Understanding what the students know

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Before starting to teach a new topic or concept, we need to become aware of what are the pupils’ perceptions on the subject.

Students bring with them a baggage of information which sometimes may be right but other times can be full of misconceptions.
Comprehension - Easter

- Teacher shows Resurrection of Jesus Christ animation – iLumine Bible

Just a short video of 30 seconds which shows the soldiers are in front of the tomb of Jesus and an angel appears.

- After watching this short video, learners in groups write on their erase boards what they think happened after that.
When Jesus came out from his tomb. There was a war and Jesus came to stop it. When Jesus landed on floor the warfiles can to him. When Jesus risen.
It was about when Jesus Christ was alive again.

When an angel that was white as snow came down.
It came an earthquake. The angel was Jesus Christ.
The story is about Joses and then Joses resent from Dad.
Essay Writing - An unusual weekend
Ex: In pairs learners had to discuss what an unusual weekend means.

- Some of them did not know what unusual means.

- While I was going around listening to their ideas I heard one saying that it is something that we do not do everyday like for example going camping on a Wednesday.
With these techniques teaching can be adapted to meet learners’ needs which varies from one pupil to another.

If pupils are not allowed to talk about what they know, teachers will never know exactly what difficulties they have but will only be able to do assumptions which sometimes may not be correct.
Recommendations

- Allow students to talk while we listen without commenting. This should only take 2 minutes.
- Listen and observe attentively to what students have to say. This is the time where we are collecting evidence of what the students know about the topic.
- Associate the concept that will be explained during the lesson to a real life situation or one that they have experienced.
It is therefore logical to start off by using these techniques that elicit this information:

- Brainstorming
- Structured questions
- Discussions
- Mind Web
- Talk Partner
- Debate
- Previous experience
- Evaluate written work done at home or at school

Allow students to talk while you listen.
Some examples:

1,2,3,4,5,

L-għalliem irid isaqsi lill-istudenti jekk jafux x’inhu verb. L-għalliem jikteb din is-sentenza.

Peter ħareġ mid-dar filgħodu kmieni.

1  2  3  4  5

Kull student fil-klassi b’subgħajh juri liema hi t-tweġiba t-tajba.
Mini whiteboards

The teacher asks a question and **ALL** the students have to answer by writing on a laminated whiteboard.
Advert

What do you think of when you hear the word advertisement or advert?

(Create talk partners)
What do my learners know already?

Jekk qed nitkellmu dwar l-**oppost tal-aggettiv**:

X’qed taraw f’dawn l-istampi? Iddiskutu f’pari

- oħxon – irqiq
- twil – qasir
- imnieħer żgħir – imnieħer kbir
Conjunctions

I put on boots and a hat because it is cold and rainy.
I put on my boots and hat. It is cold and rainy.

Learners talk about these two statements and the differences they notice.

OR

- She did not go to school. She was sick.
- I went to the cinema. My friend came too.
- Paul went to the shop. He didn’t buy anything.

Learners choose the best conjunction.
Multiplication of two digits:

Teacher writes some simple multiplication sums and asks the learners to work them out on the dry erase boards.

When they show the erase boards the teacher will look out for any wrong answers. Those who get the wrong answers will be re-directed to the group to discuss their process.
Il-Kmand

Immaġinaw li intom xi prinċep jew prinċipessa. Iddiskutu f’pari x’tikkkmandaw lin-nies.

Kliem li jirrima

Liema kliem għandhom l-istess ħoss?

ra ḥin pa tin
Learning Intentions
What is a Learning Intention?

‘A learning intention describes what pupils should know, understand or be able to do by the end of the lesson or series of lessons.’ (Learning Unlimited, 2004)
Sharing Learning Intentions

1. Identify what pupils will be learning (We are learning to...).
2. Share the learning intention with pupils at the beginning of the lesson or activity.
3. Present these in language that pupils can understand.
4. Revisit the learning intention throughout the activity/lesson.
If students know **what** they are to learn, you increase the chances that they **will** learn.”

Harry Wong
If learners are to take more responsibility for their own learning, then they need to know what they are going to learn.

Learning Intentions
‘What’ and ‘Why’
We are learning to...

count to 10

We are learning to...

read our words

count 10 objects

We are learning to...

make patterns
Learning Intentions:

We are going to learn about fractions.
Do you think this learning intention is clear for the learners?

How about the following learning intentions?
Learning Intention:

We are going to learn about equivalent fractions.

\[
\frac{1}{3} = \frac{2}{6} = \frac{4}{12}
\]
How should our Learning Intentions be?

- Clear
- Unambiguous
- Explained to the students in a way that makes sense to them
- Common for all students.
Two versions of Learning Intentions:

- teacher’s version
- the learners’ version.
Examples

(a) Teacher’s version:  Connectives

Learners’ version:  We are learning to join sentences.

(b) Teacher’s version:  għ fl-ahħar ta’ kliem - verbi.

Learners’ version:  Inkunu nafu liema verbi jispiċċaw bl-’. Dan ikun ifisser għ moħbija.
(c) Teacher’s version: The skill of asking questions.

**Learners’ version:** We are learning to ask questions.

(d) Teacher’s version: Cause and Effect

**Learners’ version:** We are learning that what happens now is the result of what happened before.
How many Learning Intentions?
During same lesson:
may be more than one Learning Intention.
As lesson progresses the Learning Intention may change to become more demanding.

Example:
Learners’ version:
We are learning what is \( \frac{1}{4} \)

Later during the lesson this might change to:
We are learning the difference between \( \frac{1}{4} \) and \( \frac{1}{3} \).
Where are we going to write our Learning Intentions?

- On the interactive whiteboard.
- On the whiteboard.
- On a chart.

or
WALT
We Are Learning To...
WALT
We are learning to
We Are Learning To...
Benefits of Learning Intentions

• Motivate our students

• Students become more task-oriented (they would know how to go about the task)
The activity

The task has to MATCH the learning intention.

The feedback given has to MATCH the learning intention.
A practical tip:

Remind students continually of the Learning Intention.

Why?
Answer

Focusing

teacher...and...learner
At what stage during the lesson is the teacher supposed to share the Learning Intention with the learners?
Always after the first strategy:

- Understanding what the students know
Workshops:

**Group 1:** Use units of time and know the relationships between them. - second, minute, hour, day, week, month, year. – 4.2.1

**Group 2:** With support begin to build sentences on pictures. – 2.3.7

**Group 3:** Jisimgħu b’attenzjoni u b’konċentrazzjoni. Juru li fehmu bi twegibiet verbali u mhux verbali għall-mistoqsijiet magħmula dwar dak li semghu. (taħriġ il-fehem) – 3.1.1

**Group 4:** Recognising numbers 1-9 - 1.1.3

**Group 5:** Plurals - 2.3.12

**Group 6:** L-artiklu (sillabu Malti - grammatika) or

- using action words the verb - 4.2.9