



The White Hills Park Trust

A Culture of Excellence

Workshop G: Building Knowledge and skills

Monday 1st July, 2019

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Read the extract in your delegate pack

A **threshold concept** can be considered as akin to a portal, **opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking** about something. It represents **a transformed way of understanding or interpreting**, to viewing something **without which the learner cannot progress**.

Mayer and Land (2003). Threshold Concepts and Troublesome Knowledge: Linkages to Ways of Thinking and Practising. In *Improving Student learning: Theory and Practice Ten Years On*. pp412-424.

Aims of this session:



- To understand the importance of **threshold concepts** for curriculum development
- To examine how we can embed key concepts to ensure **curriculum depth**
- To discuss ways these **concepts** can be **applied to the curriculum** in different subjects or phases.

What are the common misconceptions in the subjects that you teach or lead?



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History KS4 Overview – mapping concepts onto content

	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
Year 10	Medicine <i>(Medieval and Renaissance)</i> Religion (Church) Power Warfare	Medicine <i>(Nineteenth and twentieth Century)</i> Religion (Church) Power Warfare	Medicine on the Western Front Power Warfare	Anglo Saxon and Norman England Power Warfare Religion	Anglo Saxon and Norman England Power Warfare Religion	American West Power Warfare Rights
Year 11	American West Power Warfare Rights	Germany Power Rights Warfare	Germany Power Rights Warfare	Germany Power Rights Warfare	Revision	

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History KS3 Overview – transferring concepts

	Autumn		Spring		Summer	
Year 7	<p>Why did people risk their lives in Medieval England?</p> <p>Power and Warfare Causation</p>	<p>What was life like in Medieval England?</p> <p>Power and Lifestyle Significance</p>	<p>Why did the Church have so much power in Medieval England?</p> <p>Religion Causation</p>	<p>How did the Crusades change life in Britain?</p> <p>Religion Interpretations</p>	<p>How far did the Reformation change England?</p> <p>Religion Change and continuity Enquiry</p>	<p>How successful was Elizabeth I as queen?</p> <p>Power Enquiry</p>
Year 8	<p>How did the power of the monarchy change 1509-1745?</p> <p>Power and Warfare Change and continuity</p>	<p>Why did it take so long to abolish the slave trade?</p> <p>Rights Enquiry</p>	<p>Did the British Empire benefit everyone?</p> <p>Power Interpretations</p>	<p>Why did life change so much during the Industrial Revolution?</p> <p>Lifestyle Causation</p>	<p>How has Crime and Punishment changed over time?</p> <p>Rights Change and continuity</p>	<p>Crime and Punishment over time and local study.</p> <p>Rights Change and continuity</p>
Year 9	<p>Did Britain become more democratic by 1920?</p> <p>Rights and Power Cause and</p>	<p>Was the First World War really so terrible?</p> <p>Warfare Interpretations</p>	<p>What were the key features of the Second World War in the East?</p> <p>Warfare</p>	<p>Was the Holocaust inevitable in 1933?</p> <p>Rights Interpretations</p>	<p>Did Civil Rights improve in the USA in the twentieth century?</p> <p>Rights</p>	<p>Why has terrorism become a global issue?</p> <p>Power and Rights</p>

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In English – our core concept was that **texts are deliberately constructed.**

By ourselves, when we are writing.

By others when we are reading.

Reading	Writing	Themes and Contexts
Year 7 – Myself and Others – Introducing challenging texts		
Structural and meaning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Narrative arc 	Paragraphing Planning Punctuation	
Language and effects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MRS SOAPIC FAT HORSE 	Voice, register and tone Audience Narrative Descriptive Persuasive	Identity Character Family
Inference skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AO1 : use summary techniques AO2 : use PEEL 		
Year 8 – Journeys – Developing critical thinking		
All the above Deepening inference skills + Purpose of effects + Evaluation of effects + Expansion and range of evidence	All the above + Purpose + Perspective	Creating Atmosphere – a sense of place Implicit power – social control: patriarchy; authority Explicit power – hierarchy Gothic/Dystopic/Tragic
Year 9 – Power and relationships - Building independence and stamina		
All the above Moving from ‘clear’ to ‘considered’ + Comparison + Depth and Detail	All the above + Crafting + Discursive text types	All the above

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PiXL Spine – Aims to create a map of threshold concepts in subjects.

Primary Colleagues

- Choose a curriculum area that is a focus at your school.
- What are the threshold concepts that students need to pass through in order to transfer knowledge from year to year?
- Use the PiXL Spine mats for key stage 3 to support – which concepts carry through from primary to secondary phase?

Secondary colleagues

- Look at two different curriculum areas with a partner or two.
- Consider the extent to which the PiXL Spine mats reflect the threshold concepts in your subject at key stage 3 and 4
- How could you (a) adjust a particular mat to reflect your curriculum or (b) adjust your curriculum to match the mat?

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The Impact of Organising Knowledge

The Intervention – focus on **evaluation**

1. Opening phrases (POINT)

- *(The writer) successfully crafts...*
- *(The writer) skilfully creates...*
- *(The writer) conveys...*

2. Don't forget to
EMBED your evidence!

How does x present ideas about y...?

3. Analysis/Development phrases

(LINKING PHRASE)

- *Our first impressions of ...*
- *By the close of the ... the ... has developed into...*
- ***Even though/although...***
- *On the exterior... yet on the interior we can infer...*
- *...is motivated not only by... but also by ...*
- *At first glance ...; however, on closer inspection ...*
- *The most significant word/sentence/idea is ... because...*
- *Considering...the writer suggests here that...*
- *Reflecting on the text's overall theme of...the quotation... evokes a sense of ...*
- ***It is as if... It seems... It is almost as if .. It could be...***

4 and 5. Word Level Analysis (MAGNIFYING A WORD)

- *The writer's intention when using the [word / device]'...' could be... whereas the [word / device] '...' implies...*
- *The most significant word/sentence/idea /moment is ... because...*
- *The writer has used the phrase ...to imply...Moreover, ...*

Analytical adverbs/ sophisticated vocabulary ...

- *Unquestionably, promptly, powerfully, finally, certainly, interestingly, significantly,*

6 and 7. Context/Writer's Intention

- *... reveals her/his belief in ...through her/his description of...*
- ***Perhaps, (writer's name) was hinting that...***

8. Effect on the reader – passive voice

- ***Evoking... suggesting... creating... conveying***
- *Despite the initial presentation of... one might also consider that...*
- *While one proposal may be that...; others however might contradict this view and argue....*
- *In essence, being caught between... underlines the effect that...*

From intent to implementation

3 things I need to take forward now

-
-
-

3 things I need to take consider later

-
-
-

Which resources do I need to download from (a) PiXL; (b) online group; (c) the shared area

Who do I need conversations with? What will be the focus?
When can I see them?

PiXL Spine – needs member login:
<https://auth.pixl.org.uk/members/1#!/spine/English/English>

Which parts of your curriculum require these types of knowledge...?

Integrative – knowledge that brings together different parts of the subject which you hadn't previously seen as connected.

Irreversible – knowledge that is difficult to unlearn – once you've passed through it's difficult to see how it was possible not to have understood before.

Troublesome – knowledge that presents you with a degree of difficulty and may sometimes seem incoherent or counter-intuitive.

Discursive – the student's ability to use the language associated with that subject changes as they change. It's the change from using scientific key words to thinking like a scientist.

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