

Additional practice - Primary

By Debra Ridley

When marking books after a lesson or 'live' marking with pupils during a lesson, it becomes apparent which pupils have grasped a concept and can apply their knowledge of it independently, and which pupils still need some support.

While teaching a lesson on fractions, decimals and percentages, I assessed pupils understanding through discussions during explanations and modelling and it seemed as though all pupils had a good understanding. However, when marking their work after the lesson, it became clear that a small group of pupils needed additional practice around **adding mixed number fractions** as they'd struggled to complete the task successfully when working on their own.

They were able to do the work while I was working with them and offering prompts, but I identified they had struggled to apply their understanding when left to work independently.

I wanted to address this as soon as possible so I asked my classroom assistant to practice this skill with the pupils **immediately after lunch the same day**. I ensured the practice activity focused on exactly the same skill that the pupils struggled with when working independently. After gathering feedback from my classroom assistant, it was clear that the pupils would require additional practice to consolidate their learning. As a result, I ensured that in the next maths lesson this small group would begin by working on fluency examples before progressing to a reasoning activity, which the rest of the class were working on. I closely monitored their work so I could provide affirmative or corrective feedback immediately to ensure they didn't learn or embed misconceptions.

To consolidate learning, I know that pupils need regular practice to build up retrieval strength of the material they are learning about. Therefore, I included questions that required pupils to **add mixed number fractions** in the daily arithmetic practice **for the rest of that week. In our school, daily arithmetic practice is completed when they come into school every morning.** I found that a little and often approach is an effective way of incorporating additional practice in any area rather than overwhelming the pupils with lots of, what they might see as, 'extra work'.

As further additional practice, I offered short lunchtime booster sessions, usually 5-10 minutes long, which pupils could attend if they felt they needed more practice. In these sessions, I was able to sit with the pupils in a more informal way and go back through their work to address misunderstanding and consolidate their learning.

The variety of additional practice provided has had a really positive impact on pupils learning. By completing the same types of questions daily, the pupils are given the chance to repeat and embed knowledge and understanding.