

# Playing a bigger educational game

## Building Powerful Learners



### Schools investing in future generations

- Schools' curriculums are unapologetically designed to ensure students reach ever higher levels of achievement
- Today's learners are set to learn more complex knowledge, more precisely, at an earlier age... in order to thrive in an increasingly complex world
- BUT learners need more than to know what has gone before - they will need to generate what will come next
- **The challenge lies in delivery**

### + Building Learning Power ... nurturing both teacher and learner

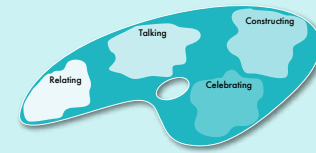
- Interprets any school curriculum for a creative, compelling, unforgettable classroom experience
- Develops the attributes that characterise successful learners
- Uses a toolbox with tools and techniques that have a reputation for balancing curriculum content with the subtleties involved in strengthening effective learning behaviours
- Treats learning as a journey that is available to every student
- **Invites excitement and drives learning for life**

### = Aspiration, Ambition and Achievement open to all. Learners who:

- **fit happily and successfully** in the communities of tomorrow
- **innovate and move** freely across different fields and disciplines
- **understand themselves** as learners
- **relish challenge** and **seek new experiences**
- always **fulfil** their potential
- **are committed to learning for life**



# Putting learning at the heart of Classroom Cultures



## Where are you now?

Learning friendly cultures systematically cultivate learning habits and attitudes that enable young people to face difficulty calmly, confidently and creatively. The focus moves from teaching to learning.

For learners, it's a place where their role changes from receptivity to activity.

For teachers, a place where their role changes from delivering content to creating situations where students can learn.

**Ask "How might we..."**

### Relating

[ "...give more responsibility for learning to our students?" ]

### Talking

[ "...introduce a sophisticated and agreed language for learning?" ]

### Constructing

[ "...offer more open-ended activities?" ]

### Celebrating

[ "...make positive use of being stuck and making mistakes?" ]

To build powerful learners teachers will need to expose the learning process; make students aware of their own learning behaviours. The palette of techniques teachers deploy to achieve this - what they do and say, what they notice and commend, how they model learning, and how they design and present activities - secures a learning-friendly classroom culture.

### Relating - Shifting how teachers relate to their students; gradually sharing more of the responsibility for learning with them

#### Teachers:

- Coach more, teach less.
- Model learning processes.

#### So that learners:

- Do more of the thinking.
- Ask more questions.
- Collaborate and talk about how they understand things.

A shift in relationships



### Talking - Shifting how teachers talk about learning; the sort of language content and style they use to enhance and explain learning

#### Teachers:

- Make learning the object of conversation.
- Introduce a language of learning.

#### So that learners:

- Become fluent in talking about the process of learning.
- Apply the language of learning practically.
- Talk more, and adults talk less!

A shift in learning language



### Constructing - Shifting how teachers construct learning activities; the tasks and classroom routines they design to build positive learning habits

#### Teachers:

- Offer few 'talk and chalk' lessons.
- Build review and reflection of the 'how' of learning into lessons.

#### So that learners:

- Become regulators of their own learning.
- Relish exploring knotty questions/problems.
- Reflect on how they are learning.

A shift in how learning is constructed

### Celebrating - Shifting what teachers celebrate about learning; what they prize, recognise, display; the outward signs of beliefs about learning

#### Teachers:

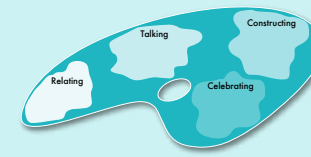
- Make learning the object of attention.
- Flip the concept of failure — stuck, mistakes, etc. — to being positive.

#### So that learners:

- Regard themselves as improving learners.
- Value making mistakes, taking on feedback, rising to challenge.
- Are conscious of their growth as a learner.

