Self-regulated tutor time: ***developing the characteristics of independent learners through self-regulated tutor time***

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Overview

Question

Does the use of self-regulated tutor time develop the characteristics needed by independent learners?

Project aims

- To promote independent learning
- to develop the characteristics of independent learners in students
- to create an enabling environment where a mutual responsibility for learning is established.

Rationale

- Y9 is an important intersection in students' academic careers. With GCSE options being taken and examinations in the near future, it is important that students develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and improve the skills they need to be effective independent learners.

Project outline

- Eight groups were randomly allocated to be either intervention or control groups.
- Intervention groups are given the same outcomes to achieve over the project time, but these are delivered in a way which creates an environment supportive of independent self-regulated learning. Control groups work as a whole with a more traditional transmission of information.
- This intervention is used to allow students to develop the characteristics identified in research[1, 2] as necessary to be an effective independent learner.

[1] *Independent learning: a literature review and a new project, W, R Meyer, Evaluation and Research Department, LSN*

[2] *What is independent learning and what are the benefits for students? Meyer, Haywood, Sachdev and Faraday. London: Department for Children, Schools and Families research report 051, 2008*

Impact

Eighty students responded to both the pre and post intervention surveys: 40 from the control group and 40 from the intervention group. There were significant increases in students' perceptions of their characteristics associated with independent learning.

- 75% (30/40) of students who received the intervention said their ***communication*** had improved, compared to only 7.5% (3/40) in the control group
- 82.5% (33/40) of students in the intervention group reported a self-perceived increase in their ***motivation***, compared to zero in the control group
- 37.5% (15/40) of the intervention group reported that they felt ***retention*** of information improved at the end of the unit, compared to 25% (10/40) in the control group
- 62.5% (25/40) of the intervention group identified an increase in their ***attention span***, compared to 12.5% (5/40) of the control group
- 75% (30/40) of the students in the intervention group perceived that their ***problem solving*** skills had significantly improved compared to 12.5% (5/40) in the control group
- ***resilience*** saw an increase in 62.5% (25/40) in the intervention group and a 35% (14/40) increase in the control group
- 70% (28/40) of students in the intervention group reported an increase in their ***team work*** skills compared to zero in the control group.

There was a notable increase in all seven of the characteristics measured for the intervention group, this can be seen in the table below.

Characteristic	Intervention Group % increase	Control Group % increase	Percentage points difference
Communication	75	7.5	67.5
Motivation	82.5	0	82.5
Retention	37.5	25	12.5
Attention span	62.5	12.5	50
Problem solving	75	12.5	62.5
Resilience	62.5	35	27.5
Team work	70	0	70

Additionally, students were questioned about their relationships with their form tutor and peers.

- The majority of students in both the intervention and control groups reported that they had positive relationships with both their form tutor and peers before the intervention.

- Two students in the intervention group thought that their relationship with their tutor had become less positive during the intervention. They believe less interaction with their tutor was the reason for this.

- Four students in the intervention group reported an increase in peer relationships, this was due to more group work during form time.

- Four students reported that they felt their strong friendships had weakened during the intervention because they were encouraged to work in different groups and not with the same students all of the time.

Teacher comments

- "I found it difficult at first to allow the students more control over the pace at which they completed activities, but once I saw they were completing the tasks it helped to develop a more trusting relationship."

