

# STIMULATING TEACHING PERFORMANCE

MAY / JUNE NEWSLETTER



## Think for the class

I PICK UP YOUR PEN BY MISTAKE AND PUT IT IN MY BAG. AM I STEALING?

### STARTER SUGGESTION

(Suggested by Amy Walker)

### POST-IT KNOWLEDGE

**What do you need?**  
Post-it notes and a wall/board.

### How does it work?

This is an AFL task. Start with any topic and get the students to write down at least three things they know about it and stick it on the wall.

\* After you have delivered the lesson, you can use the post-it notes as a plenary. Give them another post-it and get them to add to the wall what new knowledge they have gained.

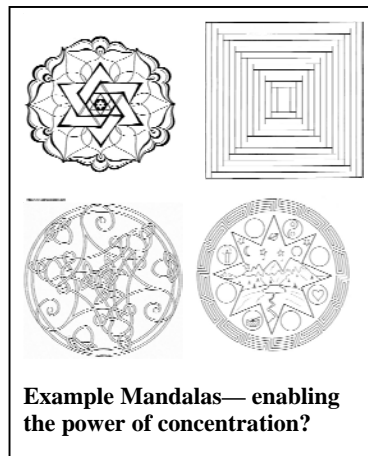
## Yoga In The Classroom?

Yoga in the classroom; surely a load of nonsense? Visions of students sitting in a meditating position humming in harmony like a bee nest. This naïve and ignorant view of yoga is somewhat inaccurate as benefits of yoga in schools are intriguing.

Interestingly, yoga at school is an aspect which is already being put into action in many classrooms.

As many would already know, yoga is an exercise which focuses on relaxation of the body and mind. A mind which is in this state is meant to be receptive, more importantly, receptive to teaching.

As mentioned above, yoga cannot be limited to sitting and humming. Rye yoga focuses on a person visualizing a place, a situation, a possibility and embracing surroundings through silence. Mandalas encourage and foster the power of concentration, an aspect that many students (and adults) find difficult to master.



Example Mandalas— enabling the power of concentration?

Rye yoga— This aspect of yoga can be used specifically for improving listening skills. An example could be the strategy named *Silence*. *Silence* first requires students to listen and focus on the sounds that are outside of the classroom, ask them to think what they are. Move onto sounds that are inside the classroom, try to get them to figure out a sound you are making (crumpling paper, clicking a pen etc.)

Then focus on the sounds they can hear and feel inside them (heartbeat, breathing etc.) The focus that a task like this brings can be particularly effective for more creative tasks.

Mandalas— These are certainly not a new concept, but the use of Mandalas is proven to focus the mind. Children are provided with a picture and they simply colour it in. Many schools use this in afternoon periods after lunch when a child is at their least susceptible state for learning. Be it a short sacrifice of class time (5-10 minutes), as a brief starter Mandalas are believed to allow a student to absorb lesson content more successfully in the long run.

Teaching yoga to children provides a steadying and harmonizing influence. It is believed to balance general hyperactivity, more significantly ADHD, lethargic or fidgety children. It can give pupils more confidence, self control and delight in their achievements.

## Reading Is The Key

**"I don't need to read because I get someone to do it for me in the exam!" This was the attitude of one young lady I encountered during my teacher training. The ideology that reading is a chore and will not be required after she completes her schooling is a devastating failure.**

Learning to read for a variety of purposes is essential to success in school and beyond as it is to learning in general. 'Reading is the basic tool in the living of a good life'. It is the jam in your donut, the ink in your

printer, the petrol in your car.

Many parents believe that reading skills are only evident in language subjects. This could not be further from the truth. Of course a child does need to do well in language, but the importance of good reading skills is significantly noticeable in all subjects.

The answer is not to make every student sit down in silence and read a novel. Wider reading has to be celebrated first as the interest for reading has to be nurtured, not forced. If a child prefers to read sport/celebrity biographies rather than a novel, it needs to be

encouraged. Whether it is a magazine, comic book or the back of a cereal box! Reading has to compete with technology like Xbox, Playstation and the internet. Attaching a negative connotation to a child's choice of literature could seriously harm an eventual love for reading.

As Joseph Addison aptly highlights, 'Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body'. The mind is a muscle and like with all unused muscles will eventually become weak if not trained.

Designated reading times within the classroom can certainly enhance reading skills, and this can be applied to any subject covered in school. It is not the soul responsibility of an English teacher to promote reading; it is the responsibility of any educator.