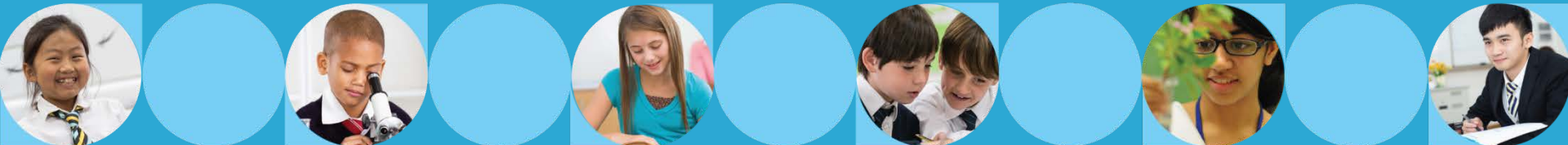


The formative use of summative test questions:

examples of classroom practice from the Social Sciences

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Content

The aims of this workshop:

1. To reflect upon how teachers prepare learners for summative assessments
2. To consider and develop some practical approaches for using summative test questions to help learners succeed
3. To consider how and when to start preparing learners for examination success

Formative and summative

“When the cook tastes the soup, that’s formative; When the customer tastes the soup, that’s summative”

Robert Stake, 1991



Imagineering

- ▶ Look at the pictures on your table
- ▶ Discuss what ideas or concepts or tasks they could represent
- ▶ Can you relate any of these to formative and/or summative assessment?
- ▶ Write down any ideas on the post-it notes provided and attach them to the appropriate picture