A shift in what is celebrated and valued

# Building powerful learners through Classroom activities and talk



## Where are you now?

**Learning-centred teachers have a particularly rich conception of learning and the habits that underpin it. They design nudges and activities that target specific aspects of learning behaviours. Teaching for learning becomes more detailed and forensic.**

**Teaching that coaches** students to see what they are learning more clearly and discover their own ways to improve. The Learning Power coach:

- helps learners to explore their challenges, problems and goals
- provides an objective view of learners' actions to enable them to see things as they really are
- enhances learners' motivation and self-esteem
- builds learners' curiosity

Above all, Learning Power coaches resist offering solutions since this denies the student the opportunity to confront and engage with the problem and find their own way forward.

### Activities that challenge

Activities are designed to be challenging, and where:

- stuck and confused are regular and fruitful experiences
- students are given the opportunity to 'learn what to do when they don't know what to do' – to work on wild tasks, rather than tame ones, where there's plenty of scope to get lost and perplexed.

### Starters that engage

Turn everyday objectives into intriguing questions that pique students' interest and build their emotional engagement – a pre-requisite of powerful learners. It is this engagement that gets students interested enough to be willing to put in the effort to get better and see the value of pushing themselves.



**Talk that nudges** positive self-talk in students and ensures they do the thinking for themselves. For example:

“Try explaining to yourself why you are stuck”  
(Persevering)

“What questions would get you closer to solving the puzzle?” (Questioning)

“How are you looking at things differently now?”  
(Revising)

“Have you agreed a clear team goal?”  
(Collaborating)

“What went well? What could be improved? What lessons can we learn from this?”  
(Meta-learning)

“Can you spot the false step there?”  
(Reasoning)

“What is this like that you know about already?”  
(Making links)

“Why might someone think/believe that?” (Empathising)

“Decide which is the most important question.”  
(Distilling)

