

What type of teacher are you?

What does your approach in the classroom say about the type of teacher you are? If you could complete this survey, our expert **Hannah Day** will be with you shortly...

1 You're setting up your classroom – which resources do you get out?

- A** Resources? What resources? My knowledge is the only resource my students need...
- B** A series of small tables, each with a unique item. Students can choose which ones they interact with and what those interactions should involve.
- C** A series of small tables, each with a different task related to the topic and a clear outcome; the students get to decide the order in which to tackle them.
- D** Just one or two items – my students will all bring in some resources of their own, since we're learning together, after all...

2 In your classroom who's in charge?

- A** Me, of course. Who else would be?
- B** No one's 'in charge' – I'm more of a facilitator.
- C** I'd prefer to ask 'Who's responsible?' Partly the students, though yes, as their teacher I must organise and ultimately deliver suitable lessons.
- D** We're all responsible for ourselves on our learning journey.

3 How do you set up your classroom? Do you have a seating plan?

- A** I've not taught in a classroom for years – I prefer a lecture hall.

- B** Where possible, I try to be outside. In the woods, a meadow, by the sea – it's where learning is most potent.

- C** I like 'U' table layouts; we can have class discussions, but I'm still able to deliver from the front when needed.

- D** Firstly, I'll set up a table of food. If we're hungry we can't learn; once everyone's fed, I find the class naturally orders itself.

4 What does your year plan look like?

- A** Every four weeks a new discrete topic is started, with no link to the topic preceding it or coming afterwards.

- B** There are basic topics sketched out, but the plan will be left behind at various points throughout the year as new topics and focuses emerge from the work we've completed.

- C** It combines tutor- and

student-set targets, with each topic flowing from one to the next. New projects will often refer back to old ones, or open up new ideas that we'll look at in more depth later on in the year. It's all about coherence and connectedness.

- D** As student voice is central to how I practice, the year plan isn't set in any specific way, but rather evolves as the lessons and learning do. I've not actually prepared a year plan since completing my PGCE...