Imagineering



Imagineering



Imagineering

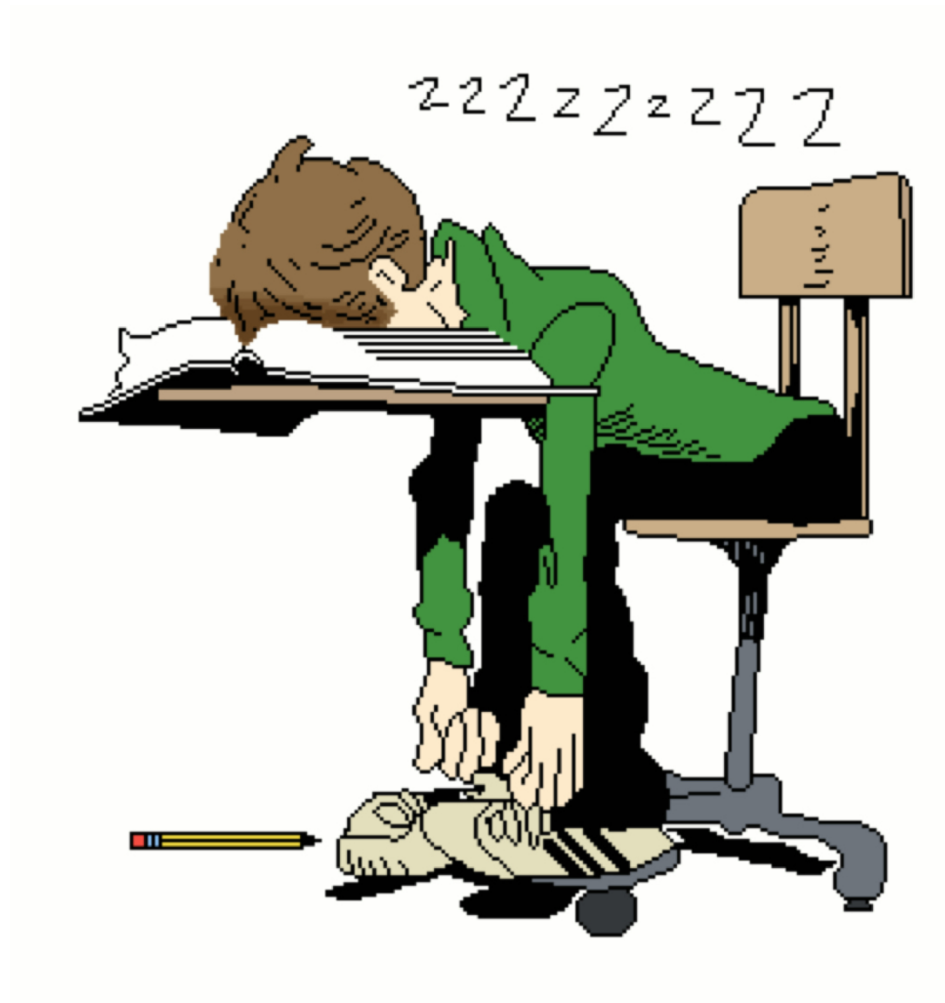


Imagineering



Typical preparation for summative tests

- ▶ Discuss amongst yourselves typical tasks and strategies used in your school to prepare learners for external examinations



Typical preparation for summative tests

- ▶ Make a plan
- ▶ Revise in short bursts
- ▶ Practice past paper questions
- ▶ Start early
- ▶ Put in the extra hours
- ▶ Make your notes effective
- ▶ Sleep

If they do all this, why do so many students still feel a sense of panic as they prepare for exams?



Learning Techniques (Dunlosky et al.)

	Technique	Description
1	Elaborative interrogation	Explaining why a stated fact is true
2	Self-explanation	Explaining how new information relates to known information
3	Summarisation	Writing summaries of to-be-learned texts
4	Highlighting/underlining	Identifying to-be-learned material while reading
5	Keyword mnemonic	Using keywords and mental imagery
6	Imagery for text	Forming mental images of text while reading/listening
7	Rereading	Restudying text material again
8	Practice testing	Self-testing or taking practice tests
9	Distributed practice	Spreading out study activities over time
10	Interleaved practice	Mixing different kinds of problems or material within a single study session

Improving students' learning with effective learning techniques: Promising directions from cognitive and educational psychology.
Dunlosky et al 2013

Learning Techniques (Dunlosky et al.)

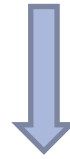
	Technique	Utility	Why?
1	Elaborative interrogation	Moderate	Good short-term but doubts over delayed recall
2	Self-explanation	Moderate	Dependant on learners' knowledge and ability
3	Summarisation	Low	Most learners require extensive training
4	Highlighting/underlining	Low	Does little – need knowledge to highlight effectively
5	Keyword mnemonic	Low	Too much time training for keyword generation
6	Imagery for text	Low	Benefits constrained to imagery-friendly materials
7	Rereading	Low	Aids short-term recall but not comprehension
8	Practice testing	High	Effective with minimal time and training required
9	Distributed practice	High	Easy to implement with some training required
10	Interleaved practice	Moderate	Effective learning and retention – little research

Improving students' learning with effective learning techniques: Promising directions from cognitive and educational psychology.
Dunlosky et al 2013

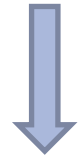
Practice Testing

- ▶ Most learners' experience of testing is summative and high-stakes
 - ▶ It leaves them feeling trapped or tricked
 - ▶ It's not surprising that they don't like it...
- ▶ However, if the same tests become low-stakes or no-stakes...
 - ▶ ...involving practice that learners can do themselves and understand
- ▶ Then learners understand the process and experience the benefits

Examiner



Student



These could look terrifying...

1. In recent years a significant number of businesses have been accused of being unethical. Discuss whether senior managers should consider ethics when making business decisions. [20]
2. Discuss whether a high rate of inflation or a deficit on the current account of the balance of payments is the more serious problem for an economy. [12]
3. Explain the various forms of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and evaluate their effectiveness in resolving civil disputes. [25]
4. Explain and assess the view that cultural factors are the main influence on family structure. [25]

High Challenge, Low Stakes. 1

▶ **At the start of the year, for the first topic assessment:**

- ▶ Give learners the question(s) a week before and discuss how they might tackle them
- ▶ Allow them to make a 'crib sheet' of one side of A4 paper
- ▶ Make the assessment timed
- ▶ Mark and give feedback, with targets for improvement (DIRT) and compare to exemplary answers
- ▶ Ensure each learner reflects on their own work
- ▶ Review their crib sheets – what makes a good one?

