

How do the templates support pupils' discussions?

Pupil views templates have been developed across a number of research projects in partnership with teachers to support and facilitate pupils' discussions about learning. The template design has its origins in projects where children and young people have been prompted, through a picture or visual representation, to reflect on their learning, feelings, thoughts, actions and outcomes in different learning contexts, in particular:

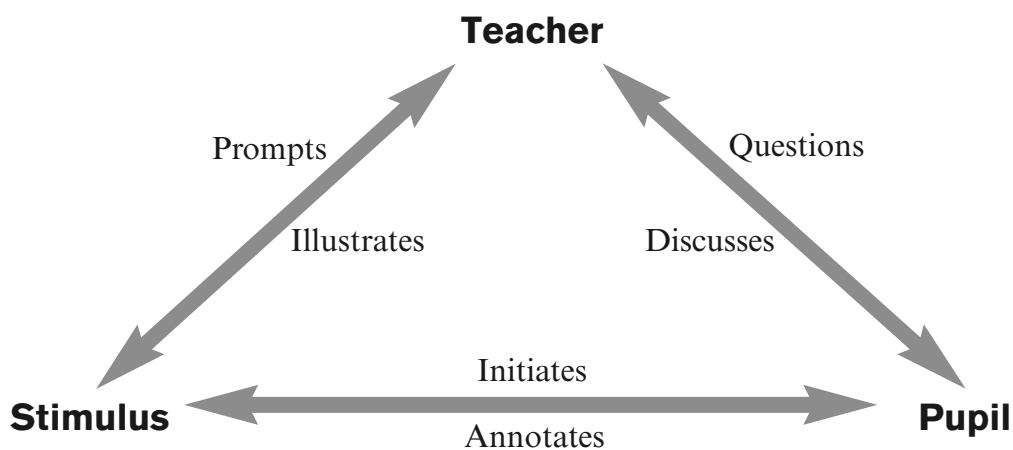
- the work of the Bubble Dialogue team who developed software with speech and thought bubbles to explore with teenagers the issue of difference in the context of citizenship in Northern Ireland. This focused on the distinction between what people say and what they think;
- cartoon images were used to prompt Year 1 children (5–6 years old) to reflect on their experiences of the National Literacy Strategy focusing particularly on what the children were feeling during different sections of the Literacy Hour; and
- work completed as part of a development project looking at how ICTs could be used to capture learning as part of a digital portfolio; speech and thought bubbles were used to support this reflection and to support pupil dialogue about the associated learning.

The templates have mainly been used and developed in classrooms; however, they clearly have potential to

bring adults and children together in reflective and productive discussion across a much wider range of contexts beyond schools and formal learning situations. The key idea in all these projects is that children can be asked, using cartoon representations, to reflect on their thinking about different aspects of life. This has led to the design of templates which can examine *the processes of thinking* in different learning contexts.

The templates have been designed as a stimulus for discussion about learning. The scenes are ones that pupils will instantly recognise as representations of different learning situations. The familiar setting supports discussion, and the design of the picture also means that the pupil can engage with it further. For example, drawing in the faces of the teacher and pupils, adding features of their classroom, or drawing what was on the board in a recent lesson, can help to trigger further reflection. This is also a useful way to support discussion and reduce any tension or implication that there is an expected or a correct way to complete the template and to ensure that the children are able to express their own thoughts and opinions.

In a more traditional interview, dialogue between an adult and child is clearly influenced by the unequal power relationships or by conversation dynamics in which young children quickly become adept at working out what they think adults want to hear. The templates attempt to diffuse this by not only giving the child a familiar type of classroom activity (a type of worksheet), but by also directing the attention towards the templates and away from the adult-child dynamic, and to emphasise through the cartoon representation that it is permissible to talk about what they think.



