

# Using Transitions Effectively To Maximise Learning Time

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# Key Points

How to **use** transition times to increase learning opportunities, rather than just **manage** them. Focuses on the use of chants as ways to embed key number facts, as the children move around the classroom.

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## Purpose

### What were your reasons for doing this development work?

Now in my third year of teaching, I wanted to look at how to use transition times effectively to maximise the progress in my classroom. I identified that my children would benefit from a more rapid recall of basic number facts, and so selected this as the focus of my transition times.

### Who were the identified target learners?

As the Year 2 teacher, my target learners were Year 2. However, this could be used across all year groups.

### What specific curriculum area did you intend to have impact on?

This project focused on Maths, although it could also be used in English for e.g. days of the week, months of the year, alphabet.

### How were you intending to improve pupil learning?

The intention was to use transitions, often considered “wasted time”, to consolidate basic facts through chanting and the use of rhymes. I hoped that after a few days the children would be able to chant these independently and retrieve these facts during lesson times.

### What were your success criteria?

I selected key aspects of our Maths curriculum which I believed most of the children needed to consolidate, namely their number bonds to 10, 20 and their 2, 5 and 10 times tables.

Assessment based on a number facts test, taken at the beginning of Spring term, to see which key facts children were missing.

Informal assessment ongoing in class.

# Methodology

## What did you do - what teaching approaches did you use?

I looked into Maths Mastery techniques, where children chant during transition times. I decided to contrive my own, using rhyme to help the children pick up the numbers quicker. (see below)

I mapped out week-by-week focuses on the objectives, beginning with two weeks on number bonds to 10, followed by two weeks on the 2 times table, 2 weeks on the 5 times table, 2 weeks on number bonds to 20 and 2 weeks on the 10 times table. At the end of each week we had another test to see how much they had retained.

I believed by using a consistent and repetitious approach, the children would succeed in 'overlearning' these number facts, where they might have struggled to recall them before.

For the number bonds to 20, I used a different voice for each pair of bonds, varying the accent and the pitch, to call the two matching numbers – "20, 0", "19-1".

For the number bonds to 10, I used the attached rhyme, with accompanying actions.

## What specific teaching resources did you use?

Number bonds to 10 and 20, and the "number bond rap" I had written.

## What CPD experiences, materials, research and expertise have you drawn on?

The project was inspired by something I observed in my NQT year at Eleanor Palmer school. The children moved from playtime to the carpet chanting a number bond rhyme. I talked to the teacher and discovered they were drawing on elements of Maths Mastery.

I read Maths Mastery documents online and used these to help me identify the justification for chanting.

Using my awareness of Makaton (which is widely used throughout the school because of the Language Resource Base which used to operate on site), I decided to add actions to the chant to help the children recall it.

# Outcomes and Impact

## What has been the impact on pupil learning?

After weeks of repetitive chanting my children are now able to recite their number bonds to 10 and 20 nearly flawlessly. We had some success with their times tables I have decided to

continue this into the following term. The children can finish the chant themselves and in a separate context, tell me two pairs of numbers which equal 10 and 20 with fairly rapid recall. Without the aid of numicon, children are beginning to use their number facts to solve calculations with multiplication.

The greatest impact is on the children's number bonds, which they are now considerably more confident on than before.

## **Evidence of impact on pupil learning**

Before I began this case study, the children completed number bond sheets and times table grids. We then repeated this at the close of the case study. The results were as follows:

Number bonds to 10 (mixed addition/subtraction), all 20 calculations correct:

73% to 100%

Number bonds to 20 (mixed addition/subtraction), all 20 calculations correct:

30% to 93%

2 x table, just multiplication:

37% to 67%

5 x table, just multiplication:

27% to 60%

10 x table, just multiplication:

50% to 81%

Observations of the children have shown that they use the rhymes to help them solve calculations – one particularly low-attaining child mutters it under their breath. When we play the rapid recall game “Ping Pong”, far more children are able to join in the game than previously.

## **What has been the impact on teaching?**

I am far more conscious of transition times than before. I use each moment the children are moving around the classroom to chant something, whether it is the words to a poem we are trying to learn or some number facts. I find I am managing less behaviour issues as the children move from carpet to table, and it is a useful tool to measure how long they should be taking to get their books out, a pencil ready etc.

I have disseminated the chants to Year 1 and they have begun chanting their number bonds to 10.

## **Evidence of impact on teaching**

I no longer plan mini-Maths sessions around number bonds to 10, 20 or times tables – this daily practice is covered during our transition times.

Fewer classroom incidents recorded in our Behaviour Book.

## **What has been the impact on school organisation and leadership?**

N/A

## **Evidence of impact on school organisation and leadership**

N/A

## **What is the crucial thing that made the difference?**

The over-learning aspect – it ensured each and every child knew the words to every chant.

## **What would your next steps be?**

I am going to work with the new Reception teacher in Autumn term to look at developing chants they can use at specific moments in their day. I will develop a bank of English / Maths-based chants/rhymes/songs which help embed key skills such as alphabet, days of the week, months of the year.

# **Sharing Practice**

## **If another individual or school was attempting to replicate this work, where should they start?**

I would suggest that you start by determining your class' area of need. Your class might benefit from a tighter focus, such as simply number bonds to 10 and 20, or only times tables. It helps to assess them in a written form so you can refer to these to show progress.

Then I would suggest you use my number bond rap – which children seem to enjoy – or create your own, perhaps based on things or phrases you know the children like. Teach it to them one line at a time, having them repeat it after you. I have found that using actions, even if it is something as simple as tapping your wrist, help the children to remember the words.

## **What would be the essential elements to include?**

Implement during transition times

Chanting / singing

Actions

'Repeat after me'

Starting the line and letting them finish it (later on)

Letting a child run it (later on)