▶ **At the next assessment point:**

- ▶ Give learners the question(s) a week before but don't discuss them
- ▶ Allow the crib sheet and mark, feedback and reflect as before

▶ **At the next:**

- ▶ Don't give the question, but allow a crib sheet (on the topic area)

▶ **At the next:**

- ▶ Make it exam style

DIRT - horrible acronym, useful strategy

Dedicated Improvement & Reflection Time

- ▶ Time regularly allocated in a lesson for learners to consider any feedback given by their teacher or peers and to set their own targets for improvement or act on suggestions given



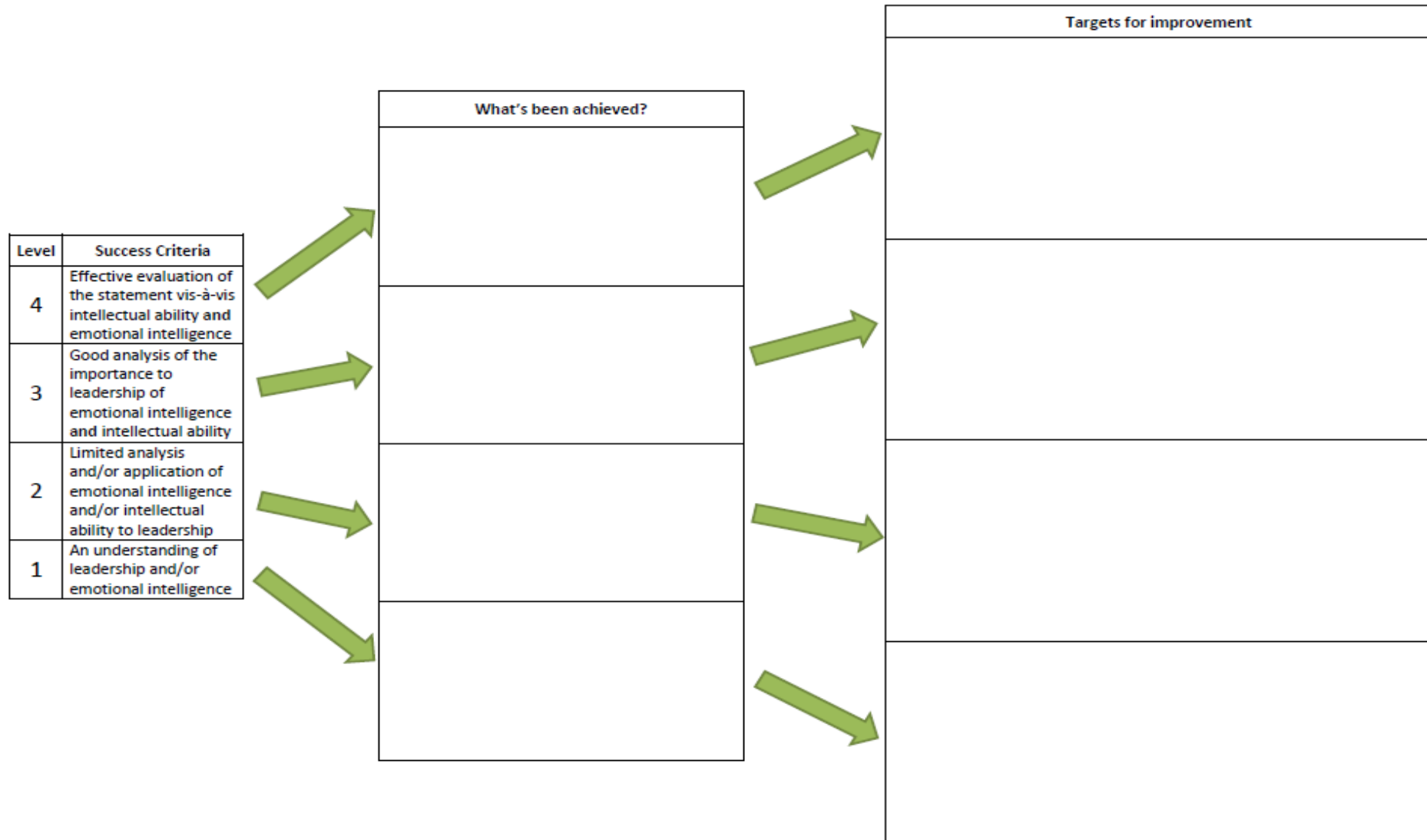
Task...

