How does the perception of progress impact on the engagement of high achieving Year 8 pupils in Modern Foreign Languages?

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A Research & Development Project
Submitted for the
MSc Learning & Teaching 2018

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How does the perception of progress impact on the engagement of high-achieving Year 8 pupils in Modern Foreign Languages?

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1 ABSTRACT

This research describes a school-based study conducted to understand the effect that high-achieving pupils' perceptions of progress might have on their engagement in Modern Foreign Languages (MFL). Pupils' perceptions of progress were collated through qualitative data method collections such as interviews and questionnaires. Pupils' engagement levels were measured using a mixed method data collection through an analysis of changing Attitude to Learning scores (ATL), interviews and questionnaires.

The research was conducted in a mixed secondary school and focused on a class of thirty-one, high-achieving, Year 8 pupils learning Spanish. For the purpose of this study a MFL high-achiever will be defined according to Renzulli's (1986) 'The Three- ring conception of giftedness' (figure 3, pg.16); a pupil with an equal balance of creativity, above average ability and task commitment.

At the start of the study, pre-questionnaires and interviews were conducted with the class to understand their definition of progress. Following these discussions an intervention was designed which offered the pupils the opportunity to review their learning at three stages, as well as the space to practise key learning points by answering three questions, specifically; what do you normally do during the holidays? Where did you go on holiday? And where are you going to go on holiday next year?

The first review was carried out on three fortnightly occasions during the term and the questions remained the same each time, allowing pupils to build on previous answers. The first cycle intervention proved to be successful with an increase of 35% in pupils who rated themselves as 'very engaged' at the end of the first cycle. These results were corroborated by an increase of the average Attitude To Learning (ATL) score from a 2 to a 1 (1 being the highest available and 3 being the

lowest); a score given against a standardised pro-forma and regularly reflected on and updated by the researcher throughout the process.

After the success of first cycle of the intervention a discussion, with both the Continued Professional Learning (CPL) group (a teaching and learning focus group in my school) and the pupils, led to alterations to the review sheet for the second cycle which included new questions for each review and a revised timescale for reflection.

Nonetheless, the findings of the second- intervention produced yet more questions. At the end of the first cycle pupils averaged a higher point score of for content (8/15 compared to 6/15 at the end of the second cycle), range and complexity (7/10 compared to 5/10 at the end of the second cycle. These differences highlighted that the quality of the work produced over the first cycle was of a better than that produced over the second cycle. Pupils' also expressed a decline in engagement since there was a decrease of 10% of students who had previously felt 'very engaged' compared to the end of the second cycle. Yet despite a seemingly disappointing outcome to the second cycle, the average of the ATL scores recorded by the researcher remained a 1; indicating that when assessed against a standardised pro-forma pupil engagement had not changed and was still higher than their pre-intervention ATL scores, despite a poorer quality of work.

It would seem that pupil engagement during the second cycle intervention did decline, however there are many reasons for this; period of the year, GCSE options were selected during the second cycle or the inability to produce a substantial amount of evidence on the progress sheet in the time given. Nevertheless, it is clear that an intervention which encourages pupils to reflect on their progress and participate in the learning process, does impact positively on their overall engagement.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale

The rationale to focus on high-achieving Year 8 pupils and to understand their perception of progress and the possible correlation it has with their engagement was for two reasons: firstly, a recent OFSTED inspection at my workplace specifically identified the less than expected progress *more-able* pupils were making. This observation was based on interviews with the Scholars group (*most-able)* (see below for a discussion of this group) and parents who felt that *more-able* pupils were not being routinely challenged. This comment prompted a deeper investigation into exactly who the *more-able* are in a MFL context and how valid this observation was in MFL.

Secondly, in response to increased pressure on teachers to meet the requirements of the rigour of the new GCSE's (Parliament. House of Commons, 2017) and to tackle boredom language learners experience during their first few years at Secondary School (Bolster, 2009), the introduction of complex learning concepts and avoidance of repeated learning from Primary School has been introduced from an earlier age in my workplace. A piece in the Times Educational Supplement (TES) warned against introducing such difficult concepts in KS3, since it may cause onset disengagement (Spalding, 2017). Yet in response to these demands, a top set Year 8 group known as the *double-linguists* and would be identified as MFL high-achievers or MFL *more-able,* with pupils who should be equipped with such exertion were starting to display traits of disengagement. The decline in engagement was identified by their average Attitude To Learning (ATL) scores of 2, (see Appendix 9.17) a standardised pro-forma for teachers to assess pupil ATL; which indicated that pupils were not wholly engaged with the learning process.

The *double linguist* group is identified principally through a linguistic aptitude test and they are the only pupils in their cohort offered the opportunity to learn German (see figure 1, pg.10). These

pupils, who are willing to commit to after school lessons for the second language and meet the demands of learning two languages, have shown that they are motivated and committed to language learning. This is particularly concerning since this group represent the largest potential GCSE languages candidates in Year 9 (when GCSEs commence in workplace), yet only four students from this particular group had selected German as a GCSE option at the time of writing up this research. Despite a potentially large uptake for Spanish GCSE, three classes, pupils could still change opt out. It was a concern that pupils were ill-equipped to independently deploy learning strategies and therefore felt they were not making adequate progress, leading to a decline in their motivation to learn and the decision to drop Spanish. By using this group as the focus of the study it was hoped that there would be a clearer understanding of how the *more-able* or *high-achievers* perceive their progress and if such perceptions had any correlation with their engagement.

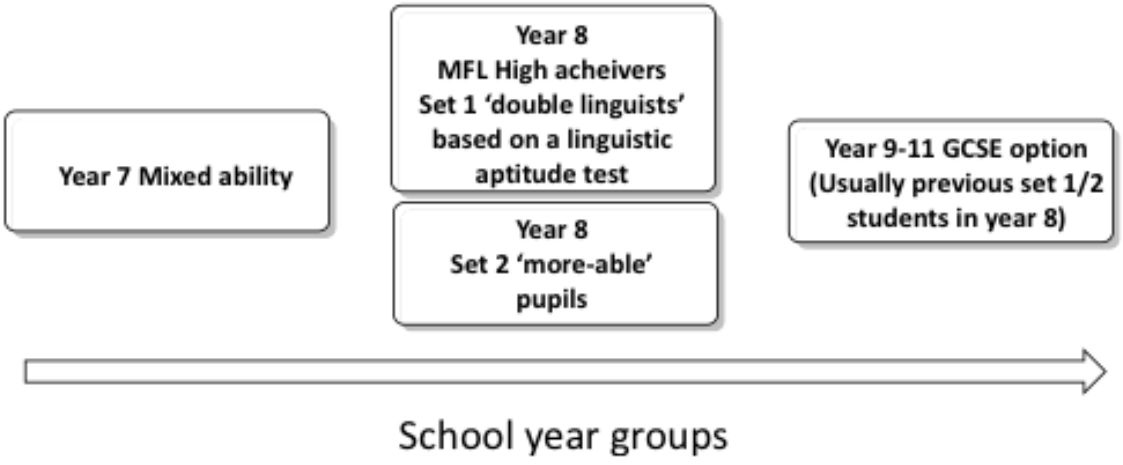


Figure 1 Organisation of MFL classes Year 7- 11

1.2 Context

I am beginning this research by addressing who OFSTED were referring to as the *more-able* during their inspection at my workplace and why this study will not focus on this group solely. I feel it is important address the current definitions of *more-able* as well as my decision to refer to the group of pupils in my study as *high-achieving* as opposed to *more-able*.

My school has two categories for pupils who exhibit above-average ability, creativity and task commitment (Renzulli, 1986): *Scholars* and the *more-able (*see figure 2, page 11, for an explanation of the school gifted and talented syste*m).* The school defines the top *ten percent* of pupils with outstanding academic performance across the curriculum as *Scholars* or the *most-able*. This group of pupils are chosen based on a point score average in all their subjects and pupil eligibility is dependent upon them being able to demonstrate high order thinking skills. They were also the group selected to represent the more-able and meet with the OFSTED inspectors during their inspection of my workplace.

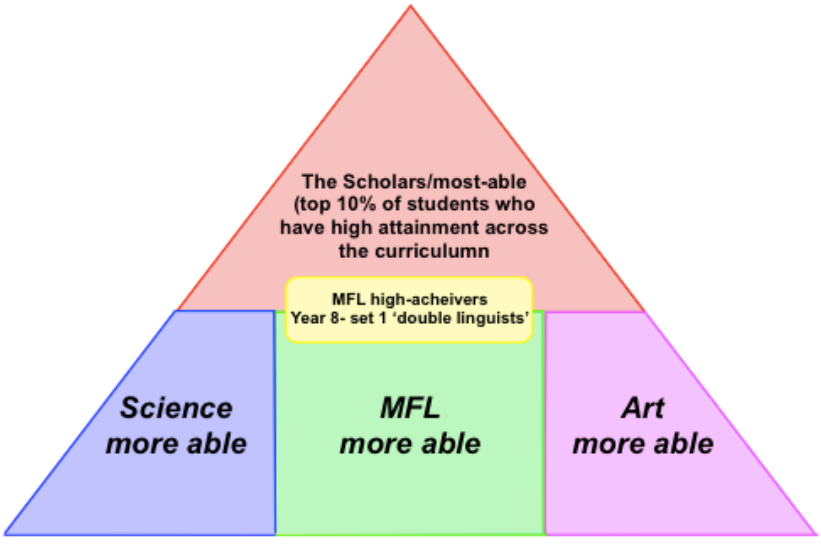


Figure 2 The identification of more-able pupils at my workplace (yellow box represents the focus group of this study).

The rest of the pupils who demonstrate task commitment, creativity and above- average ability (Renzulli, 1986) in a specific subject are labelled as the *more-able*. The identification process for this group of pupils is left to the discretion of subject teachers, I will consider later on if labelling can impact on the pupils' perception of their own abilities and therefore affect their efforts. Although my school recognises that there are multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983) and offers a degree of freedom to class teachers to identify their *more-able* pupils there is an engrained perception an engrained perception both from the students' perspective and the teaching staff of who *more-able* pupils are.

In my workplace Year 7 pupils sit an aptitude test, through the medium of Swedish, which challenges their ability to problem solve and apply linguistic patterns. The top sixty pupils out of the entire Year 7 cohort who attain the highest results are then invited to pick up a second language in Year 8, after-school, and are known as the *double-linguists*. We would label these pupils as *more*-able in MFL and there is a near fifty-fifty split of pupils from the Scholars group and other pupils. Using the term *more-able* implies that this group of pupils have an 'inherent ability' (Hart *et al*., 2004, p.247) and although this group of pupils have exhibited that they hold a 'cognitive intellect' (Hart *et al*., 2004, p.247), Hart *et al*. (2004); Dweck (1986); Dweck and Leggett (1988) and Elliott and Dweck (1999) would argue this could expand when nurtured. The current organisation of the *more-able* in my workplace means that the double-linguist group denotes superiority to the rest of the MFL learners, when in fact cognitive ability is only one aspect of being *more-able*; membership should not be exclusively related to ability but additionally the desire to want to achieve. The group have issues surrounding their engagement and willingness to challenge themselves. Some would argue that this is due to a lack of challenge provided by the teacher, but I believe it is because of their inability to independently track and monitor their progress in Spanish.

