

LESSON BASICS

stand
out
teaching

OUTSTANDING LESSON PLANNING





WELCOME

What are 'Lesson Basics'?

They are those every day activities we as teachers undertake during our lessons on a frequent basis, often without much thought. They are those activities that are essential to keeping the lesson moving, disseminating information efficiently and necessary to promote progress.

Here at Standout Teaching we have looked at lesson basics and put together a range of resources and strategies to make them just that little bit better.

Add little tweaks to make them more student focused and add timings to ensure that they are delivered with pace. It is these small details, given that extra bit of thought, which will make your lessons outstanding.



TIMINGS

Timings are critical to maintaining student engagement and achieving progress within a lesson.

Often activities can run for too long, for example teacher explanations or demonstrations, leading to students becoming bored and detached from the learning. The simple solution is to plan your activities in advance with a careful consideration of the time required and then use a timer or clock to try to keep to these times to ensure that pace is maintained.



TEACHER TALK

There are frequent times within a lesson when the teacher needs to instruct or explain. These are essential lines of communication which require full student attention.

Yet often these are not planned resulting in students not fully engaging with what is being said. This can be easily addressed through using active listening strategies and also timings to ensure that pace is maintained.

Active listening can be simple things like note taking, having a set of questions to answer or students creating their own questions. This places the focus clearly onto the listening. Using timers to ensure that teacher talk is not excessive will help to keep your lessons engaging.



STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Lessons should be about the students working towards gaining understanding and developing their skills.

Yet far too often they are about the teacher working excessively hard while the students take a back seat. This often results in disengagement and lack of progress. Lack of planning which looks at how activities can be student focused can often be attributed to a slowing of learning. Whenever you are planning your lesson take time to look at every point which is teacher led and consider the following question-

How could this be student focussed?

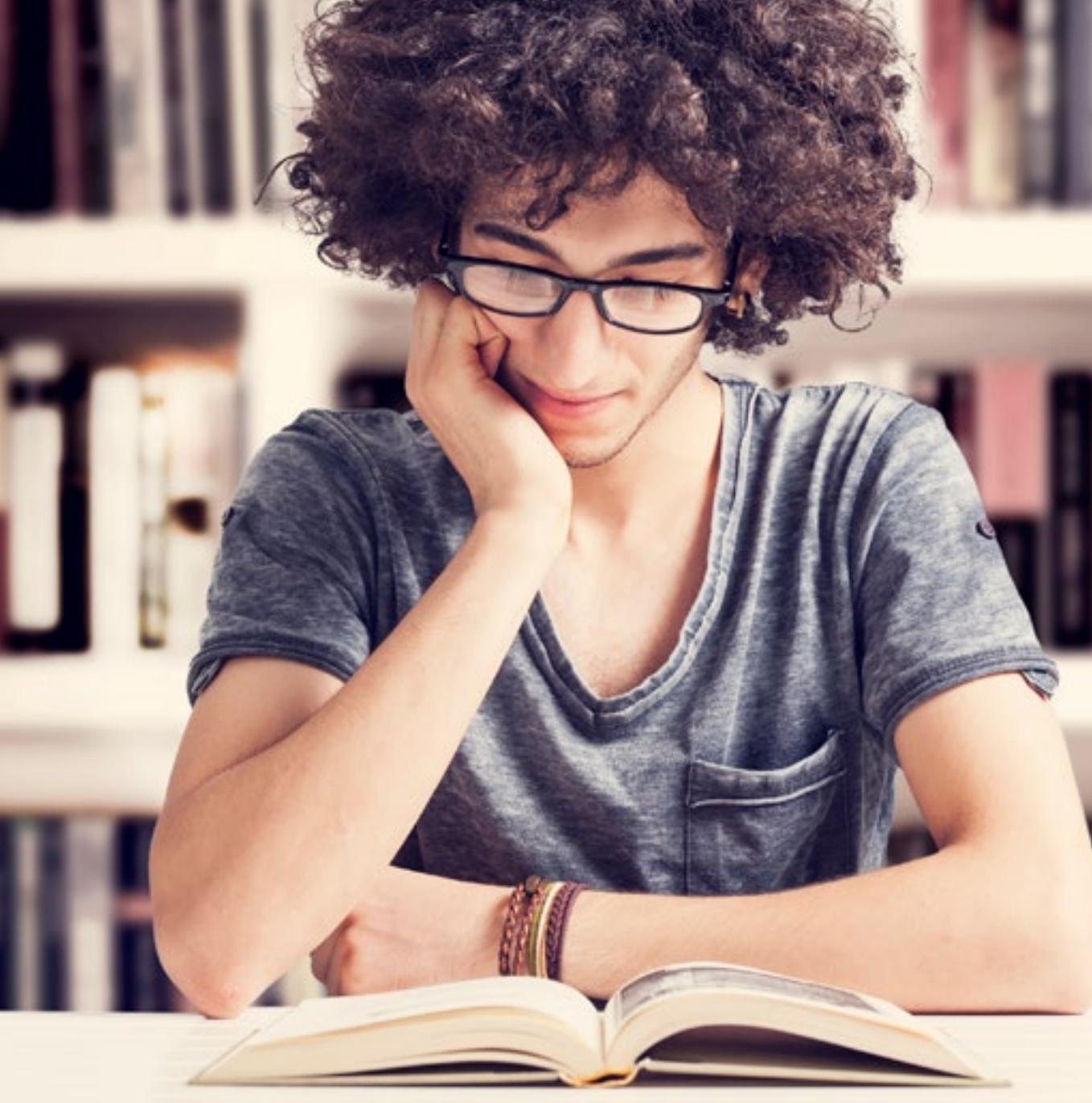
Could this teacher talk be replaced by active listening or reading? Could an activity based around discovery be used instead? If it is essential that the teacher has control and it's more than a quick activity then always look at how the students will be engaged throughout.



STRUCTURE

Everyday lesson basic activities form a key part of lessons, yet often they become a creature of habit with little reflection about their impact applied to them.

These activities, like all others need a clear structure which focuses student attention and contributes to pace and progress. Try to build consistency into each type of lesson basics using a structure planned in advance. This structure should consider timings and how they are managed, how the activity is student orientated, how students can take control of the activity to gain independence and how they will maintain challenge, ideally through using differentiation.



INDEPENDENCE

Imagine a situation where you are starting a task and you are constantly stopped to be given more information which prevents you from ever really getting going. Frustrating!

This is also how it is for students so the more we can plan our activities to support independence, especially decision making the better. Look at how you communicate and the ability to check. For example if your giving instructions let students know they can ask questions. If they get stuck with a task what avenues can they use to gain support apart from the teacher? These small things will develop independence over time and also allow students to undertake activities without constant stopping, but only if the teacher has considered how to address this in advance.

If it doesn't
challenge you,
it won't change you!



CHALLENGE

To maintain engagement with any Lesson Basic activity it is essential that there is a level of challenge for every student. This is often a fundamental overlooked.

This can be simply addressed through planning these activities so that they are either remodelled to be student focussed or so that they contain an element so students actively interact with them. Also don't be averse to differentiating these activities. This can easily be achieved through using the GAP strategy i.e. tiering questions to answer or tiering instructions. However you approach it you must ensure student involvement and how this can be tiered to engage a range of abilities.



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