Teaching & Learning

Rationale

The policy details the Teaching and Learning (T&L) principles used to inform teacher practice, outlines teacher expectations and offers effective T&L strategies to be used to support the development and effective application of The Wells Academy Big 6.

Teachers at The Wells Academy use the Academy Big 6 (*see below*) combined with The 6 Learning Habits (*see page 2 & The Academy Behaviour Policy*) to ensure there is an effective learning environment in place which promotes high levels of engagement and progress, a love of learning and good behaviour for learning, allowing all students to learn, grow and achieve greatness (*Teacher Standards 2012, The Wells Academy Mission Statement 2021*).

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The Wells Academy Big 6

Retrieval Practice – The practice of regular and deliberate recalling of key information to examine what students know and don't know. Allowing our students, the opportunity for regular and quality retrieval time enhances their chances of applying knowledge more successfully.

The Learning Journey (TLJ) – TLJ introduces students to what they will be learning within a series of lessons. TLJ is an explicit statement or question which highlights what learning will take place. TLJ will allow students to understand what they will be learning, how and what key words will be relevant within a particular learning episode.

Modelling – Modelling is essential in addressing misconceptions before they arise and allows teachers to scaffold instructions and demonstrations to support student success in applying what they have learnt. Teachers model and talk through how they would successfully answer a question, ensuring they ask the right questions relating to the knowledge required to answer a question successfully. Teachers use Rosenshine's *'I do, we do, you do'* framework to model instruction in a variety of ways and to ensure students have a secure understanding of the essential knowledge required to answer a question and how to apply that knowledge to a question.

Practice Time – Students use Practice Time to practise applying content knowledge or learnt processes to questions. This will develop their ability to apply knowledge successfully to key questions.

Review– Teachers use Review to assess what their students have learnt and to identify where learning is less secure. Teachers use this time to address misconceptions in the lesson and use this to inform future lessons.

Feedback – Teachers give regular verbal and written feedback to address any misconceptions. Teachers ensure their students receive quality feedback which allows them to respond effectively and make good progress.

The 6 Learning Habits

At The Wells Academy, we teach students to break old habits and learn new empowering habits that will make them successful in life. 'The Wells Academy Learning Habits' provide a framework to ensure our core values (Kindness, Resilience and Greatness) are embedded within our daily practice and routines. Our learning habits are:

Learning Habit 1: *In school on time*; students who want to achieve greatness always attend and are on time.

Learning Habit 2: *Perfect Uniform*; students who want to achieve greatness wear their uniform correctly and with pride.

Learning Habit 3: *Ready to Learn*; students who want to achieve greatness always bring the right equipment to the academy everyday.

Learning Habit 4: *S.L.A.N.T*; students who want to achieve greatness always demonstrate S.L.A.N.T in lessons: S=Sit up, L=listen carefully , A= Ask and answer questions , N=Never interrupt , T=Track the teacher.

Learning Habit 5: *First Time Every Time;* we know that students who want to achieve greatness do not answer back and trust that teachers' instructions are to help them be successful.

Learning Habit 6: *Right place, right time doing the right thing*; students who want to achieve greatness are always in the right place at the right time doing the right thing in every lesson and behave in a purposeful manner outside of lessons.

Introduction

Our T&L policy promotes best practice and establishes consistency in T&L across the whole Academy. Through lessons and tailored professional learning we aim to ensure that all students are provided with high quality learning experiences which lead to a consistently high level of pupil achievement and attitude to learning.

In lessons we want to ensure that our students are supported to be the best they can be within our ever changing, diverse and eclectic society. We seek to give our students access to the best which has been thought, said and written through the effective implementation of our challenging and rigorous curriculum so that they are knowledgeable, critical, enriched and well-informed individuals who can lead fulfilling lives.

Through the delivering of quality first teaching and a knowledge rich curriculum, we seek to ensure that all students at The Wells Academy succeed in higher education and skilled employment working at the cutting edge of their chosen profession and have a lasting impact on their family, community and *world (The Wells Academy Mission Statement 2020).*

The Big 6 Explained

The Wells Academy Big 6 teaching methods, are based on research of the most effective teaching and learning principles, influenced by scientific research. We focus particularly on Barak Rosenshine's research around explicit instruction ***(see appendix 1)*** and Roediger and Karpicke's research on retrieval practice ***(see appendix 2)***.