1.3 **Definitions of *more-able*, *high-achieving* and *gifted and talented* pupils**

1.3.1 National perspective

It is important to outline exactly what is meant by *more-able* and why I have decided against this term. In a review of literature regarding gifted and talented pupils, it was found that there are '[…] over two hundred definitions of "giftedness", "talented", "more able", "exceptional" and "marked aptitude"' (George, 1992 *in* White *et al.*, 2003, p. 2). Following the oversight of able pupils in the Warnock Report (1978) and the Education Act (1981), able pupils' needs began to come under scrutiny at the beginning of the 1990's (White *et al.,* 2003, p.4). Initially the term '*Gifted and Talented*' (G&T) was suggested to identify those pupils with above average ability, but this was critiqued by some: 'It is not just the conflating of "gifted" and "talented"; it is that "gifts" and "talents" are often specific' (Smithers and Robinson, 2012, p.i).

According to a report by the Department for Education (DfE, 2011), the term *more-able* refers to pupils '[…] who have abilities in one or more academic subjects such as mathematics or English' (2011, p.1). Smithers and Robinson (2012) recommend the term '*Highly Able'*, which refers to pupils 'capable of excellence in school subjects' (2012, p.iii). The term more-able can be conflictual in many school settings, with one Head teacher claiming the introduction of the term more-able as: 'a bit elitist' (Schools Week, 2015, NP) which amongst more-able advocates incited the response of '[..] there is sometimes confusion between "excellence and elitist"' (Schools Week, 2015, NP). The common perception is that in a school setting some pupils will perform better than others based on their ability. Hart *et al.* (2004) argue that once a child is labelled in such a way it can be harmful to their achievement since their assumed attainment is based on the belief that they are *more-able* therefore they *should* be able to perform if they apply greater effort to their learning. On the surface, the labelling of a child as *more-able* may not seem harmful if it means a teacher will apply a greater

amount of attention to their learning needs and performance. However, if one considers the inverse, a child being labelled as *less-able*, what does this mean for their achievement? If a teacher assumes a child is *less-able* because of innate ability, as is presumed for *more-able* pupils, they will not try to challenge their lack of learning or mistakes, because they were bound to be limited at some point of their learning (Dweck and Molden, 2005). Equally as harmful would be a teacher who presumes *more-able* pupils have the ability to achieve, and when they do not perform it is their fault for not applying their efforts (Hart *et.al.,* 2004; Dweck and Molden, 2005).

Another important consideration is how these pupils are selected. The Education Act (1944) claimed that ability was identifiable by 'one means at the age of eleven': children who show a certain 'specialness' in certain areas of the curriculum' (White *et al.*, 2003, p.12), this belief contradicts theories of intelligence such as 'multiple intelligences' (Gardner *in* White *et al.,* 2003). In 2008, The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) explicitly stated that a pupil should be identified on 'ability rather than achievement' (2008, p.1). Nonetheless one must consider what is meant by ability. Jill Bourne and Bob Moon (1995, p.26) define ability as 'common-sense'. Bourne and Moon (1995) argue that far from the belief that ability is fixed and genetic, ability is a subjective concept which is based on cultural ideologies.

In the United Kingdom (UK) it would seem that a cultural belief of ability is based on how well a pupil can perform in English and Mathematics. This notion is supported by the findings of a report by OFSTED in 2013 into how well the *more-able* faired in English and mathematics examinations. The report (2013) made direct reference to the importance of understanding progress between the levels; a void point at the time of writing this thesis since there are no longer national curriculum levels. Although written in 2013, this focus on grades validates the dogma that *more-able* pupils are destined to get higher grades, it does not encapsulate the characteristics of a *high-achieving* pupil

who can apply learning in new situations and demonstrates a secure understanding of a learning point (Hart *et al.,* 2004). Despite claiming that *more-able* pupils do not necessarily have to be selected based on ability, schools are judged on their ability to ensure more able pupils achieve the necessary results in English and Mathematics. More recently, OFSTED are directed to judge the progress of all pupils based on '[…] growth in pupils' security, breadth and depth of knowledge, understanding and skills' (OFSTED, 2017, para 175). This statement does not explicitly imply that grades are an indicator of progress and the OFSTED (2017) Handbook reminds Inspectors that many schools may not have a formal grading system during the phasing out of levels (2017, para.178). OFSTED (2017), however, has expressed their frustration that teachers were slow to take on board comments made about the dissatisfactory progress of *more-able* pupils, but it is not clear how the progress of these pupils is being assessed. One could argue that one reason for why the *more-able* continue to make less than satisfactory amounts of progress is because of a lack of inherent understanding of a concept. Although there have been attempts to break from using attainment levels to track progress, in many schools it would appear that grades are still the most significant indicator of progress.

1.3.2 School context

My school has a broader understanding of the *more-able* and it promotes the belief that a child can be deemed *more-able* if their subject teachers can see that a pupil can show resilience, is above average ability and displays creativity in their subject. The More-Able Coordinator (a designated teacher who selects the Scholar's pupils, organises enrichment opportunities for the Scholars and monitors the progress of the more-able across all subjects) often refers to Renzulli's (1986) 'The Three- ring conception of giftedness' (figure 3, pg.16).

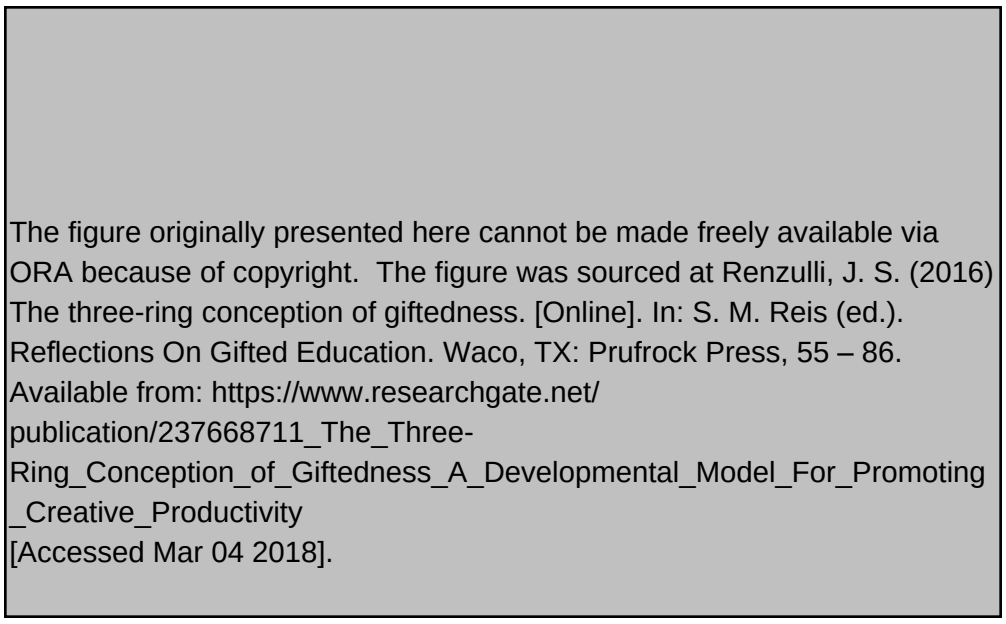


Figure 3 Adapted from 'The three- ring definition of giftedness' (in Renzulli, 2016, p.67)

This is particularly useful since defining a child solely on their ability in English and Mathematics may not necessarily reflect their ability in Modern Foreign Languages (MFL). This is a fairly new concept since the More-Able Coordinator wanted to address the issue of identifying the *more-able* and he did not want it to be based wholly on pupil performance in just Mathematics and English. Nonetheless, in an interview with the More-Able Coordinator it was pointed out that some departments prefer to track the progress of the *Scholars* as opposed to identifying the *more-able* pupils in their subjects. He explained that despite reminding staff that ability is not fixed, and teachers should acknowledge the multiple intelligences of their pupils, many still prefer to use assessment data to identify which pupils are *more-able*. This is relatable to Hart *et al.'s* (2004) work on mind-sets of ability. If a teacher holds a mind-set that learners hold a degree of ability, the outcome will be that no matter what measures are put in place ultimately teachers are left feeling 'a sense of powerlessness' (Hart *et al.,* 2004, p.247).

1.3.3 This study

For the remainder of this study *high- achieving* is the term I will use to refer to the group of pupils selected for the study. I want to apply a mind-set of 'transformability' (Hart *et al.,* 2004, p.247) and referred to Ingram's (2008) characteristics of a 'good language learner' to identify the high-achievers in the Year 8 group rather than data from the aptitude test:

> *"general intelligence; aptitude […]; personality […]; age of acquisition […]; motivation and attitude […] leaner preferences/style […]; learner beliefs […]; learner strategies […]* (2008, p.41 adapted from Lightbown and Spada, 1993, quoted by Eyre and Lowe, 2004, p.142).

The term *more-able* is restrictive; however, Renzulli's (1986) definition of 'giftedness' offers a broader set of means to identify a high-achieving pupil. He identified three characteristics of a high-achiever: 'task commitment, creativity and above average ability' (in Eyre, 1997, p.5). I believe that these three traits are essential in a linguist, particularly since the difficulty of language learning often drives pupils to disengagement, high-achieving or not (Graham, 2004). I will identify low engaged pupils from an ATL score guide of 1-3 (1 being outstanding) (see Appendix 9.17) used in my workplace which assesses pupil resilience, motivation and quality of work from. In my opinion, if pupils are achieving a 1 in each of these categories they are demonstrating that they are deploying their best efforts to their learning and it is also what I would expect the majority of the selected Year 8 class to score. The intervention will focus on the high-achieving pupils in the group who are coasting at a score of around 2 and 3, demonstrating that they are not displaying high levels of motivation and are settling for the bare minimum.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

The research took place in a Year 8, top set Spanish class in a mixed secondary school. The project involved two interventions over two terms. During the first cycle pupils were given a fortnightly review sheet (see Appendix 9.10) which outlined the learning points for the unit and three questions

to be completed by the next review point. Pupils were given the same questions and expected to develop previous responses; they were also asked to assess their knowledge and understanding of the learning points at each fortnightly review, moving them on a weighing scale labelled 'know' and 'need to know'. During the second cycle, following a discussion with the class and my colleagues in a Continued Professional Learning (CPL) focus group, it was decided that there should be three different questions at each review point (see Appendix 9.11, 9.12 and 9.13). After the first fortnightly review in Cycle-two the pupils asked for a weekly review instead since they felt this complimented the changing questions. Questionnaires and interviews were carried out with the class to understand if their engagement had increased and the pupils' written responses over the two-cycles were given a score for an improvement in content, range and complexity and accuracy.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW: PROGRESS, MOTIVATION AND THE HIGH-ACHIEVING

3.1 Overview

There are many different definitions of progress but for the purpose of this study I will be referring to Flavell's (1976) definition of metacognition:

'the individual's own awareness and consideration of his or her cognitive processes and strategies' (Flavell, 1979 in Fisher, 1998, p.2).

