

Improving Inferencing skills of A2 Psychology students

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Psychology dept. responsible for all psychology teaching in the school.

- Large groups in Year 12 made teaching coursework using hard copy newspapers and magazines impossible in the timescale. The coursework task involves the students reading newspaper articles and identifying psychological inferences. Ability to infer is reported to be dependent on a wide knowledge and is helped if the structure of the story is made explicit. We aimed to improve student's inferencing skills using online materials instead of traditional hard copy to speed up the process of choosing articles for A2 coursework.
- We aimed to improve student's inferencing skills by employing the 'think aloud' strategy for the process of inferencing.
- All materials accessed on line were suitable for 16+ readership. All checked by staff for suitability.

ACTIONS	TIMESCALE/ DATES	RESOURCES/ PERSONNEL	SUCCESS CRITERIA
Plan meeting	15/10/08	brainstorm	Ideas generated
Think aloud strategy	21/1/08	Practice materials.. inferencing games website	Follow process
Coursework lessons	12/5/08	Computer rooms	All find an article

- Research and practice of 'think aloud' strategy shared and developed st meetings. Presented to students in a lesson with steps explained.
- Disseminate via dept meeting

- Previously, student performance data indicated poorer performance on this particular section of the coursework. Students took longer to complete it and complained that it was difficult. Teacher resources were stretched.
- Explaining the process to another person improved our own understanding of the process. The timescales were reduced as the planning was simpler than anticipated.
- We saw immediate improvement in students understanding of 'an assumption' following the 'think aloud strategy'. Rapid engagement in the tasks with both practice materials and on-line articles. Improved quality of articles found.
- Research suggests inferencing is improved if the cultural background of the inferencer and the article match. Thus, some students from other cultures may find this task more difficult. Teachers to find and explain articles for these students

A highly effective intervention which has improved delivery of A2 coursework and increased students confidence in their study skills. Our own data implies higher quality work will be produced but as yet, only the number of articles found and the rate at which they have been found is recorded.



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