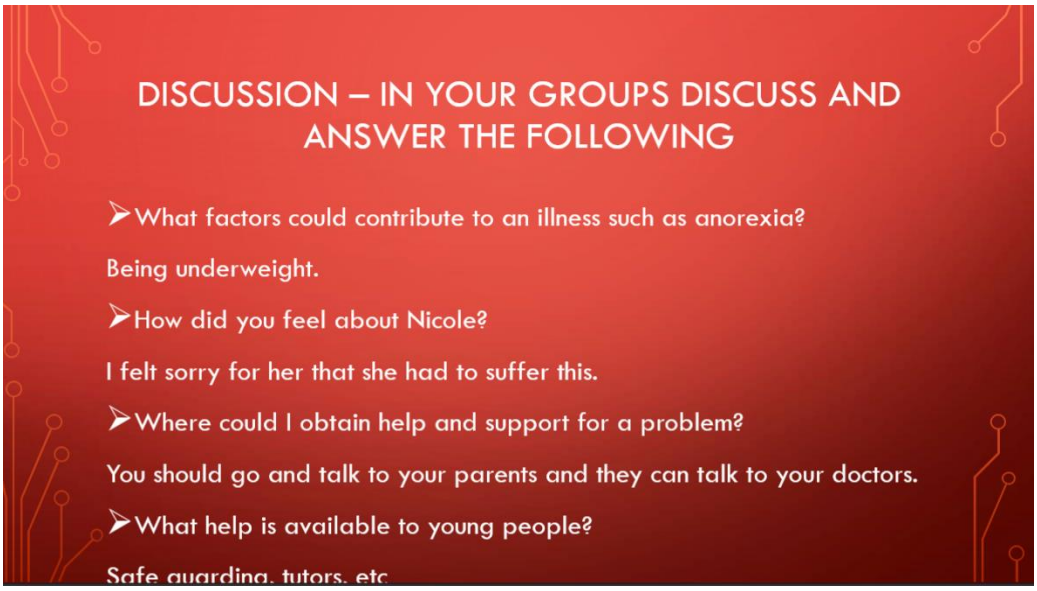
- "It was good to see students develop both their group and individual work, and to gel and develop as a tutor group."

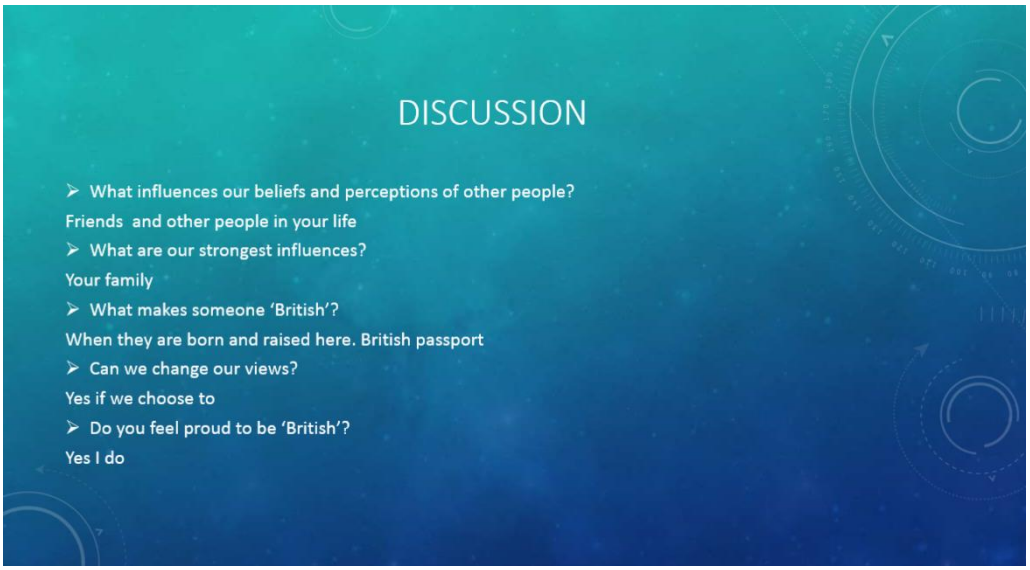
- "It was beneficial for the students to be out of their comfort zones and have to make more decisions for themselves."