This is the preferred definition since the study seeks to understand perceptions of progress, but I would amend this to: '*to talk about the development of the individual's own awareness […]',* since my intervention seeks to ignite self-motivation within high-achieving pupils.

I have divided my literature review into the following sub-sections:

- What alternative approaches might there be to the use of attainment levels?
- Are there different methods to track progress without using attainment levels?

- Does engagement improve over time when pupils are aware of their progress?
- How does a heightened meta-cognitive awareness amongst MFL high-achievers correlate to progress?

3.2 What alternative approaches might there be to the use of attainment levels to assess progress?

The removal of National Curriculum Levels (NCL) in 2010 meant that at the time this study was conducted many schools had already initiated alternative approaches to assess in order to accommodate for a future of assessment without levels. In light of these changes one needs to understand the issues surrounding the old assessment of progress and alternative approaches suggested in the literature.

Since 1988, under the Education Reform Act, assessment in schools had been a way to monitor both school and pupil progress (Capel *et al.,* 2010, p.273). Core failings of assessment using the NCL were researched and presented by groups such as The Teaching and Learning Research Programme and the Assessment Reform Group (2009), and the Department for Education (DfE) (2009). They agreed that firstly, the use of attainment levels had become a means to assess teacher performance and secondly, frequent summative testing was ineffective *because* it was graded (Bloom, 1969 in Wiliam, 2011). A key finding by the groups was the tension which existed between assessment and grading; an issue which is also explored in the literature by Wiliam *et al.* (2004) and Stobart (2008;2009). Both the literature and the findings of the review groups agree that the tension was often due to the difficulty teachers faced when trying to deliver quality lessons and raise pupils' attainment (Wiliam *et al.* 2004).

In a MFL learning context the difficulty of using attainment levels to measure second language (L2) progress is explored by Mitchell (2003). Currently language teaching is based on a Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach which incorporates both functional language tasks and grammar and promotes the multi-faceted relationship between the four language skills; listening, reading, writing and speaking (Johnstone in Pachler *et al.*, 2001). Considering the interconnected relationship between the four skills it would be inappropriate to assess each as a single entity, Mitchell (2003) suggests that the National Curriculum Levels in MFL (NCLMFL) did not reflect the true nature of MFL progress since skills were assessed individually. Progression in MFL can be described as '[…] multiple interconnections and backslidings' (Mitchell, 2003, p.17) not linear which is how the narrowness of the NCLMFL, used at the time of Mitchel (2003) and Jones (2001) research, forced teachers to assess progress. On the other hand, the use of levels and descriptors was argued by some authors such as Jones (1994); Clarke (2008) and Jones (2001) as a way to empower pupils who could ascertain their progress definitively against a level and then refer to the descriptors when seeking practical advice on how to move up to the next level or sub-level. Small achievable goals could motivate language learners since the ultimate goal of fluency, which can take years, for many L2 learners can be the cause of disengagement (Jones, 2001).

3.2.1 What effect do grades have on the mind set?

The clarity of how to progress, as described in the NCL descriptors, could be argued as positive since it allowed pupils to understand exactly where they were in their learning and what they needed to do in each activity in order to improve (Jones, 2001). However, this argument does not consider the inverse effect of a lack of progression and how this impacted on pupil motivation. The Teaching and Learning Research Programme and the Assessment Reform Group (2009), and DfE (2009) reviews found that attainment levels were having a negative impact on pupil engagement. The notion of a 'fixed mindset', highlighted in the DfE review (DfE,2015, p.13) was also explored in the 2015 speech

by the Minister of State for School Standards, Nick Gibb. He explained the detrimental impact grading was having on pupils and although initially an intended means to standardise testing through the use of national framework, in time encourage pupils to 'self-label' (Gibb, 2015, NP). It was found that attainment levels had become synonymous for progress in the sense of moving up a level instead of developing broader understanding and depth (DfE, 2015). As a result, pupils were not putting in the effort to try and progress through the levels, either because they felt they had natural ability and putting in effort would indicate they had reached their natural threshold, or because they considered themselves capped in ability and putting in the effort and failing to attain a high level would make them look silly (Dweck, 2010). The notion of a 'growth-mindset' was coined by psychologist Carol Dweck (2008b), she highlighted the importance of learning free from self-inflicted barriers of achievement, this term, although as a concept widely explored by previous psychologists, was being used in an educational environment as a way of describing some of the motivation related learner issues that had been highlighted by the reviews as leading to lower than necessary performance.

A study by Dweck (2008a) researching the positive impact of a growth mindset on achievement found that two groups, one given praise for their intelligence and the other for their effort, displayed polarised attitudes to learning. The former group did not want to accept further tasks which would challenge them and encourage a deeper learning, the latter accepted the tasks as a means to broaden their learning. Whereas the intelligence-praised group's motivation plummeted in the face of challenge, the effort-praised group increased resulting in better overall performance. The study was repeated five times to confirm the outcome that those who valued effort when learning achieved better overall (Dweck, 2008a). Overall this study exemplifies the positive impact of a growth mind-set and the effect it has on a pupil's willingness to engage with their learning.

3.3 Are there different methods to track progress without using attainment levels?

The current situation in schools demands an alternative method to attainment levels to monitor progress, we will consider some suggestions in Jones (2001); even though she makes a fair amount of reference to NCL in her paper this is commensurate to the relevance of levels when the report was published. One of the argued strengths of the NCL descriptors was the clarity of progress and how pupils could see progress between the levels, Jones (2001) highlights the importance of target setting on pupil learning, he suggests introducing pupils to Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-related targets (SMART) (Jones, 2001, p. 103) in order to focus pupils' learning. Jones (2001) suggests that the impact of such targets may help to bridge any gaps in pupils' knowledge. This point is particularly relevant since Commission by the Department for Education (2015) highlighted that pupils who seemed to be making good progress according to their level, in fact had gaps in their knowledge. The DfE's Commission (2015) suggested that this was due to teachers teaching to the test because of the pressure on them to demonstrate adequate pupil progress. A suggested method to track progress without levels and which incorporates the principles of SMART targets comes from a teacher's handbook by Pachler *et al.* (2001, p.194) '[a] learning diary'. The benefits of deploying SMART targets are rooted in the positive consequences of goal-setting (Locke and Latham, 2002); reflection and feedback, which are tantamount to enhancing pupil engagement (Bullock and Wikeley, 2004; 2008 in Day and Tosey, 2011); authors Wallace and Kirkman (2014) also argue that in order to truly evaluate if pupils have made progress there needs to be an established starting point from which the progress can be measured. A learning diary could ensure pupils have acquired the breadth and depth of learning concepts before a summative test, therefore placing value on the process of learning rather than the end result. Jones (2001) exemplifies the success of the principles

of SMART targets through reference to a seminal study by Bert Creemers (1994) which found that if teachers projected clear learning goals in advance, pupils were more focused in their learning. Personal constructs, however, such as disengagement or emotions may hinder how active pupils are in their learning (Claxton, 1999; 2006; Watkins *et al.*, 2001; James *et al.*, 2006; Watkins and Lodge, 2007 in Day and Tosey, 2011). The above points will be explored below as we consider how pupil involvement in their learning and awareness of their progress can result in improved engagement and performance over time.

3.4 Does engagement improve over time when pupils are aware of their progress?

In order to establish the relationship between engagement and progress we should first consider another suggested definition of progress from Jane Jones (2001, p.101):

'Progress must surely involve moving from the familiar and relatively simple to the less familiar and more complex in a learning trajectory which teachers can use to help maintain the interest and motivation of their pupils'

Motivation is argued to be one of the most important factors when learning a foreign language (Dörnyei, 1998). Jones (2001) makes reference to motivation in her definition of progress and psycholinguist Zoltán Dörnyei corroborates its influence in his extensive research into the role of motivation and L2 learning (see, for example, Dörnyei, 1998, 2000, 2009; Dörnyei and Csizér, 1998; Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998 and Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2013). This section seeks to examine if long-term engagement can be maintained if pupils are aware of their progress. Dörnyei (1998) highlights that for L2 learners' motivation is crucial at two-stages; firstly, the initial impetus to want to learn a second language and secondly, the drive to continue learning the language which can often be

'tedious' (Dörnyei, 1998, p. 117). Firstly, we should consider the main theories of motivation and how they relate to long-term motivation in language learning.

The research literature includes a wide range of motivation theories (see, for example, Eccles and Wigfield's (2002) review of the main theories), but I have chosen to focus principally on *goal-orientated motivation theory* which I would consider most relevant to this study because it 'was specifically developed to explain children's learning and performance' (Dörnyei, 1998, p.121).

3.4.1 Goal oriented motivation theory

Goal setting is considered a key factor in L2 motivation, motivational theorists such as Ames (1992a) define goal-oriented motivation as:

'how the structure of learning environments can make different goals salient and consequently affect how students think about themselves, their tasks, and others' (Ames and Ames, 1984 in (1992a, p.261).

L2 motivation theorists, however, have questioned the use of the term *goal*, Dörnyei and Ottó (1998) critique the term which they believe is '[an] ill-defined or over defined term in motivation theories' (1998, p.49). It would appear that previous definitions of *goals* do not take into consideration the 'commitment component' needed to achieve the goals (Locke and Latham, 1990 in Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998, p.49), a particularly prevalent factor in L2 learning (Jones, 2001; Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998).

In a school setting there are two types of 'achievement goal constructs' (Ames, 1992a, p.261) to consider. There is a variety of labels for the two constructs, presented by other key researchers in this field such as: Dweck, 1986; Dweck and Leggett, 1988; Elliott and Dweck, 1988; Maehr and Nicholls, 1980, but the two constructs I will be referring to are those of Ames and Archer (1987, 1988) who talk about *mastery orientation* and *performance orientation*.