5 A student brings in an object they want to share with the group. What do you do?

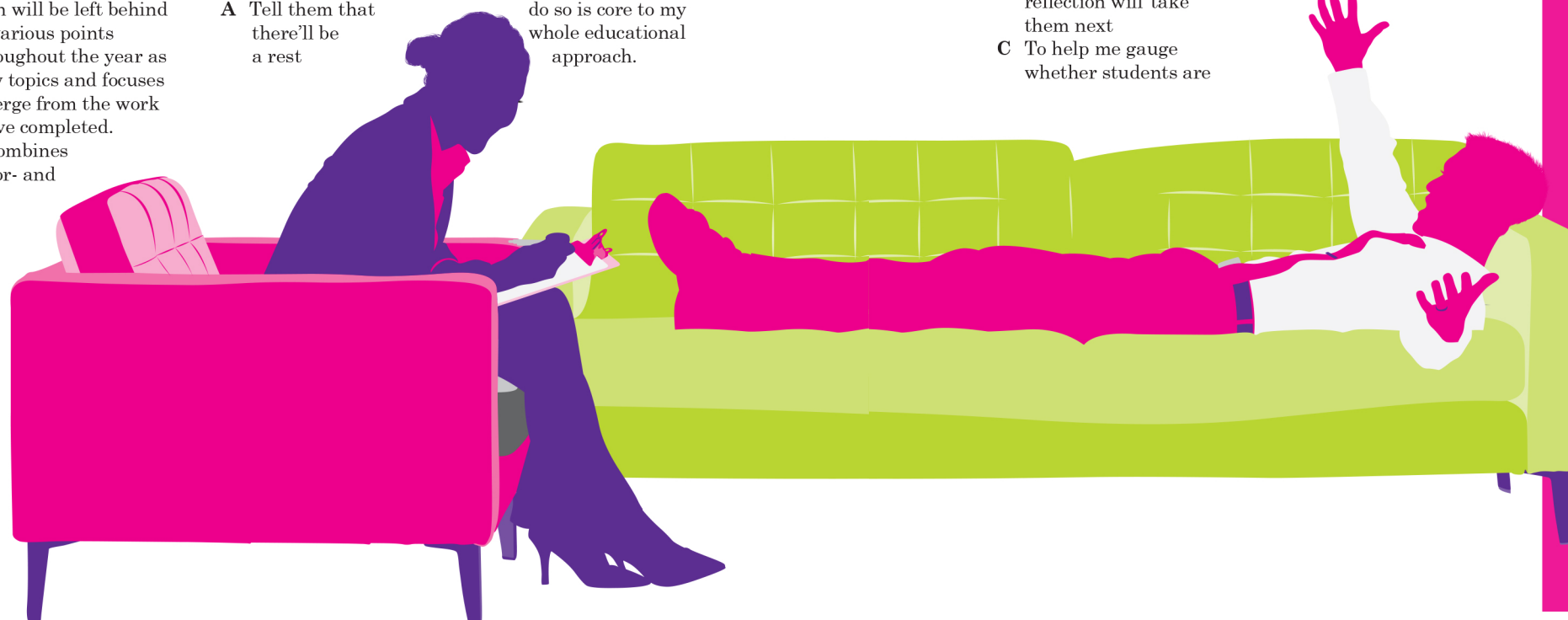
- A** Tell them that there'll be a rest

break midway through the session, at which point – if they must – they can show whatever it is to their friends then.

- B** We'll focus on the object and consider what we can learn from it. These unexpected additions to our time together enrich the learning experience, and tell students that their interests are just that – interesting, valid and worth sharing. What a powerful lesson...

- C** Giving students opportunities to share what they're interested in is so important – that's why I set aside some 'show and tell' time at the end of each day.

- D** My students do this daily – allowing them to do so is core to my whole educational approach.



6 How would you want students to engage in your lessons?

- A** Sit still, listen, take notes, ask questions at the end.
- B** To just have a go, and see where their own investigations take them.
- C** I'd like them to engage with the tasks set, while taking on board teacher feedback and working well with others.
- D** I'd want them to consider what might benefit their own learning and that of the school community, while self-directing and self-reflecting.

7 What is assessment for?

- A** To tell students if they've passed or not, and to what level.
- B** We use many assessment approaches, but refer to the process as 'reflective learning' – our students are part of the assessment process, and are therefore encouraged to consider their own progress and where this reflection will take them next.
- C** To help me gauge whether students are

making progress and provide clear and relevant feedback, while also highlighting which areas we need to focus on in order to secure good subject passes.

- D** Grades get in the way of real reflection and development. It's for my students to assess how they're progressing, and to choose which further investigations they wish to pursue as a result.

8 What terms would sum up your approach?

- A** Lectures and demonstrations, modelling, rote-learning.
- B** Hidden outcomes, swift pace, differentiation.
- C** Projects, group and paired working, scaffolded working.
- D** Equality, open mindedness, free will.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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THE RESULTS

Mostly A's – The behaviourist

Do you turn up to work in your robes and mortarboard? Yours is a traditional style that places you, the tutor, at the centre of the learning. Your knowledge is to be shared with the students, whose job is to listen. It's a long-established style that's coming back into wider use, thanks to online seminars and time-pushed tutors having to pack their content in. There's some evidence that learning by rote has a calming effect on those living with the effects of trauma, but an excess of this style risks causing many young people to disengage...

Mostly B's – The constructivist

You've adopted an approach to teaching that allows your students to learn through their experiences. Your learners are at the centre of every lesson, and given ample opportunities to reflect on their progress. Projects and learning through enquiry are key pillars in your pedagogy, and you embrace using nature and being outdoors. Hidden outcomes, a slower pace and more in-depth consideration are also important to you.

Mostly C – The social constructivist

You want to let your students be at the centre of their learning, but you also recognise that your role is important. You carefully plan and consider your lessons, ensuring that objectives are clear. You firmly believe that learning must happen in a collaborative and contextually understood

way, and that students and teachers therefore have equal importance. You'll often change up this approach to keep the learning engaging, but your students don't realise how much planning is happening – to them, it all feels natural.

Mostly D – The liberationist

You understand that students come to school with many other things on their mind, so you cater for the person first. You feed them, make them feel welcome and try to develop a good understanding of their home and social life. You believe that schools principally work to a system that ignores each student's individual nature and instead treats them as a singular mass that ought to progress together along the same topics at the same time. You see this as a fundamental problem within our existing education system. In your classroom, the student is at the centre of your pedagogy; a democratic approach that recasts the tutor as a fellow learner within a class that always works together.

A bit of everything...?

Congratulations – you're probably a highly skilled teacher, able to select the right pedagogical approach as and when it's needed. After all, no one theory or style of practice will be the best approach for all occasions. Being able to change this depending on the topic, the students or even the time of day will go a long way towards helping you get the best out of those in your care.