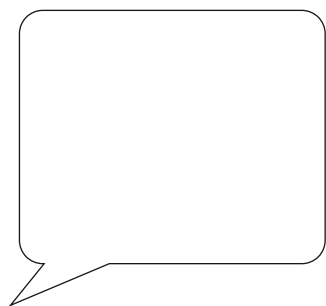
The template forms the basis of an interview about learning and the centre of a three-way interaction between an adult (likely to be the teacher), the pupils and the template. The teacher (or other adult) has an important role: they help to initiate the discussion about the chosen learning situation and to a certain extent will steer the dialogue that develops. The template serves as a reminder of the learning context under discussion and is a stimulus for this; however, as part of the process it is also annotated by the children, and so becomes a record of the discussion and a stimulus for further dialogue and ideas of their own.

The templates have usually been used with groups of four to six children working with one adult; however, this can be changed depending on the way they are being used and the particular aims for the activity. Pupil views templates can also be used on a one-to-one basis or with the whole class, although this alters the discussion or dialogue that is possible, and so needs to be thought through carefully. Within this interaction it is important that the template should be seen by the participants as theirs to adapt and available to be drawn upon, added to, annotated and changed. In practice a large version (A3 size) seems to support this, particularly with younger children. As it is written and drawn upon, the template becomes the main source of data for analysis, which is individual and reflects the views of the different children who participate.

How do the templates support discussions about learning?

The technique aims to gather information on children and young people's attitudes and beliefs about teaching, curriculum content and school or classroom routines – the process of teaching in other words – but also to go further into these processes, uncovering and developing the pupils' awareness of their own thought processes. This is structured by the speech and thought bubbles on the templates.

Of course, an overlap between these two areas is to be expected and tends to highlight the relationships between their own learning and the learning of others. The structure of the template aims to build a bridge between their experience, which children find it easier to talk about, and their thinking about their learning, which is harder to articulate. The relationship between these aspects is represented on the next page in the Venn diagram. The template is thus a structure which aims to build a bridge between more concrete experience and more abstract thinking about learning.



Speech bubble

The speech bubble looks at factors external to the individual: the learning of other pupils, teachers and parents and practicalities of learning in the specified context (awareness in general).

Thought Bubble

The thought bubble is intended to look at the 'internal' processes: the learning of the individual – 'what is going on inside their head' (thinking about thinking).

Number	Title / Description	Possible perspectives
10 (page 26)	Listening in class Three children listening to an adult speak in front of board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring issues about listening in class • The role of visitors in school • Investigating learning from a more experienced adult
11 (page 27)	Presenting work to the class Single child presenting in front of a board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring perceptions or attitudes to presenting work to the class
12 (page 28)	Individual reading Single child reading sat by book shelves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from individual reading/ research in books • Perceptions of how pupils feel as a reader • Exploring attitudes to independent work
13 (page 29)	Individual working Single child writing/ drawing at a desk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring perceptions of skills to work independently • Exploring attitudes to independent work
14 (page 30)	Working with an interactive whiteboard Three children sat in front of a teacher using an IWB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitudes to learning with an interactive whiteboard • Exploring how interactive whiteboards support learning • Advantages and disadvantages of using interactive whiteboards
15 (page 31)	Listening to an adult Three children sat listening to an adult	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring whole class teaching • How children learn from listening to an adult • Investigating which kinds of adult talk are helpful for learning
16 (page 32)	Music in a group Three children with musical instruments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning skills which can transfer across the curriculum • Learning from working in a group
17 (page 33)	Individual music Single child sat in front of the music cupboard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of the benefits of music for an individual learner • Perceptions of learning in music and how it might differ to other curriculum subjects
18 (page 34)	Learning outside Single child outside the classroom in the country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring how children think they learn on school trips or visits • How is learning outside school different to in the classroom
19 (page 35)	Learning outside in a pair Pair of children outside the classroom in the country	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring how children think they learn on school trips or visits • How is learning outside school different to in the classroom • Looking at collaboration or working together outside the classroom

7. Working in a group

Name:	
Age:	