3.4.1.1 Performance orientation

Performance orientation is the drive to achieve through demonstrating aptitude, achieving high grades or performing better than other classmates (Ames, 1992a; Dörnyei, 1998). The role of extrinsic motivating factors, such as grades, are of high importance within this orientation. *The self-determination theory* proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985) is a paradigm to performance orientation and it highlights the characteristics of performance orientated behaviours: 'performing a behaviour as a means to an end […] to receive some extrinsic reward' (Dörnyei, 1998, p.121). A criticism of this orientation in relation to L2 learning by Douglas Brown (1981, 1990, 1994 in Dörnyei, 1998, p.124) is that in the long-term pupils become too obsessed with 'material or monetary rewards'. This is a point that will be developed later on.

3.4.1.2 Mastery orientation

Mastery orientation is the drive to achieve by 'developing new skills, trying to understand their work, improving their level of competence, or achieving a sense of mastery based on self-referenced standards' (Ames, 1992b; Brophy, 1983b; Meece, Blumenfeld and Hoyle, 1988; Nicholls, 1989 in Ames 1992a, p.262). *The Self-Determination Theory* (Deci and Ryan, 1985), a paradigm to mastery orientation, again highlights the benefits of mastery orientation for L2 learning; independent learners who are motivated by strategies to enhance their learning.

3.4.2 How do goal orientations relate to the role of progress as a factor of long-term L2 learning motivation?

Having considered the two constructs of goal orientated motivation we should now consider how these polar opposite goal orientations correlate with progress and long-term L2 engagement. Firstly, why is progress an important factor in long-term L2 motivation? As Jones (2001) highlights, progression is a crucial element of learning as the pupil moves from the unknown into the known, realisation of their self-efficacy can be an important element of pupil motivation as the reconcile

harder learning concepts. The two previously presented orientations exemplify two different ways people are driven to succeed (Dörnyei, 1998), how individuals' asses their capabilities are known as the *Self-Worth Theory* (Covington, 1992). More recently schools have taken on-board Dweck's (2008b) work on 'growth mind-set', which seeks to encourage pupils to focus on their capability to succeed through effort rather than preconceived ideas of ability (Dweck, 2008b); which can become self-destructive in the long-term since both pupils with high and low perceptions of their ability will rebuff learning opportunities in order to save face (Dweck, 2008a). A study carried out by motivational theorist Albert Bandura (1993), found that individuals who believed their ability was based on 'an inherent intellectual aptitude […] plummeted as they encountered problems, they became more and more erratic in their analytical thinking, and they lowered they aspirations for the group' (1993, p.121). Mastery orientation as opposed to performance orientation, is evidently better for sustained long-term pupil engagement since it encourages pupils to develop and practice learning concepts in order to succeed.

The next point to consider is how these two orientations correlate to long-term engagement in L2 learning. Research has found that rewarding pupils for good ***performance*** can result in better engagement and learning, however, by ***grades*** does not necessarily result in an improved performance over time (Schunk, 1991). When success in a task is attributed to the high level of *effort*, this is said to have a profound long-term positive effect on the motivation of pupils (Schunk, 1991; Weiner, 1979). In a L2 context the feeling of achieving fluency, which is seen as a key goal in L2 motivation (Noels *et al.,* 2000; Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998), can offer individuals a greater incentive to persist in the learning process. A study of Japanese pupils' interest in learning English by Tachibana, Matsukawa, and Zhong (1996) supports the notion that pupils who are driven to master the foreign language are more engaged with the learning process. They found that these pupils deployed greater *effort* to achieve better scores and did not simply use the scores to motivate them

(in Noels *et al.,* 2002, p.63). Although this study exemplifies the benefits of mastery orientation, we must consider other prevalent motivational factors present here such as the necessity to be able to use English and attitudes towards English speakers (see research by Csizér and Dörnyei, 2005; Noels *et al.,*2008). One cannot therefore compare L2 learners of English with pupils in the Anglophone world learning a foreign language since they may not have the same underlying motivational factors. Fluency is subjective to each learner and therefore effects the constructs of achievement (Dörnyei and Ottó, 1998). For many pupils with English as their first language, L2 fluency can often be seen as very distant (Jones, 2001), Suzanne Graham's (2002) research paper highlights that language learners often feel 'frustrated with their own attainment, in they cannot express themselves and say what they would like to' (in Mitchell, 2003, p.20).

In the context of this study, a goal of L2 fluency may be a contributing factor in disengagement, therefore we should consider how to sustain the drive for mastery orientation, particularly having considered the positive impact this mind-set can have on progress and long-term engagement. To help us understand the importance of a 'growth mind-set' (Dweck, 2008b) in L2 learning we must consider the importance of autonomous learners with a range of strategies to remedy L2 failures and a desire to add depth after each success. Williams and Burden (1997) suggest a three-stage framework for L2 learning: '(1) the reason for doing something, (2) deciding to do something, and (3) persisting in doing something' (*in* Waninge *et al.*, 2014, p.707). In the context of my study step one of Williams and Burden's (1997) framework gives the pupils in this study little control because they are required to learn a language, specifically Spanish and German at school. Therefore, step two and three are crucial to develop since pupils will soon be given the choice of whether they continue with the L2 or not. As Csizér and Dörnyei (2005) highlight, deciding to learn the L2 can stem from a variety of factors. Therefore, it is important to consider that pupils driven by grades may be able to maintain motivation for the remaining few months of Year 8 which will suffice for the short-

term obligation to study Spanish (Dörnyei, 1998), but in the long-term, especially if they choose to study GCSE Spanish, they will struggle to meet the increasing demands of L2 learning, making these pupils the most susceptible to disengagement and affecting the learning of other pupils (see Bandura, 1993). As explored by Dweck (2008a) if pupils are driven by performance orientation they will not engage with the learning process and failures will seem more personal, adding more incentive to drop Spanish or German, yet if pupils start to develop strategies to cope with failures and to invest in work which will add depth to their learning it will be easier to persist in L2 learning. A study carried out by Dweck (2008a) in twenty New York City schools, found that when pupils were explicitly taught about how the brain works and how it develops learning concepts, pupils started to engage with benefits of deploying greater *effort* to tasks realising that that aptitude was insignificant in the ability to achieve. In L2 learning pupils may benefit from seeing the small changes to their conceptual understanding of the language which cannot be measured with a grade, reigniting step two of Williams and Burden's (1997) framework for L2 learning.

The final consideration in the role of progress as a factor of long-term motivation is the varying levels of motivation pupils will experience during the learning process. Williams and Burden's (1997) framework for L2 learning offers an insight into L2 learning but it does not consider the intertwining relationship between the steps, Dörnyei and Ottó's (1998) L2 framework considers these 'feedback loops' (Waninge *et al.*, 2014, p.707) which gives a fairer representation of the instability involved with L2 motivation. A study by Freerkien Waninge *et al.* (2014), highlights the instability of motivation in L2 learning; four pupils from a Dutch secondary school were selected and their engagement was monitored over a period of two weeks. The study concluded that classroom motivation is reliant on different factors and is a 'mixture of dynamic stability' (Waninge *et al.*, 2014, p. 719). They also found that motivation is not a stable trait, regardless of whether pupils usually display higher or lower levels of motivation (Waninge *et al.*, 2014, p. 719). The study does have

limitations, as Waninge *et al.* (2014) highlight, there was a limited number of participants and the period of data collection was very short. Furthermore, the research compares German and Spanish which arguably differ in terms of difficulty therefore there is not a stable constant.

3.5 How does a heightened meta-cognitive awareness amongst MFL high-achievers correlate to progress?

This thesis aims to understand how progress is perceived amongst the high-achievers and if it has any correlation with their motivation. An empirical study into L2 learning and motivation carried out by Williams *et al.* (2002, p.518) found that pupils with high proficiency in language skills were more intrinsically motivated to learn the language they were studying, yet as we explored in the previous section, the distance of fluency may be a cause of disengagement in L2 learning. Nonetheless, Williams *et al.'s* (2002) study also found that high-achieving pupils have greater independent skills when faced with language learning strategies, which suggests that high-achieving students demonstrate qualities of individuals driven by *mastery orientation* and they understand that *effort* will allow them to build on their successes and errors.

Firstly, one must understand the characteristics of a high-achiever in MFL and how they are best motivated. According to Ingram (2008) the high-achievers in MFL will complete the principal activities with ease, it is at this point they must be pushed to develop: 'independence; critical thinking; creative thinking; problem-solving ability; reflection' (2008, p.54). This is supported by Lev Vygotsky's (1978) work on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which stipulates that if a learning point is developed and practised until mastered, even a less competent person will be able to become independently proficient. The issue for high-achievers arises when they master a learning point but continue to receive the same difficulty of work (in Chaiklin, 2003), since this is where

disengagement may arise. A key criticism of this theory is that it assumes mastery perfection and does not consider that learning has different levels, meaning complete mastery of a concept is essentially impossible (Chaiklin, 2003). In addition, Flavell *et.al* (1995) suggest that meta-cognition develops as a child matures, therefore it is unreliable to refer to grades as an indication of progress or to identify high-achievers, which is what many schools tend to do (Ingram, 2008).

After reviewing the literature, I decided to define progress as *'the [development] of the individual's own awareness and consideration of his or her cognitive processes and strategies'* (adapted from Flavell, 1979 in Fisher, 1998, p.2), otherwise known as meta-cognition. Meta-cognition can also be known as 'self-awareness' (Fisher, 1998, p.1), a term introduced by psychologist John Flavell in 1976 (Fisher, 1998, p.2). It refers to the engagement with the thought process which takes place in learning which in turn correlates to deeper progression in their learning. The benefits of nurturing a pupil's meta-cognition are highlighted in research by psychologists Vygotsky (1962) and Flavell (1979); not only does it encourage a higher engagement with the learning process, once children are more aware of their learning, meaningful progress can commence. Meta-cognition is a vital area to develop amongst high-achieving pupils (Scruggs *et.al.*, 1986 *in* Carr and Taasoobshirazo, 2008), particularly since the literature suggests that high-achieving pupils display more 'awareness' (Sternberg and Davidson, 1983 *in* Fisher, 1998, p.8) and will therefore engage with the learning process if taught the necessary strategies.

3.5.1 How can we develop high-achieving pupil's meta-cognition?

There are many models presented to encourage the progress of high-achievers, Clark and Callow (2002) suggest two which can be used: 'Renzulli's three-ring model (1986), 'The Cognitive Apprenticeship Model' (Holderness in Eyre and McClure, 2001, p.45), while these models are presented in a Primary school setting they can still be transferred to Secondary school level.