The application of the Big 6 provides students with regular opportunity for guided practice, with support and scaffolding, in order to master new learning, avoid and address any misconceptions and be able to apply learning in new contexts. Retrieval Time requires students to deliberately recall information and examine what they know. This method of learning is challenging and facilitates the ability for students to encode more information into long term memory and enhances depth of knowledge. All lessons at The Wells Academy include retrieval time in order to enhance and boost long term memory learning.

TLJ, Practice and Review allow us to effectively embed principles of explicit instruction. Through regular Feedback; written or oral feedback, teachers use feedback to inform their planning, address misconceptions through whole class, tailored feedback which allows students to understand how they can make improvements. Teachers use modelling to address misconceptions before they arise, scaffold instructions and demonstrations so that students are clear on what's expected when applying knowledge and have the best possible chance of being successful in doing so. Teachers use responsive teaching to set clear goals, identify where students are struggling and responding to this by adapting their teaching to support students to do better in the classroom through targeted questioning, one to one support or through whole class or group feedback.

Knowledge Organisers

Knowledge Organisers support students to memorise key knowledge in each subject and enhance student understanding of already learnt topics. They are used to support the completion of retrieval tasks in lessons and allow students and parents to have an overview of key information over a sequence of lessons. Knowledge Organisers are also used to identify key information to be memorised as a minimum, and these are shared with parents to support learning at home.

Professional Learning & Quality Assurance

Professional Learning time is dedicated to giving teachers the opportunity to collaborate on aspects of the The Big 6 and the 6 Learning Habits, observe peers and self-reflect on their own teaching. Trainees, including ECTs and RQTs follow a tailored programme of CPD based on evidence, meeting their emerging teaching and leadership development needs.

Quality Assurance processes allow leaders to support the development of priority areas within the school and provide staff with tailored training where required to ensure the effective delivery of quality first teaching. Leaders use the BlueSky platform to quality assure teaching and learning and provide teachers with regular developmental feedback.

Quality Assurance Explained

Climate Walks – Climate walks are regular daily assurance checks which seek to ensure that the correct learning environments are fostered in the classroom so that students have the best possible chance of achieving greatness through their learning. Within these leaders look at teacher application of The 6 Learning Habits, the student response to this and how the curriculum is delivered in line with curriculum long and medium term plans.

Learning Walks - Learning walks are regular weekly assurance checks which seek to ensure that the application of The Big 6 is effective in supporting students to understand, achieve and succeed.

Formal Observations – Formal observations are used twice a year to provide teachers with detailed feedback on their application of The Big 6. We use formal observations to support staff in their areas of development and to celebrate staff development throughout the year.

Book Audits – Book audits are used to capture the delivery of the curriculum and the security of student understanding. Book audits are used to address gaps in achievement, student response to the delivery of the curriculum and provide suggestions for improvement on how the curriculum is delivered which will support the improvement in progress for students.

Retrieval Practice

Retrieval time allows students to deliberately recall information and examine what they know. All lessons at The Wells Academy include retrieval time in order to enhance and boost long term memory learning. When a student enters a lesson, they will complete a retrieval task which will be based on their knowledge organiser or prior learning which includes the core knowledge required for that particular unit of work. In addition to this, the retrieval task will include a challenge question which may require students to answer a question based on prior knowledge and allow them the opportunity to apply knowledge to key questions or concepts. Students complete retrieval time in silence and independently. Teachers will ensure that all retrieval tasks are accessible, are of a high quality, are challenging and that students have the opportunity to experience success through these. Teachers will praise and reward students who have worked hard and achieved greatness through retrieval time.

Key principles in ensuring retrieval practice is effective:

- **Retrieval time is inclusive:** effective retrieval time ensures that all students are able to access at least 80% of the task and empowers students to feel confident in contributing their answers through teacher questioning.
- **Make checking accurate and easy**: it should be possible for all students to find out what they got right and wrong, what they know well and where they have gaps. Every technique involves students testing their knowledge and then checking their work for accuracy and completeness. (This is not the same as giving students extended mark schemes to mark longer assessments which). Students must mark their work in green pen to demonstrate they have corrected and understood the correct answer. Teachers must actively check students are doing this through circulating, questioning and praising.
- **Specify the knowledge:** ensure that the knowledge being retrieved is taken from the knowledge organiser or prior learning for a particular unit of work.
- **Make it time efficient:** the idea of each technique is that they can be used repeatedly in an efficient manner without dominating whole lessons.
- **Experiencing success through retrieval time:** through using prior knowledge or knowledge from the knowledge organiser, we can structure retrieval time to ensure all our students can experience some form of success. Success is a great feeling which isn't experienced by all, we must ensure this is part of our T&L culture and thereby empowering our students to feel confident in tackling challenging questions and therefore making good progress.
- **Space your practice**: retrieval practice is even more effective if it's done in short bursts over time, rather than in a single long session. This spacing causes students to forget some of the material, and the struggle involved in trying to recall it strengthens their long-term learning.

The Learning Journey

What is The Learning Journey within a lesson?

TLJ introduces students to what they will be learning within a series of lessons. TLJ is an explicit statement or question which highlights what learning will take place. TLJ will allow students to understand what they will be learning, how and what key words will be relevant within a particular learning episode.

How often should I use The Learning Journey?

TLJ should be displayed in every lesson; TLJ can be repeated within a series of lessons if there is a continuation of learning on the same topic. For example, if TLJ in an English lesson was '*Which techniques will I use to write a persuasive paragraph?*,' it would be suitable to repeat TLJ over a series of lessons as delivering this for just one lesson would not be sufficient to explore, learn and apply persuasive writing techniques.

Application of The Learning Journey

TLJ is displayed at the start of every lesson. Students are required to write this down on completion of their Retrieval Time. Teachers will introduce TLJ through teacher and student dialogue; the teacher ensures that students know what they will be learning and how in that lesson. TLJ enables students to maintain clear focus, allows students to make links and apply knowledge to a range of contexts.

Key principles in ensuring effective delivery of The Learning Journey:

- **Make The Learning Journey accessible to all**: ensure that TLJ engages your learners through making reference to prior learning or key words which students can explore. This will allow your learners to begin to think about what they are learning and how they might do this. Teachers will use targeted questioning to check that learners are focussed on TLJ and start to think about how they will navigate their way through this. Teachers will ensure that key terms are defined where appropriate to do so, and questions are answered to ensure that students have a sound understanding of these. Teachers will check understanding of TLJ through circulating and questioning.

- **Ensure regular referral to The Learning Journey throughout the lesson:** regularly referring to TLJ will ensure that the learning throughout the lesson is relevant to TLJ; key terms and questions within TLJ will be explored and applied within the lesson so it's important to make reference to TLJ where applicable.

The Learning Journey Strategies at the Wells Academy

1. **The Learning Journey is sequenced**
   Ensure TLJ is well sequenced through being in line with departmental MTPs and suited to the needs of your students. TLJ should prompt questions and definitions which are directly relevant to the topic objectives. For example: '*Which methods will I use to form the perfect tense'* will prompt questions and definitions around the perfect tense whilst simultaneously highlighting the objective of the lesson; '*for all students to know when to use the perfect tense and how to form it'*. TLJ should allow teachers and students to see a clear sequence of learning linked directly to curriculum MTPs whilst addressing student misconceptions.

2. **Key words and concepts are defined in books**
   Where new words or concepts are introduced through TLJ, teachers take time to explore and define these with students where appropriate to do so in the lesson.

3. **Sample suggested verbs to use when forming 'The Learning Journey' title or question** (*Blooms*)

Knowledge	Comprehension	Application	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation
define	classify	apply	analyse	arrange	assess
identify	conclude	calculate	calculate	assemble	compare
label	discuss	demonstrate	categorize	compose	critique
match	describe	develop	classify	construct	decide
name	explain	form	criticize	design	determine
recall	express	interpret	compare	develop	establish
recognise	identify	locate	contrast	diagnose	evaluate
record	interpret	perform	determine	manage	judge
relate	summarize	practice	differentiate	organize	justify
state	translate	predict	distinguish	plan	measure
		present	examine	relate	rate
		use	outline	summarize	recommend

Practice

Practice allows students to practice applying knowledge to questions or concepts enabling them to develop the quality of their knowledge and application through live feedback and marking. Implementing a culture of regular practice is essential to supporting our students in achieving and making progress. Part of every lesson should be dedicated to recalling key knowledge and applying this in various contexts. Some lessons may be entirely dedicated to Practice Time where applicable, particularly towards the end of a unit of learning. Teachers use this time to plug any emergent gaps in learning and provide live, formative feedback to students.

