a waste of time, as children find it difficult to think about the

processes they go through when doing something.

I prefer to use assessment for learning — considering the types of activities which work well for a particular group of children. My Year 5 class this year enjoy finding things out for themselves, so we do a lot of tasks based on using atlases, books, the internet, etc. to find information. **flookbird**

- Reminding pupils how they previously struggled with something that they're now doing successfully can be encouraging; for example, "I remember how at the

beginning of the year you had no idea how to do this and now you're confident enough to talk about it and help others."

Tangible improvement — seeing that you're getting somewhere — is motivating. Often we have a fair idea of how we're doing right now, or what we might aim for next, but need reminding where we once were. **cffoster**

- The most surprising motivator I've used was an "invitation" sent out to my Year 10 students for a detention for coursework that did not appear by the given deadline. They

were in colour and looked like party invitations. They caused uproar in morning registration and everybody wanted one.

Even though recipients worked out they were in trouble, they still came (as did some of their classmates who didn't need to), most stayed for an hour, not the 30 minutes required, and we got lots of work done. **SHB**

- If, like me, you are a real saddo, and read through Ofsted reports, then you will notice that "high expectations" is an oft-repeated term. These might not guarantee high pupil performance but they certainly

help. Our expectations of our pupils are very important.

Barbara Preston

- I try to make lessons as practical as possible (when studying descriptive writing I devised an experiment where all the pupils had to use each of their five senses) and suited to every learning style. Using the accelerated learning approach, as well as making it clear that the pupils have achieved something and what they have achieved by the end of each lesson, is the key.

Clear use of learning outcomes is vital ("by the end

'The most surprising motivator was an "invitation" to a detention for late coursework'

of this lesson you will have..."), but how do you show the pupils that they have clearly done this? I scan work, project it (interactive whiteboard/projector needed) and then mark it, clearly showing what is good about that pupil's piece of work.

Nigel Whittle

- There are two simplistic assumptions that are very tempting — but rather dangerous — to make about the relationship between assessment and motivation. The first is that assessment is simply a means to greater