A key component of meta-cognition is independence when problem solving, Renzulli's (1986) 'three-ring model' focusses on the skills needed to develop in a certain area, encouraging pupils to be 'pro-active' and problem solvers (Clark and Callow, 2002, p.59). This model could compliment MFL high-achievers because '[…] if learners can develop, personalize, and use a repertoire of learning strategies, they will be able to achieve language proficiency in a much-facilitated manner' (Tseng *et al.,*2006, p.79). All L2 learners must have an understanding of the linguistic concepts, but this alone will not be enough to encourage the progress they should make. As Ingram (2008) highlights, if a pupil to not committed to the workload and gives up in the face of difficulty, they will never achieve their true potential. Renzulli's (1986) 'three-ring model' encourages high-achievers to focus on *effort* rather than performance. The notion of task commitment is also widely referred to in the literature surrounding MFL motivation (see, for example, Dörnyei, 1998, 2000, 2009; Dörnyei and Csizér, 1998; Noels *et al.*, 2002) this is a crucial trait amongst any L2 learner in order to achieve L2 mastery.

The second suggested model to engage high-achievers is the 'The Cognitive Apprenticeship Model' (Holderness in Eyre and McClure, 2001, p.45) which focusses on connecting previous learning and new content. Clark and Callow (2002) highlight the positive impact this model has on intrinsic motivation, since its success relies on pupils setting their own goals. For MFL teachers, however, this means entrusting high-achievers with setting goals which are attainable, not goals which invite failure and therefore allow them to save face (Dörnyei, 1998) and also goals which the individual wants to achieve in the first instance (Dörnyei, 1998). This model does not also consider the importance of pupil task commitment which is valued in Renzulli's (1986) 'three-ring model'.

The final area to consider in developing a MFL learner's meta-cognition is challenge; Black and Jones (2006) have highlighted the importance of challenge '[it makes pupils] think and perform' (2006, p.5). Ingram (2008) suggests the use of an Individual Education Pan (IEP) commonly associated with

monitoring the progress of Additional Education Needs (AEN) children, can also be applied the high-achievers since allows pupils to keep a record of past successes and failures and clear strategies for how to improve.

3.5.2 Why is meta-cognition more important than perceived ability amongst high-achieving MFL learners?

As explored in the literature, motivation therefore is a key element in L2 learning and in return it can encourage not only high attainment but also meaningful learning, this is particularly the case for pupils who demonstrate a very high competence in language learning. Firstly, we should consider the value placed on high-competence amongst the high-achieving and why this does not necessarily equate to inherent achievement, particularly in MFL. The literature suggests that high-competence in a language is the lesser component of a high-achiever since '[…] learners-even the most gifted-have already passed the critical period at which their language acquisitions skills are at their best' (Ingram, 2008, p.40) and L2 mastery is achievable even for those without the 'aptitude' (Dörnyei, 1998, p.117). In addition, by focussing solely on linguistic competence other key components; such as 'task commitment' and 'creativity' often ignored (Renzulli, 1977 in Ingram, 2008, p. 48).

We should now consider why meta-cognition or *mastery orientation* is so important amongst the high-achieving by considering of how the polar paradigm *performance orientation motivation* can damage a L2 learner's enthusiasm. The literature suggests that on the whole L2 learners exhibit motivation traits of individuals driven by performance orientation (see, for example, Graham, 2004; Dörnyei and Csizér, 1998), however in a study by Williams *et al.* (2002), there was evidence of a high-achieving pupil deploying strategies to aid his learning in comparison to a low-achieving pupil who displayed resistance to any independent learning (2002, p.520). If *high- achieving* pupils associate good grades with progress the effect could be detrimental on their motivation and attainment (Black

and Jones, 2006), whereas gaining confidence in competence and being able to develop learning concepts leads to a wider range of independent strategies to problem solve (Jones, 2001).

3.6 Conclusions of the literature review

The literature has been extremely insightful in helping to clarify my research questions and highlighting a number of key points I will consider throughout the intervention. The first key point is the importance of nurturing the meta-cognitive awareness of high-achieving pupils in order for them to engage with the learning process. The literature has highlighted the importance of motivation in MFL learning and also how to enhance engagement through promoting the relationship with learning rather than grades or ability.

The literature has also highlighted that the high-achievers need to test out their new acquired knowledge in order to understand how a concept is realised. Despite little research into high-achievers in MFL and the impact of progress of their engagement, the study led by Waninge *et al.* (2014) highlighted that high-achieving pupils are able to understand the patterns in languages and re-apply them in new scenarios. Their understanding of linguistic patterns is an area which needs to be developed in order to ignite independent learning and a deeper understanding of the connections between units of learning. The studies led by Dörnyei and Csizér (1998); Tachibana, Matsukawa, and Zhong (1996) and Waninge *et al.* (2014) all highlight the importance of achievement and successful L2 learning for pupils. I believe progression in L2 learning can often be minuscular and therefore unseen by pupils, an intervention which allows pupils to track their growing knowledge and ability to improve learning may encourage greater engagement.

The issue of measuring attainment has been broadly explored and debated and despite the removal of levels, the issue of how to assess progress continues to pose a dilemma for many schools. This

project will seek to understand how different forms of formative assessment can impact on motivation rather than the implications of summative assessment on pupil motivation. It was suggested that the previous NCLMFL prevented teachers from incorporating all four skills, listening, read, writing and listening into any assessment (Mitchell, 2003) but there are potential methods as explored by Jones (2001) as to how progress can be monitored, and targets can be set through clear feedback. Therefore, my intervention will seek to promote the transferal of knowledge across the skills without wedding each skill to a particular level. This could also help pupils to stop focussing on a particular 'weak' skills, since knowledge can be reproduced in all the skills, if students see the correlation. Given the current lack of research into pupil engagement and their perceptions of progress under the current educational context of life after levels, it would be an interesting area of research to understand if pupils have moved away from assessing their progress by grades and if a deeper understanding of their learning has an impact on their engagement.

3.7 Aims

In order to encourage pupil resilience and autonomy in MFL learning with the aim of enhancing pupil engagement in class an intervention was introduced over two terms. The aims were as follows:

- To examine the extent to which pupils can be encouraged to engage with their learning by developing their resilience.
- To understand the impact on pupil engagement when gaps in pupils' knowledge are identified and addressed.
- To determine the extent to which an improved meta-cognitive awareness can have on pupil progress and engagement.

4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The findings in my literature review have led me to devise the following research questions:

Can mastery of learning, instead of grade obsessing, boost high-achieving pupils' engagement in MFL lessons?

If high-achieving pupils in MFL engage with the learning can they challenge themselves to transfer it to all four skills (listening, reading, writing and speaking)?

Can high-achieving pupils in MFL start to set their own targets for improvement based on the learning taking place?

4.1 Hypotheses

After reviewing the relevant literature, it has led me to hypothesise that high-achieving pupils will reveal that they base their progress on their grades rather than their cognitive development and therefore will be stimulated by results. However, I also believe that once pupils start to see and understand the progress they are making they will move away from needing a grade to assess their acquired knowledge (Jones, 2001). I also believe that in line with Waninge *et al.'s* (2014) findings, there will be varied levels of engagement with the intervention, but it will overall result in an enhanced engagement with the learning journey. A null hypothesis could be that despite my concern that pupils consider grades to be the indicator of progress, in fact they are from a new generation which has less focus on grades and therefore may be judging their lack of progress against their lack of understanding of how to make progress.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Overview

The literature had signalled that there is a gap in the research regarding high-achieving pupils perceptions of progress in MFL and the correlation with their engagement, therefore the project would equip me with the knowledge to develop my own teaching practice and that of my colleagues. After reviewing the literature, I devised my research questions according to Lewis and Munn's (1987) suggestions; what, why, when, how, where and from whom (adapted from Lewis and Munn, 1987, p. 18). The focus of the study was high-achieving pupils' perceptions of progress and the correlation with their engagement, therefore I specifically selected a Year 8 class of high-achievers that I taught. The benefits of this meant that I had the freedom to implement an intervention without imposing on another teacher or risking and misinterpretation of the focus of the intervention; high-achievers and not Scholars. The drawback of such a specific focus meant that the collection of data was limited to just this group, but there were ways to ensure rich data collection, which are explored below. My project was based on an action research methodology, following Mertler's (2009, p.32) 'The Process of Action Research' (see figure 4, pg.37).

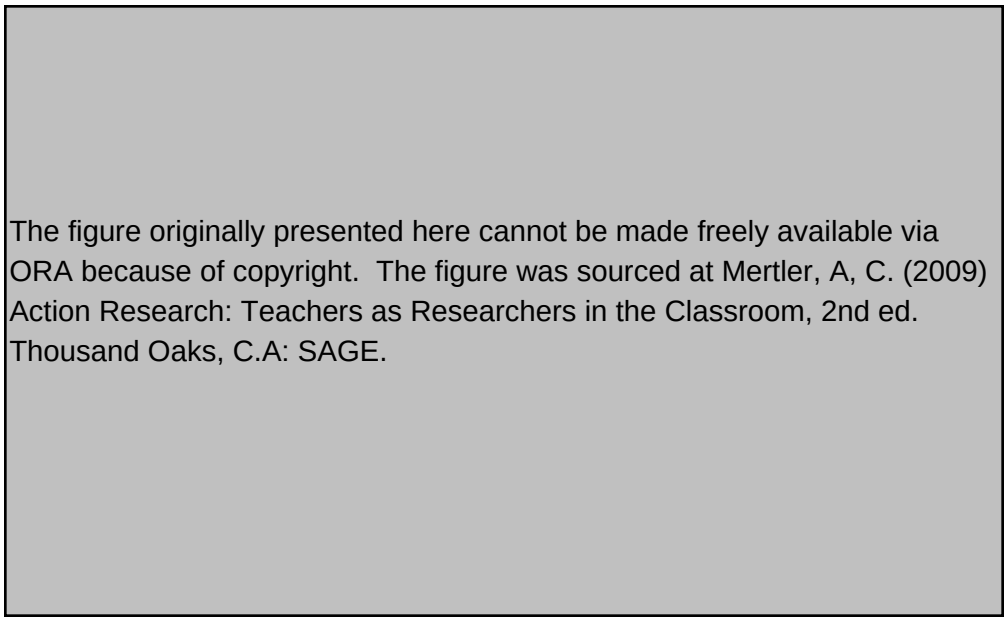


Figure 4 Adapted from Mertler (2009, p.32) 'The Process of Action Research'

I felt that this methodology would be most effective in allowing me to collaborate with my colleagues and pupils to address the issue of disengagement amongst high-achievers. Stringer (2013, p. 1) describes action research as 'unlike experimental or quantitative research that looks for generalizable explanations related to a small number of variable, action research seeks to engage the complex dynamics involved in any social context'. Given the small scale of this project, action research would lend itself favourably to the findings, since a key principle as highlighted by Stringer (2013) is that it is not a one rule fits all project. The success of the project was contextual to my workplace and my classroom, but there are key points that could be re-applied more broadly.