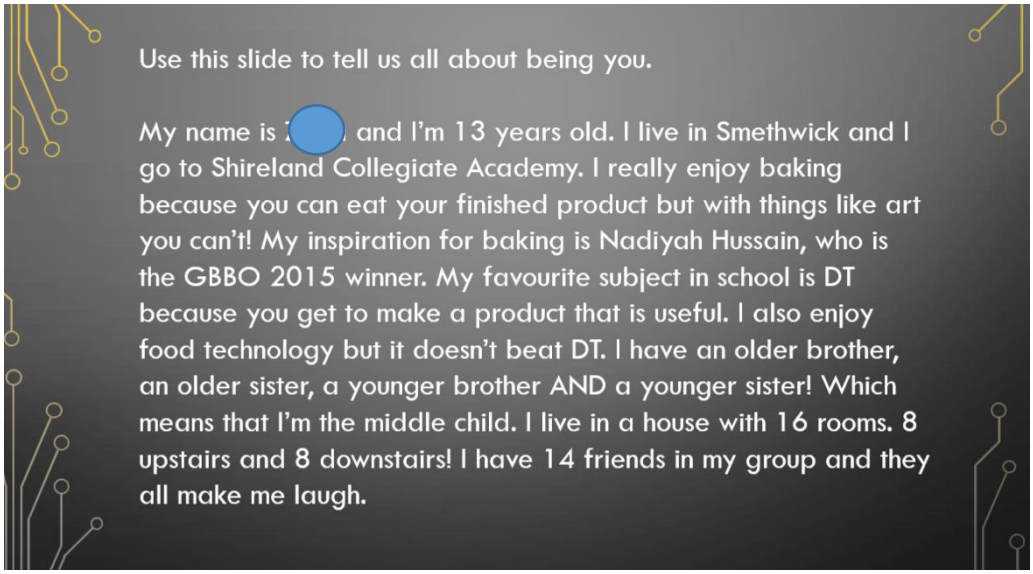
How to . . .

- The intervention group completed small project tasks over a six-week period, two sets of information were given per week with specific instructions
- these were either completed as individuals or as part of small groups on student devices
- students were given an end point as to when tasks had to be completed, but they dictated the pace at which they moved towards completion
- tasks were set using our learning gateway, in the form of PowerPoint presentations using Office Mix to allow students to answer questions and detail group discussions, with work then gathered from the learning gateway
- paper based projects could be used if devices are not available to all students
- content was relevant and engaging to students

Examples of student work




DISCUSSION
What influences our beliefs and perceptions of other people?
Friends and other people in your life
What are our strongest influences?
Your family
What makes someone 'British'?
When they are born and raised here. British passport
Can we change our views?
Yes if we choose to
Do you feel proud to be 'British'?
Yes I do


Use this slide to tell us all about being you.
My name is and I'm 13 years old. I live in Smethwick and I go to Shireland Collegiate Academy. I really enjoy baking because you can eat your finished product but with things like art you can't! My inspiration for baking is Nadiyah Hussain, who is the GBBO 2015 winner. My favourite subject in school is DT because you get to make a product that is useful. I also enjoy food technology but it doesn't beat DT. I have an older brother, an older sister, a younger brother AND a younger sister! Which means that I'm the middle child. I live in a house with 16 rooms. 8 upstairs and 8 downstairs! I have 14 friends in my group and they all make me laugh.

Hints and tips

- Choose the content to be delivered in your tutor time sessions
- when designing how you want to deliver the content be mindful of how much tutor interaction it will need
- difficult content may be covered which may stir up emotions and increase difficult or thought-provoking conversations
- ensure you identify when you want students to work independently and as a group
- clearly state the learning expectations and objectives at the beginning of each period, whether that be daily, weekly, bi-weekly etc.
- set specific tasks to ensure content is covered and objectives are met
- ensure students know the timescales they are working to
- place work in an area where all students can access it, whether this be online or paper based
- give clear details about where to put completed work
- be prepared to facilitate learning rather than delivering information in a more traditional teaching method.

Summary

This project indicates that the self-regulated use of tutor time can be a good way to develop the characteristics of independent learners.

Appendix: example of one task

WHICH OF THESE APPLY TO THE SIX PEOPLE?

- I feel I belong to my local community
- I have a good group of friends around me
- My religion is important to me
- I like living in this country
- I didn't choose to come to this country
- My parents have good jobs

IN GROUPS

- Choose one picture
- Discuss the following:
  - What difficulties might this individual face in your community
  - Would they face the same difficulties in other areas/countries?
  - Would this person face any prejudices? If so, who from? If so, would this prejudice be the same in another area?
  - What might this person bring to society as something which could be celebrated?
  - What might you have in common with this person?