Key principles in ensuring independent Practice is effective:

- **Start with the basics:** Thinking and knowing are different things. Practice time is the time to determine what the students know, not think. This starts from the basics. Students must know the underlying principles, knowledge and definitions before applying the knowledge in different scenarios. Start with the basics and build difficulty into the practice. Even higher attaining students should start with the basics, as without the basics there are no higher levels of thought.
- **Everyone writes:** Independent Practice Time is the time to write answers. Everyone must write in their own books. This is the time for focus to determine what knowledge the student has gained and what knowledge they are able to manipulate and apply.
- **Right is right:** Do not accept and incorrect or partially correct answer. This enforces bad habits and makes the students think that they are correct, when in fact they are not. Aim for 100% correctness and provide feedback and guidance where the student has not written a correct answer.
- **Conceptual understanding or procedural fluency:** It should be clear what your intent behind the practice is. Is the intent to assess the students' knowledge and understanding of the concept(s) that they have been taught, or the procedural fluency in applying their knowledge to a procedure. For example, when drawing a graph is it important that the students can draw the graph perfectly (fluency) or describe and explain what relationship the graph shows (understanding).

Practice Time Strategies at the Wells Academy

1. **Guided practice**
   Students work through a variety of guided examples independently before applying to questions that build in challenge. For example, guidance to a mathematical problem is provided as a worked example, then a scaffolded example, then plentiful independent examples to apply the process that they have learnt.
2. **Formative, low-stakes quizzes**
   A quiz where students receive a standardised set of questions either on the board or provided as a handout. The teacher has deliberately planned these questions to assess what knowledge has been learnt from a sequence of learning, for example, at the end of a sequence of lessons.
3. **Exam style questions**
   Particularly applicable to KS4 students. Exam questions that are an appropriate level of challenge for the group that have been deliberately planned to provide exposure to the language used in exam questions and build an understanding of what is required in terms of applying the knowledge learned to exam scenarios.

Review

During the Review part of a lesson, a teacher will use a question or low stake test or quiz which allows them to gain an understanding of what their students have learnt and any areas which need re-teaching. Teachers use this part of the lesson to live mark and plan what key concepts or knowledge they will focus on the following lesson. You will see teachers use phrases such as '*during today's review you will be completing 10 questions and your partner will mark these in green'* or *'answer the following question, your partner will then highlight the areas of strength using the assessment criteria, I will go through the answers at the end, be ready to listen and make notes.'*

Key principles in ensuring Review is effective:

- **Work the clock:** ensure a strict time is given and adhered to. The review stage of the lesson should aim to take no longer than 10 minutes. Any longer than this fears to become an extended period of practice, which isn't necessarily what this time is for.

- **Be precise:** be precise in the instruction that students receive and what is expected of them in this period, if applicable, provide a specific success criteria. Work with the students to outline the success criteria if these are necessary.

- **Clarify the boundaries:** students should be explicitly clear in what they are doing in this time. If it is a short quiz, they should know what is expected of them in response to the question (e.g. a cued response or a full sentence). Aim to be explicit, clear and concise in the instructions that students receive when approaching a Review task.

- **Be seen looking:** students should know that you are watching, using verbal and non-verbal cues. Students will value the fact that you are looking at, and appreciating, the work that they are producing during the Review time. Take positions in the room where a systematic scan can be made to ensure full engagement, followed by individual intervention.

- **Be successful:** students should walk away from the Review period feeling a sense of success having learnt something from the lesson. We are aiming for students to Achieve Greatness, this begins with the knowledge they learn in each and every lesson.

Review Strategies at the Wells Academy

1. Short, formative quiz

A short quiz of 6 to 10 questions which could either be used as cued response, multiple choice or full sentence answers depending upon the circumstance. The quiz questions should be specific to what has been learnt within the lesson as a guide for what needs to revisited in the next lesson.

2. Extended response question

An extended or short essay question may be appropriate to use here. Ensure that students have a strict criteria to mark themselves or their peer against. Students can use the success criteria to guide their work, although shouldn't provide the knowledge that you are attempting to assess in the question.