Data collection methods

This study followed a 'multi method approach' (Robson, 1993, p.69) in order to measure the changing levels of engagement throughout the intervention and the changing perceptions of progress. This study collected seventy-eight questionnaires in total; the use of questionnaires enabled a larger compilation of data and given that the focus group was very small, thirty-one high-achieving pupils in one Year 8 class (Munn and Drever, 1990). Similar projects looking at engagement

in MFL such as that of Waninge *et al.* (2014) also use a small sample group (four students) in order to allow for 'intensive, individual-level microanalysis' (Waninge *et al.*, 2014, p.708).

The inclusion of closed- questions made it easier to analyse the changing levels of engagement (Munn and Drever, 1990). The results of the closed- questions were presented as pie charts, which as suggested by Robson (1993) can offer readers a clear understanding of the results and summary of the data. On the other hand, Munn and Drever (1990) points out that in some instances questionnaires are completed by participants who have little opinions on the research matter and this could lead to skewed results.

Before handing out the questionnaires they were all piloted by five pupils also in Year 8, as suggested by Munn and Drever (1990), to verify that all terminology was clear and that the format was simple, Munn and Drever (1990) points out that the process of piloting questionnaires is crucial in order to spot potential pitfalls in the questions, layout or terminology. The first questionnaires were administered in paper form but a conversation in the group led a change to online format for the subsequent questionnaires, which pupils felt offered greater anonymity.

Two interviews were also conducted after each questionnaire had been administered, in order to address specific points which were raised in the questionnaires, Robson (1993) signals that a benefit of interviews is the opportunity to have face-to-face conversations that may reveal '[…] non-verbal cues [which] may give messages which help in understanding the verbal responses' (Robson, 1993, p.229).

To select the students a process of 'random sampling' (Munn and Drever, 1990, p. 20) was followed in order to avoid bias. The participants were all from the double- linguists class, which as explained in the introduction has a mixture of Scholars and other pupils. By choosing a random sample from the group I was ensuring that my own bias did not lead me to select just scholars. Munn and Drever

(1990) highlights the importance of avoiding such bias since the sample will reflect the population more closely. The process to select the pupils as random was guided by advice from Munn and Drever (1990) who suggests numbering the participants and then selecting the number of participants you wish to interview at random. The sample size numbers were kept low (six pupils in each group with a total of five groups interviewed across the study) since the group was not that varied and larger sample sizes are suggested by Munn and Drever (1990) to be more appropriate for more varied groups. Lastly, all interviews were semi-structured, for which I had a list of five broad questions in order to provide prompts rather than a narrow conversation (Robson, 1993).

The final data collection instrument was the use of a reflective diary, this allowed me to not only record my experiences but also to reflect on the discussions during the CPL meetings and also the reactions to the intervention (Moon, 2006).

Quantitative data

The content, range and complexity and accuracy of the work produced during the intervention were analysed according to a standardised numerical point system which can be found in Appendix 9.14. The use of a standardised point system was to ensure fairness when analysing the quality of the work. There was also an analysis of the changing ATL scores assessed against a standardised pro-forma table (see Appendix 9.17) across the intervention. The arithmetic mean was taken and used in the discussion of the findings since it 'best represents the level of distribution' (Robson, 1993, p.321). When analysing the findings of the questionnaires, given that the participant results were less than 100, I refrained from converting the findings to percentages and instead kept actual values to avoid any distortion of the projected results (NFER, 2000), although some of the pie charts are automatically displayed as percentages, I reverted these figures to their original values in the discussion.

5.2 **Research plan and Schedule**

Step-by-step plan	Time-scale	Action
Step 1	October 2017	Gain Ethical approval and Head teacher's permission
Step 2	November 2017	Interview with the More-Able Coordinator
Step 3	December 2017	Initial class questionnaires
Step 4	December 2017	Initial pupil interviews
Step 5	January 2018	Initial whole staff questionnaire
Step 6	January - February 2018	Action Research Cycle 1: Intervention and follow-up questionnaires to whole class, feedback to CPL group and More-Able Coordinator
Step 7	February- March 2018	Action Research Cycle-two: Intervention and follow-up questionnaires to whole class, feedback to CPL group and More-Able Coordinator
Step 8	March 2018	Concluding pupil interviews

5.2.1 Step 1: Ethics

A key aim of this project was to understand how pupils defined progress and the implication of good progress on their engagement in MFL. I was mindful of the fact that pupils may be wary to divulge negative comments regarding their current engagement in MFL and reasons as to why they were

not fully engaged, given that I was their teacher. I therefore ensured I fully explained my role as a researcher and how this differed to my role as their teacher. I did not want them to feel as if they were under scrutiny or pressure to participate.

The initial questionnaires were on paper and carried out during lesson time, but a pupil voiced a concern that despite the anonymity, I would recognise hand-writing. Therefore, in order to put the pupils at ease and to avoid any possibility of tracing comments I carried out the remaining questionnaires on a google form and gave them a time frame of one week to fill it in if they wished. The school has wide access to computers and therefore I felt every pupil had an equal opportunity to have access to the questionnaire. I found that this method allowed pupils to be more open in their feedback since thanks to the with the anonymous forms and option to complete outside of the class I would not be able to identify pupils who abstained.

5.2.1.1 Consent

I ensured all questionnaires were anonymous and that pupils had the option to opt out if they wished (Cohen *et al,* 2011), in total nineteen pupils took this option. I replicated this when conducting the interviews and also asked in advance if there were any pupils who did not wish to participate in any of the interviews, in total there were four students who wished to abstain. Those who did not wish to participate could tell me at the end of the lesson in private to avoid feeling obliged to interview if selected. Given the small number of abstainers, I invited pupils to interview outside of their Spanish lessons so that pupils who had declined to participate would not feel singled out.

5.2.1.2 Avoiding labelling pupils

I was sensitive to the title of my project and did not want pupils to feel that I was focusing solely on high-achieving pupils. This is particularly prevalent in my school context, since there is tension

amongst the pupils regarding who the 'smart ones' are; many pupils only view the pupils in the Scholars group as the high-achievers and if they are not part of the group, as many in this class are not, they may have felt that the project excluded them. Therefore, I took two steps to remove this fear: firstly, I did not divulge that my project was focusing specifically on high-achieving pupils. This was in large to ensure that it was not confused as a project that focused on just the Scholars, particularly since some pupils in the class were starting to lose confidence in Spanish as the difficulty increased and I did not want to risk them feeling unworthy of my attention. Furthermore, I have another Year 8 class and I would not want them to think I had not chosen them as a focus of the study because they were not considered high-achievers. Secondly, some may argue that a control group of the high-achievers compared to the remaining pupils would be best to assess the success of any intervention, as promulgated by Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998). If this was the case for my study, I would have to decide if the Scholars would be my control group. I have discussed at length in the introduction the issue with referring to just the Scholars as the high-achievers and therefore maintain that every pupil in the class are MFL high-achievers and therefore the intervention would benefit them all.

5.2.1.3 Data collection and storage

The initial paper questionnaires were stored in a locked cupboard and the preceding online responses in a secure, password-protected file. The interviews were also stored in password protected file and pseudonyms were given to all participants. The research was conducted within the British Educational Research Association (BERA) research guidelines and only upon receiving of ethical approval from the Central University Research Ethics Committee (CUREC) for this study and permission from the Head teacher (Appendix 9.1 and 9.2).

5.2.2 Step 2: Interview with the More-Able Coordinator

I began the planning stage of the project by meeting with the More-Able Coordinator in order to discuss the current school context for scholars, more-able and high-achievers. This was a priority for me in this collaborative piece of work since as suggested by Cohen *et al.* (2011, p.234) 'an informant' with substantial knowledge on the topic and the time, could be beneficial to the data collection process and understanding of the problem identified. I was mindful of advice from Oishi (2003) that the interviewee should have a back-seat role, I did not want to undermine the coordinators role and therefore made sure I was not leading the discussion with findings in the literature to enable a free-flowing discussion. Drever (2003) suggests a set of questions to keep the conversation focussed, I had five broad questions (Appendix 9.3) but these were only a base for the conversation, which often divulged at points.

5.2.3 Step 3: Initial class questionnaires

The purpose of the initial class questionnaire was to determine how pupils viewed their engagement in class and how they assessed their progress (Appendix 9.5). When designing the questionnaire, I was mindful of the criteria for effective questions promulgated in Peterson (2000, p.50) '[…] brief, relevant, unambiguous, specific and objective (BRUSO)'. In my first stages of designing the questionnaire I considered the type of research I had planned and exactly what role the questionnaire would have to obtain relevant and necessary information. Stone *et al.* (1990) point out that information from a questionnaire are dependent upon the quality of the questions (*in* Peterson, 2000).

The type of the research being carried out for this project is 'other-generated work', largely because it was action led (Peterson, 2000, p.15). Therefore, a key requirement to construct an effective questionnaire was to fully comprehend the desired action to take place over the course of the

intervention (Peterson, 2000). To ensure pupils felt comfortable to speak candidly about their motivation in class a suggestion by Peterson (2013, p.22) was to employ a 'projective technique'. A method introduced by Warner (1965) otherwise known as the randomized response method (RRM) (Umesh and Peterson, 1991, p.104). This meant pupils were able to choose a response from a variety of answers rather than being asked out right about their engagement in their Spanish lesson. This was particularly useful when trying to establish just the scholars' perspective, which I wanted to explore as a means to demonstrate that all high-achievers share the same opinion, regardless of their label. I disguised this as a question regarding attendance of clubs at the school, including football, rugby. Words that the pupils would understand were specifically incorporated into the interview and the questionnaire, for example the terminology of 'scholars' is one which pupils are familiar with to explain high attaining pupils (Peterson, 2000).

Types of questions

For the purpose of the research I was aware that I was intending to measure subjective opinions surrounding pupil perception of engagement and progress. Therefore, I needed to incorporate questioning to measure a '[…] particular attitude, perception, personality trait, or the like' (Peterson, 2000, p.5). My preferred questioning method was semi structured questioning such as 'adaptive or tailored, questioning' (Peterson, 2000, p.5). First type of question used was the 'mirrored-response' (Warner, 1965) where pupils had two responses to select from which both mirrored each other in some way. Pupils could offer a 'yes' or 'no' answer which either validated the statement or pointed to the second option has being closer to their true answer (Blair, Imai and Zhou, 2015). The second type of question explored by Blair, Imai and Zhou (2015) as part of the randomized response method is the 'Forced Response Design' introduced by Boruch (1971). I incorporated random statements based on truth, e.g.: 'I am a boy', that would force the pupils to answer truthfully before reaching

my actual question. Since the questionnaires were administered prior to the interviews it was important to include some open-ended questions when describing what progress looked like to them. I did not want to lead them nor their definitions of progress therefore I purposely left the section open. I gathered their responses and used these specific examples in the interviews to unpick to what extent they agreed with their classmates.