- ▶ Read, consider and discuss the collection of short essays provided, all with the title:

‘Effective leaders need to be more emotionally intelligent than intellectually brilliant.’ Discuss this statement.

- ▶ Use the pro forma supplied to decide what’s been done well and then give targets for improvement

‘Effective leaders need to be more emotionally intelligent than intellectually brilliant.’ Discuss this statement.



High Challenge, Low Stakes. 2

- ▶ **When learners are completing a past paper essay question in class:**
 - ▶ Take a break half way into the assessment to discuss progress and ideas
 - ▶ Use the mark scheme, or excerpts from the examiner's report as a source of discussion and create a checklist of things to think about in terms of structure, key words etc.
 - ▶ Ask if they have a clear answer to the essay question and a clear plan for explaining their answer.
- ▶ *When done regularly, learners know they will be asked and quickly learn to make their plan one of the first things they do.*

High Challenge, Low Stakes. 3

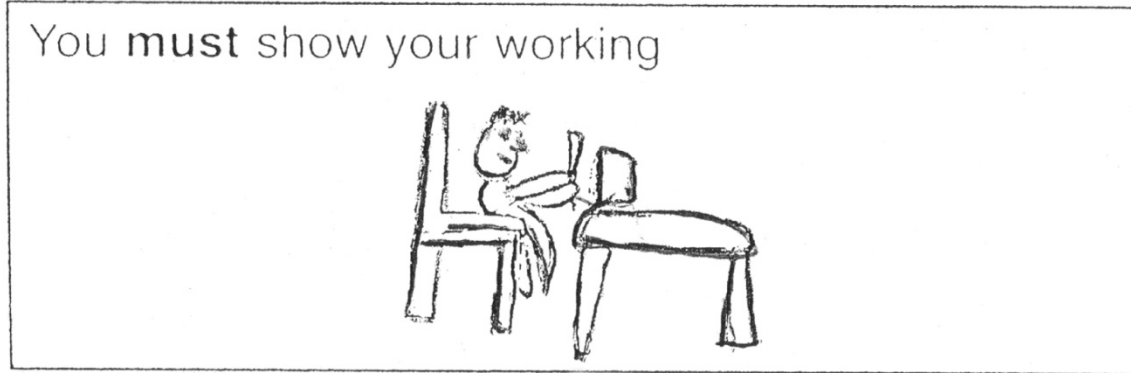
- ▶ **Use summative questions as a lesson starter**
 - ▶ These could be short-answer or multiple-choice questions
 - ▶ Even when learners have minimal knowledge, this can help frame the structure of learning for the lesson and homework
 - ▶ It helps them understand the framework you've planned
 - ▶ You can find out what they know which will inform your delivery and subsequent planning



Get your students to sort out the questions:

Question	Command word and topic						
	11. June 2018	12. June 2017	13. June 2018	12. March 2018	11. Nov 2017	12. Nov 2017	13. Nov 2017
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
7							

Use the examiners' reports



► Rank the examiners' suggestions:

Suggestion	Rank order
Evaluation guidance is required	1
Read the question	2
Use the correct terminology	3
Show your working	4
Refer to stimulus/apply	5
Allocate your time	6

When?

- ▶ Start at the beginning...
- ▶ Learners dislike summative assessments because they hate uncertainty and because they are high stakes
- ▶ Reduce that uncertainty by regularly using summative assessment questions as a 'scaffold' for your course delivery
- ▶ Make sure you make it no or low stakes, at least at first...

Summary

1. To reflect upon how teachers prepare learners for summative assessments
2. To consider and develop some practical approaches for using summative test questions to help learners succeed
3. To consider how and when to start preparing learners for examination success

Thank you

Any questions?



Learn more!

Getting in touch with Cambridge is easy

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