3. Sharing success

Teachers can use the work of successful students or a pre-prepared 'model answer' (or a 'non-model answer') and consult students to provide feedback on the answer or compare their work to this answer, suggesting positives and areas for improvements in their own and the 'model' piece of work.

Marking, Assessment & Feedback

Teachers use regular retrieval tasks to assess how secure students are in mastering core knowledge. Formative assessment is used to assess key pieces of work through which written feedback is provided to students requiring them to respond and correct their misconceptions. Teachers use PLC's to praise progress and direct improvements.

Summative assessments are used to evaluate student learning at the end of a unit of work and assess this against the relevant assessment criteria. Teachers dedicate time in addressing whole class and individual misconceptions. These should be common practice across all subjects, in the same way The Big 6 and The 6 Learning Habits are.

Overarching Marking and Feedback Policy

Principals of marking and feedback

High-quality feedback is fundamental in supporting student progress over time. At The Wells Academy, marking and feedback is underpinned by 3 key questions for students:

1. Where am I with my learning?
2. Where am I aiming to get to with my learning?
3. How do I get there?

An important element of marking is to acknowledge work completed by students to value their efforts and achievements, and to celebrate progress. There are many ways to do this without extensive marking and too much feedback can take away responsibility from the student, detract from the challenge of a piece of work, and reduce long term retention and resilience-building.

To make marking and feedback meaningful and motivating for students, and manageable for staff; we have given each faculty the autonomy to implement a best-fit marking and feedback policy.

Faculty autonomy

Each faculty has their own autonomous marking and feedback policy (AMF) which identifies:

- What work will be marked
- When work will be marked
- How work will be marked
- Whom work will be marked by
- How feedback will be presented and shared
- Which and how outcomes will be retained

Frequency, format, and quality of written feedback

Whilst faculties have much autonomy within their own marking policies, it is our overarching policy that an identified section of work should be marked at regular intervals; providing feedback for improvement and marked for literacy and accuracy where appropriate. All teachers should:

- Give regular written feedback using a purple pen as per faculty policy
- Use a *'What went well (WWW) and Even better if (EBI)'* framework that is positive, constructive and clearly give 'next steps' advice
- Plan time for students to read, understand and digest written feedback and where appropriate, respond (using green pen)
- Check students' responses to assess understanding and impact to help them move on

It is often not appropriate for every piece of work to be marked in detail. The teacher may focus on aspects that the class has been concentrating on, e.g., appropriate tenses in French. The sections of work that are marked should demonstrate to students what they have got right or wrong. Other work can be marked with a lighter touch, avoiding tick and flick where possible.

Effort and attainment

The effort made by students in producing work might well be acknowledged by the teacher and might be tied in to *'The Big Six,'* school values, STEPs etc. Teachers may want to comment on or draw students' attention to raw marks, targets, grades, attainment etc., if and where appropriate.

Marking for literacy

In assessing work, attention needs to be given to literacy. Teachers should focus on agreed subject specific vocabulary as well as marking of spelling, punctuation, and grammar (SPAG). The following is a standard notation for the marking of literacy:

- Spelling: SP in the margin or above the word, and underline the mistake
- Punctuation: P in the margin or above the work, and either correct the punctuation error or circle it for students to make corrections
- Capital letter: CP in the margin or above the word, and underline the mistake
- Paragraphing: // to show where the new paragraph should be
- Grammar: underline the error with a wavy line and write SS to emphasise sentence structure
- Wrong Tense: underline the error and write WT in the margin or above the word
- Wrong Word: underline the error and write WW in the margin or above the word

Student response to feedback

Teachers use **purple** pen/ink for written feedback. We have provided a class set of **green** pens and highlighters for teachers to lead students to reflect on, respond to and act on feedback. After marking of a key piece of work, dedicated time for improvement should be offered next lesson so that the students respond immediately to marking and can be set on the right track to progress. The redrafted work could also be marked by the teacher to confirm progress in learning. The key to this sequence is ensuring students know HOW to improve their work and that they have had an opportunity to respond to feedback.

We want teachers to consider the part that written feedback plays in creating a positive learning dialogue with each student they teach. We actively encourage teachers to share, with colleagues, any creative written feedback solutions they have developed and used.

Verbal feedback

There is a recognition of the importance of verbal feedback particularly in Vocational subjects such as Art, D&T, Health and Social Care, PE, Hospitality and Catering etc., which can have a significant impact on progress and attainment. It is the responsibility of individual faculties to ensure that effective systems are in place to promote verbal feedback and to monitor its effectiveness.