Limitations

Two key limitations of the Warner's (1965) RRM technique have been identified by Umesh and Peterson (1991, p.105): 'the statistical revelations do not offer an efficient insight to participant answers […]'. Buchman and Tracy (1982) found that RRM responses were often over exaggerated or revealed 'truths' which although somewhat true to the participant not pertinent enough to draw a definite conclusion (*in* Umesh and Peterson, 1991).

5.2.4 Step 4: Initial interviews with pupils

The initial interviews were conducted with three randomly selected groups of six pupils, as discussed in section 5.1. I had a list of five questions (Appendix 9.6) which helped to keep the consistency across the three group interviews (Drever, 2003). I wanted my questions to serve as a basis to initiate a conversation amongst the pupils, so I made sure they were open-ended thematic questions on progress, engagement and MFL learning. The questions I focused on were points which had been raised in the questionnaires, namely regarding definitions of progress. I asked the questions and waited for the pupils to start a conversation amongst themselves, ensuring I did not interfere with the points they were making, keeping my own opinions private as to not taint their responses. Oishi (2003) highlights the importance of building a rapport with respondents, however given that this is a class I have taught for the last two-years the rapport is already present and in fact may have been a limitation to the content divulged, since some pupils seemed to give answers which they deemed

correct rather than *truthful*. Oishi (2003) also stresses the importance of maintaining a neutral tone and not expressing any judgement of comments made. I assured I was positive throughout the interview and established before-hand the role I would have during the interviews (Cohen *et al.*, 2011). The interviews were recorded on a password protected device as per the ethical guidelines from BERA (2011).

5.2.5 Step 5: Initial whole staff questionnaire

The purpose of the whole staff questionnaire (Appendix 9.4) was to establish an understanding of how departments label their high-achieving students, as well as staff perceptions of progress. I wanted to compare staff and pupil perceptions of progress to ensure everybody in the school was using the same language. The style of questions was similar to those in the initial pupil questionnaires, except I included more-open ended questions in order to extrapolate as much information possible, particularly since I had opted against interviewing specific members of staff due to needing as much breadth possible, in order to understand the current school context, an advantage of questionnaires (Munn and Drever, 1990).

5.2.6 Step 6: Action Research Cycle 1: Intervention (one half-term) and follow-up questionnaires to whole class, feedback to CPL group and More-Able Coordinator

5.2.6.1 Intervention 1

The intervention for Cycle 1 (Appendix 9.10) was the introduction of a progress sheet which monitored and tracked pupil progress over the course of five weeks. Every two weeks pupils were asked to fill in a new sheet drawing on what they had learnt and needed to develop at that stage of their learning. The idea was that the progress sheet would be a visual prompt for pupils to track their acquired learning, without relying on grades. Given the success of Jones' (2001) SMART targets, I hoped that a clear outline of learning points and by keeping a record of the previous progress

sheets, would act as a diary so that pupils could refer back to previous answers or areas of development. The hope was that pupils would become more independent in their recognition of what they need to improve therefore increasing their engagement with their learning. Mindful of Waninge *et al.* (2014) findings on the varying levels of engagement in MFL from activity to activity, I selected a fortnightly time-scale to offer pupils time to reflect on their learning thus far.

Quantitative analysis

I wanted to analyse the improvement of pupil's content, range and complexity and accuracy rather than basing progress on the amount of work being written. Therefore, I took a sample of nineteen books; the number of pupils out of thirty-one who had completed each review point over the two-cycles and assessed the three reviews against a GCSE MFL writing criteria (see Appendix 9.14) in order to award points to their answers over the first cycle. I then took the mean from each category and compared the results. The purpose of this data was to determine if enhanced engagement also corresponded to a high quality of work and if pupils based their progress on the amount of work they could produce over the course of intervention or their ability to produce work independently and accurately.

5.2.6.2 Follow up questionnaires to pupils

Follow up questionnaires (Appendix 9.7) were administered to the whole class to gauge their new levels of engagement and their enjoyment of the first intervention. The same style of questions was adhered to as the initial questionnaires, but were administered on an anonymous google form, after concerns were raised regarding the true anonymity of paper questionnaires. Another purpose of these questionnaires was to determine if and how the group would alter the intervention for the second cycle. Through a mixture of closed and open questions, I was able to understand how to alter the intervention for the second cycle.

5.2.6.3 Feedback to More-Able Coordinator and CPL group

Following the findings of first intervention I presented back to the CPL group and the More-Able Coordinator. I discussed the feedback from the pupil questionnaires and sought advice on how to alter the intervention from the first cycle. The conversation was not recorded but I made a note of the key comments and outcomes in in my reflective diary. I did not feel an interview would be appropriate since there were other, private issues discussed in the meeting.

5.2.7 Step 7: Action Research Cycle-two: Intervention (one half-term) and follow-up questionnaires to whole class, feedback to CPL group and More-Able Coordinator

5.2.7.1 Intervention 2

The second intervention in Cycle-two (Appendix 9.11, 9.12, 9.13) was an alteration to the design of the first intervention. The design was heavily influenced by the class and the suggestions in the CPL group. The main changes were as follows:

- A weekly review rather than fortnightly
- Different questions each week but keeping to the pattern of one present, one past and one future
- A surprise question that pupils had to think of and answer over the week

By working with the class and seeking to optimise engagement with the second intervention, I hoped I would be able to understand pupil perceptions of progress and how they would assess it as well as understanding if this element of control was important for high-achievers. I used the same sample of nineteen books and assessed the three reviews against the same GCSE MFL writing criteria (see Appendix 9.14).

5.2.8 Step 8: Concluding interviews with pupils

The concluding interviews were conducted in a similar way to the initial interviews. The initial interviews had offered a lot of insight, but the content was often repetitive. Therefore, for the final interviews I felt I only needed two groups of six pupils and that the random sample selection would still represent the rest of the class. Given the breadth of the questionnaires, I had a strong idea of the general indication of pupil thoughts. I also made sure the groups were different to the initial interviews and that new pupils had the opportunity to offer an opinion. I had a base of five thematic questions (Appendix 9.9) and once the first-question has been asked I sat back to observe the conversation. I deliberately decided against a control group, even though the benefits are explored by Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) since I did not want to select only low engaged pupils or just those from the scholars.

5.2.9 Final steps in the Action Research

In order to complete the Action Research process (see *Figure 4, Mertler, 2009, p.32*) I presented the findings at the final CPL meeting and at the MFL department meeting. The More-Able Coordinator attended the department meeting. There was an unrecorded general conversation surrounding the success and limitations of the intervention and the possibility of implementing the intervention next year with the double-linguist groups and some colleagues in the department expressed an interest in trialling the review with their Year 9 GCSE classes.

6 FINDINGS

6.1 Step 2: Interview with the More-Able Coordinator

I began the project by investigating the current context of high-achievers in my workplace and the challenges they face. The literature had identified that there is often confusion surrounding the term more-able with over two hundred variations and definitions (George, 1992 *in* White *et al.*, 2003, p. 2) and this was echoed by the More-Able Coordinator (MAC). Firstly, I wanted to establish exactly who the high-achievers were in my workplace and how the two-tier labelling system we have of Scholars and more-able, influences staff and pupil perceptions of who the more-able are. The More-Able Coordinator (MAC) clarified that Scholars and more-able are *not* the same thing:

> MAC: "more-able is a very generic word for any student who is achieving highly […] academically"

This was an interesting point which was raised in the interview since it would appear to encapsulate the transformable mindset promulgated by Hart *et al.* (2004). The coordinator recognised that that pupils have multiple intelligences, as discussed by Gardner (1983). This is particularly relevant in an MFL context given that, as highlighted by Flavell *et.al* (1995), a pupil's meta-cognition will develop as they mature, therefore relying solely on data to identify a high achiever would not work in an MFL context (Ingram, 2008).

> MAC: "As a school […] we would look at students who are achieving rather than a student who <u>was</u> achieving"

The Coordinator justified the decision to follow data to select the scholar group as follows:

> MAC: "we went with data instead which is a bit dull […] I think that that encapsulates the high order thinking skills eventually anyway because they should, to get the high grades, be hard-working and resilient but also able to solve problems"

The Coordinator also expressed frustration at the difficulty in selecting pupils to be labelled but said that the current system in place appears to be working:

> MAC: "The first problem with being the More-Able Coordinator was who do we mean by that? […] We've created an academic group for those kids but then each department is meant to identify their more-able on a document"

Some may argue that, having a group called the Scholars is 'elitist' (Schools Week, 2015, NP); such labelling, as signalled by Hart *et al.* (2004), can impact on pupil confidence and in turn their achievement. In my workplace, the Scholars are regarded, by other pupils, as an elitist group usually because they are offered enrichment opportunities and trips, which departments tend not to provide for their subject high-achievers.

Drawing on the results of the whole staff questionnaire (Appendix 9.4), of which sixteen out of sixty staff responded, there seemed to be a divide in the preference of terminology used to refer to a high-achieving student (figure 5, pg.51), with only a small number use *Scholars (2/16)*:

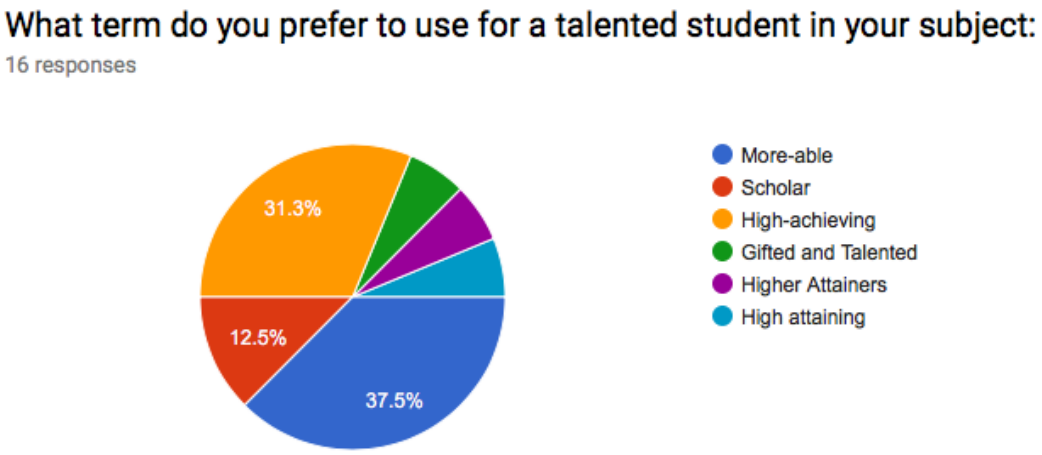


Figure 5 How staff label high-achieving pupils

When asked how they identify these pupils a large majority (13/16) said it was down to consistently high-grades in an assessment with almost all teachers (15/16) saying that they used grades as an indicator of progress. Lastly, although the majority (14/16) felt that good progress would impact

positively on pupil engagement 2/16 participants disagreed. Despite some feeling good progress has no correlation with engagement, Ames (1992a) argues that pupils who are engaged with the learning process are more engaged in the long-term. The findings of this project could help to change the school culture and promote a transformable mind-set, the culture of grade related performance is engrained in many schools, however, a key rationale to remove grades was to fight the 'fixed mind-set' (DfE, 2015, p.13) emerging amongst pupils.