**Ask yourself “Where in our curriculum plans are there opportunities for students to...?”:**

Direct their own lines of enquiry

Build perseverance in the face of difficulty

Make connections across disciplines

Convey logical arguments for various audiences

Let their imagination take risks

Grow themselves as learners

Identify what is or is not important or of value

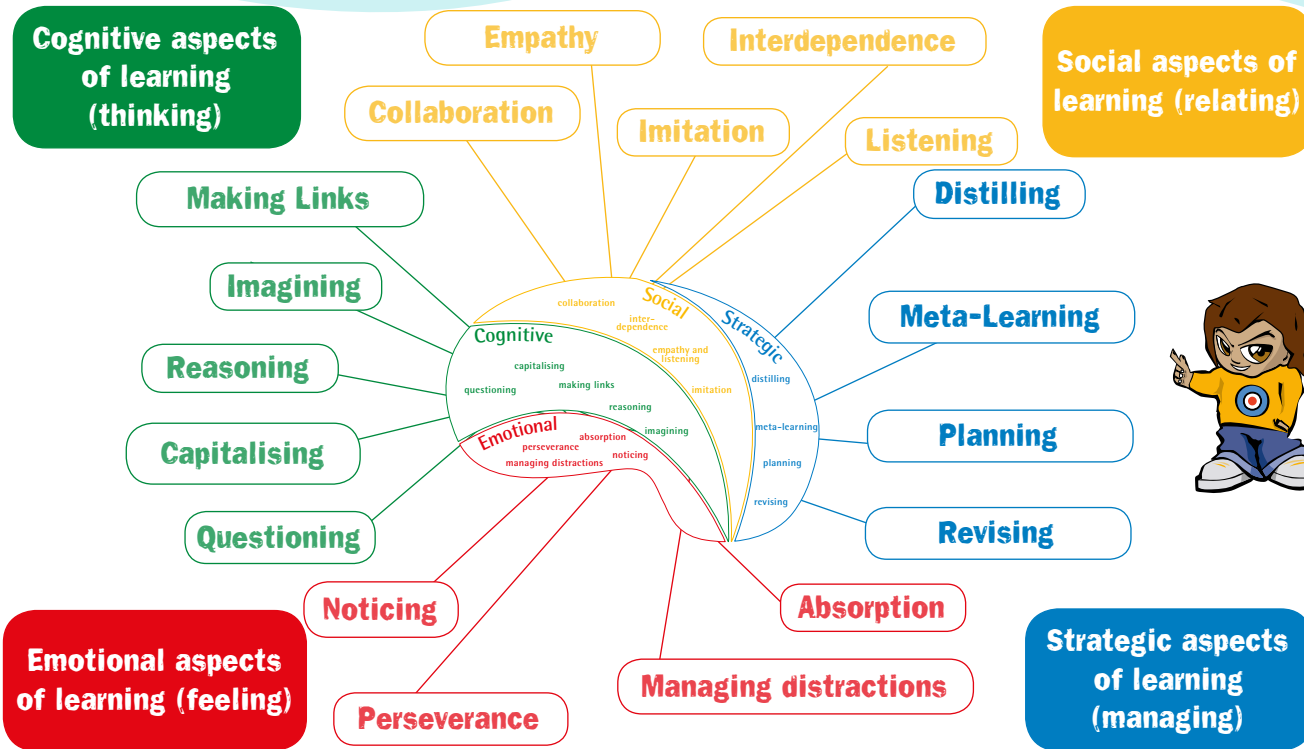
Contribute to setting goals in a team

“The presence of challenging learning intentions has multiple consequences. Pupils can be induced to invest greater effort, and invest more of their total capacity than under low-demand conditions.” John Hattie, Visible Learning

# Bringing Powerful Learners within reach

## Introducing the learning behaviours

The diagram below shows 17 **high value learning behaviours** across four aspects of learning. It reveals learning as a complex process that isn't just about thinking and having a good memory: it includes how we feel (emotional aspects of learning), how we think (cognitive aspects), how we learn with and from others (social aspects), and how we manage the process of learning (strategic aspects). It gives the beginnings of a learning language that helps teachers to think about how learning behaviours enable students to grow as learners, and tackle any content curriculum more profitably.



## From learning behaviours to learning habits

If the big ambition of Building Powerful Learners is to work, the learning behaviours have to become more than 'can-do' skills; they have to become habitual tendencies that students adopt in learning. Over time, teachers need to guide students to get better at persevering, questioning, reasoning, changing their ideas and so forth. This diagram shows the potential range of growth for each of the four aspects of learning.

From	Aspects of learning	To
No coping strategies. Gives up easily. Craves support.	<b>Emotional</b>	Develops long-term goals. Relishes challenge. Analyses mistakes positively.
Expects to be told. Fears asking questions. Firmly based in reality.	<b>Cognitive</b>	Questions are sensitive to the occasion. Innovates by challenging the status quo.
Has few positive social skills. Talks rather than listens.	<b>Social</b>	Learns with and from their peers. Leads learning teams, listens sensitively.
Little sense of goals or purposeful activity.	<b>Strategic</b>	Uses self-knowledge as a learner to monitor and control their achievements.



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Building Learning Power ... nurturing both teacher and learner

- Interpret any school curriculum for a creative, inspiring, challenging classroom experience
- Challenge the attributes that characterise successful learners
- Use a toolbox with tools and techniques that have a reputation for learning
- Connect content with the activities instead of choreographing effective learning behaviours
- Make learning a journey that is available to every child
- Include excitement and drives learning for life

Aspiration, Ambition and Achievement open to all. Learners who:

- fit happily and successfully in the conventional and beyond
- innovate and often think across different fields and disciplines
- understand themselves as learners
- seek challenge and seek new experiences
- always fulfil their potential
- are committed to learning for life

## You can find out more about how:

Find out more about how you can build powerful learning habits in your students.

[www.buildinglearningpower.com](http://www.buildinglearningpower.com)



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