Peer and self-assessment

The use of peer and self-assessment should also be encouraged to deepens students' understanding of what makes good work and learning. For this to work in a meaningful way, teachers model good learning and fully share success criteria in language which students understand. Feedback from peers should be about the work, not about the student. The comments should be specific, kind, and helpful, which enable learning to progress.

Presentation of work

Students should be encouraged to present their work in an acceptable and professional manner. The following are minimum expectations for written work:

- Titles and dates clearly written and underlined with a ruler
- No incomplete work or gaps in the books
- Where work is missed it is caught up as quickly as possible
- Use blue or black biro only
- Diagrams and tables should be drawn with pencil and ruler
- Use all the space in book and work must be clear of doodles or graffiti
- Make sure work is completed to the best standard

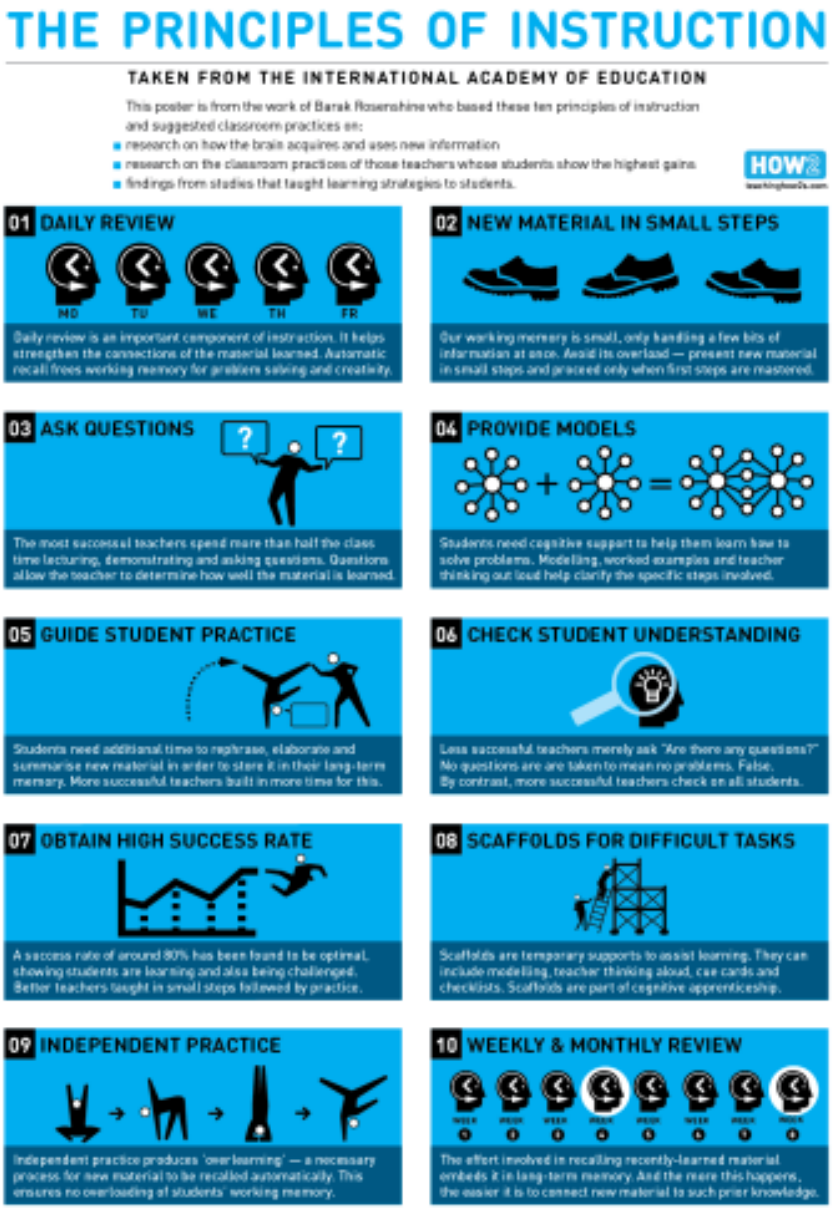
Further points to consider

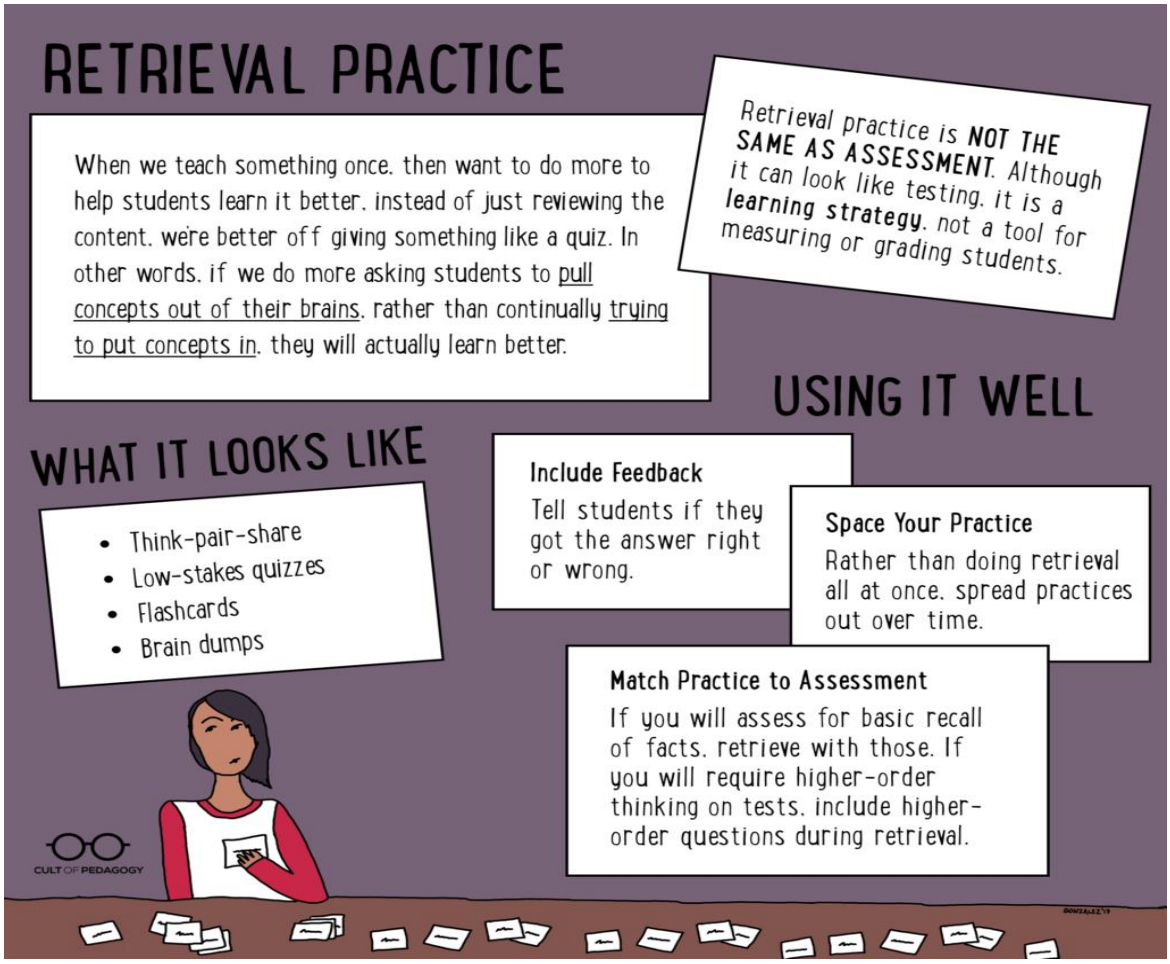
Some things we believe teachers should not be doing:

- Mark every piece of work
- Be drawn into marking repeated errors (after two)
- Allow yourself to be the only assessor in the classroom
- Mark for anything or anyone other than the student

*Each subject has a custom Marking, Assessment & Feedback policy. Please refer to subject specific policies for further guidance.

Appendix 1 – Rosenshine's 10 Principles of Instruction – The International Academy of Education



Appendix 2 – Jennifer Gonzalez – The Cult of Pedagogy - Retrieval Practice

(*Roediger, H.L., & Karpicke, J.D. (2006a). The power of testing memory: Basic research and implications for educational practice; J.R., & Karpicke, J.D. (2014). Learning with retrieval-based concept mapping. J*).