

Task qualities (rigour and engagement)

1.Tasks should reflect high expectations and increasing levels of challenge

Teachers must ensure tasks reflect high expectations and that these are made explicit to students (Habert and Kaser; Siraj and Taggart). Task should provide increasing levels of challenge as well as opportunities for students to grapple with difficult concepts.

2.Task should motivate and interest students and be connected to their prior learning

Teachers to build on student's prior knowledge, skill and understanding. According to Vygotsky, the task must be in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), that is set at the right level of challenge. As well as effective tasks that enable students to make meaningful connections and improve the quality of their work through feedback.

3.Task should develop deep understanding

The learning task must enable students to think deeply, logically and evaluate evidence in order to make progress. This is through creativity, innovation and problem solving.

4.Task should be high floor low ceiling

While the content within these tasks can be quiet, the level of thinking required is sophisticated. It allows the less confident learners to stay close to the original and consolidate their understanding while offering the more confident a chance to explore and challenge themselves. Teachers behaviour that supported high floor low ceiling include scaffolding and explicitly modelling an effective practice.



Tasks could be open ended

Open ended tasks provide students with a wider possibility to think critically.



Misconception

- To scaffold or not to scaffold

Some educators seem to hesitate to provide some form of scaffolding when presenting students with more complex and rigorous tasks. Scaffolding is not cheating, its just good instructions to scaffold for deeper understanding.

- procedural vs substantive engagement

procedural engagement means students' comply with teachers instructions, regardless of the nature and quality of the learning experience. Substantive engagement is when students are strongly engaged in high intellectual quality and have passionate positive feelings about learning

Tasks

Authentic

Students relate to it

Provide scaffold when needed

Visible thinking

Differentiated success criteria

Prior knowledge and understanding

Think deeply, logically and evaluate evidence in order to make progress.

Scaffolding is about holding the task difficulty constant while simplifying the learner's role by means of graduated assistance. (Wood, Bruner and Ross, 1976)

Does this learning provide challenge for me? will it promote deep and powerful understanding?

Do I understand what I'm supposed to be learning and why I'm supposed to be learning it?