Labelling may in some ways be causing a divide amongst pupils and encourage a negative self-perception which in turn impacts on their achievement (Hart *et al*.,2004; Dweck, 1986; Dweck and Leggett, 1988; Elliott and Dweck, 1999). Despite the Scholars being changeable, due to changing data, other pupils may not see this.

After a fruitful discussion regarding the identification of high-achievers, we discussed the issues surrounding challenge and disengagement. In accordance with Bandura's (1993) study of pupil motivation, which found that individuals motivated by perceived high perceptions of self-worth and ability, lost motivation rapidly in the face of difficulty. The Coordinator identified three points where this happens; during the transition from Primary to Secondary school, during GCSEs and during A-Levels. The Coordinator refers to Renzulli's rings (1986) when explaining to students that they need more than 'natural ability' to succeed. He explained that according to Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD theory, high-achievers are bored and under challenged. In his view, the ZPD does not assume that pupils have the knowledge already, it encourages challenge and mastery, and this is where issues arise with high-achievers, since they want to appear to have mastered a learning point but will not ask to be challenged further out of fear of failure (Bandura, 1993).

When I outlined my initial project design, the Coordinator raised a potential flaw; high-achievers will claim to know everything already when faced with a list of outcomes. In languages the 'need for

achievement' and 'self-confidence' (Dörnyei and Csizér, 1998, p.206) are of high priority for L2 learners, and therefore it was a valid point that the high-achievers would want to appear to be the best. On the other hand, using their perceived knowledge could be an ideal starting point, since it could highlight to the high-achieving L2 learners the depth of learning still required to master the concept, which is a key principle in Mastery Goal motivation theory (Ames, 1992a). 'The Cognitive Apprenticeship Model' (Holderness in Eyre and McClure, 2001, p.45) focusses on previous learning and the connection with new content and this is how to begin the dialogue of how to be problem solvers, through using prior knowledge. If pupils are to remain engaged they need to understand that they are making progress on a deeper level, rather than connecting it to grades, particularly since grades as a metric did not reflect the multi-faceted nature of MFL (Mitchell, 2003). The idea of a learning diary was agreed by both the Coordinator and I to be an ideal method to help pupils to track their progress and understand areas to develop, rather than improve.

6.2 Step 2: Initial class questionnaires

Of all the pupil participants, 26/31 responded; 18 females, 7 males and one undisclosed gender. The key purpose of this questionnaire, was to establish how high-achieving pupils defined progress and how they would rate their current levels of engagement in MFL lessons. Through the RRM method meant I was able to identify the Scholar's perceptions, which proved to be useful when comparing how the selected ten-percent of cohort viewed progress compared to high-achievers on the whole. The inclusion of the Scholar's perception was for no other means except to understand if the comments raised by OFSTED resonated with the whole high-achieving cohort.

Engagement in MFL lessons

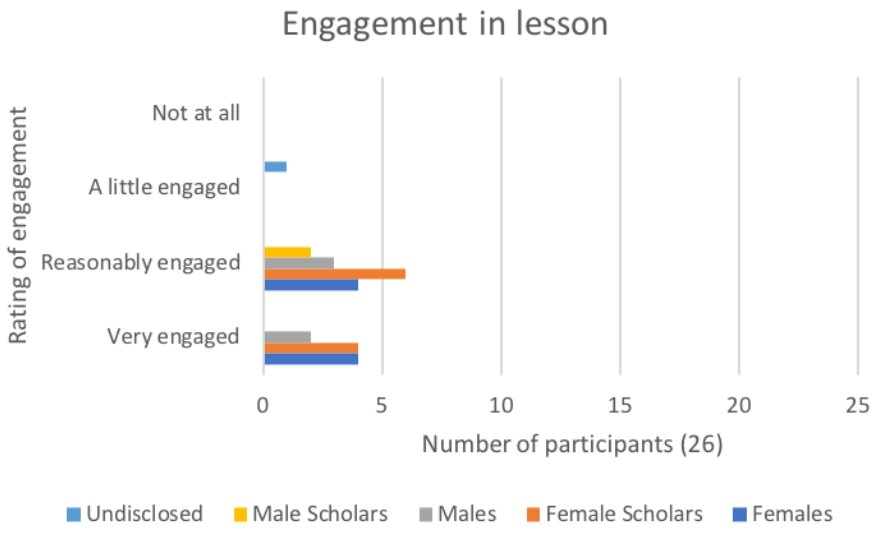


Figure 6 Results from pupil questionnaires: When you are in a Spanish lesson how would you describe your engagement in what is happening?

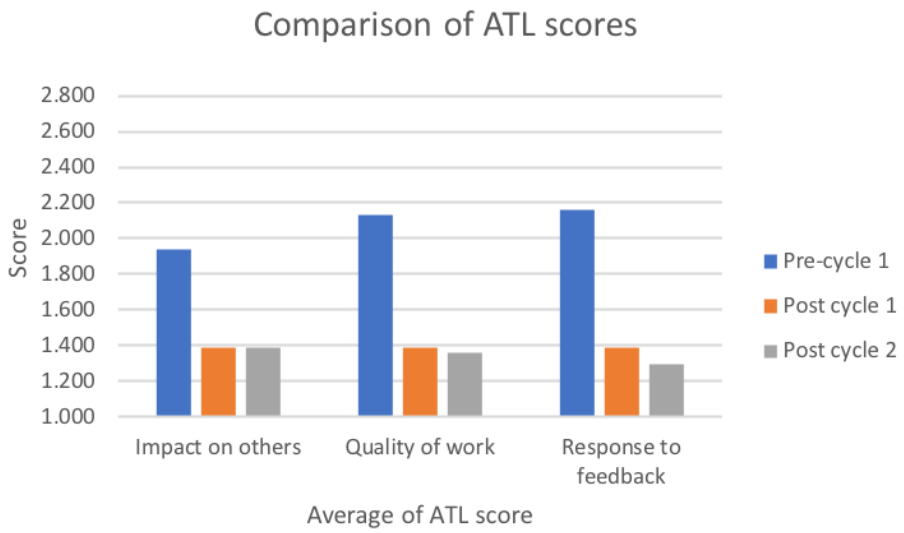


Figure 7 Whole ATL class tracking- teacher copy

The results from Figure 6 (pg.54) determine that just over half of the participants (15/26) would place themselves in the 'reasonably engaged' category, this is in accordance with my own internal

tracking of the group (see figure 7, pg. 54), specifically results for pre-cycle 1). It also supports the findings of Williams and Burden (1997) study and their three-stage framework for L2 learning; pupils were doing what expected of them (steps 1 and 2 of the three-stage framework (Williams and Burden, 1997) but they were not persisting with the learning. Before introducing the intervention, a small number of the participants (10/26) claimed to 'very engaged' in Spanish lessons.

Next, I wanted to understand how pupils are engaged, specifically to determine methods to enhance pupil engagement.

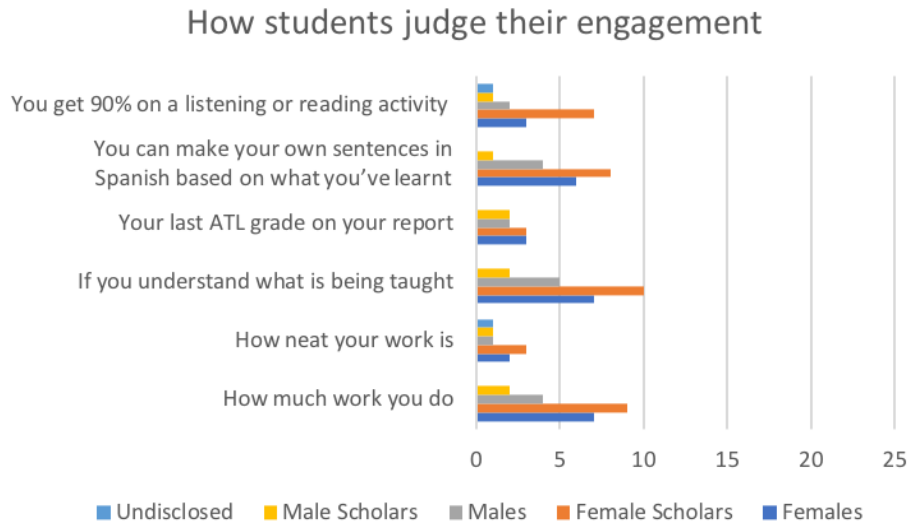


Figure 8 Results from pupil questionnaires: In a lesson what do you base your engagement on? Tick all the boxes that apply to you.

The findings in figure 8 (pg.53) highlighted that all participants prioritise the same categories for engagement; understanding the content (24/26) quantity of work (22/26); applying knowledge (19/26). The sample size, however, for male scholars (2/26) is not enough to make any conclusive suppositions of their perceptions of progress in this analysis. It is suggested from the participant responses that they value the process of learning and that a well-designed intervention could compliment their learning process and guide pupils to become more independent.

If, as Creemers (1994) suggests, pupils become more focussed when given learning goals in advance it is possible that participants will respond to an intervention which enables them to have the opportunity to apply acquired knowledge, as suggested by Black and Jones (2006). The question: "If your Spanish teacher says, 'you need to make better progress', what do you think this mean?" revealed that the majority of participants believed this meant they were not deploying enough effort and that the work was not the best it could be. However, the findings also suggested that the majority would know they have made progress if their grades improved. Therefore, it would seem that the pupils understand to some extent the importance of understanding the learning taking place, but rather than using this knowledge to gain depth, the purpose was to improve their scores. Schunk (1991) highlights the importance of feedback, particularly in the early stages of learning, therefore perhaps the pupils deemed grades or scores as part of their feedback and used these as a basis to make progress.

6.3 Step 4: Initial interviews with pupils

The main purpose of interviews was to clarify the definitions of progress and to explore how much value was placed on gained knowledge and grades as an indicator of progress. The three groups interviewed had varying understandings of progress. The overwhelming consensus in amongst all eighteen pupils was that grades were the ultimate signal of progress. Group 1 were more insistent on the mastery of learning rather than grades being a signal of progress.

> Pupil A: "[progress] is when you go from knowing something slightly to understanding it more, it's nothing to do with getting a higher grade it's to do with how well you understand something"

> Pupil B: "It's [progress] is when you like master something"

Group 2 and 3 focussed more heavily on grades as an indicator of progress and factor in their engagement

> Pupil C: “I determine it [progress] by where you learn stuff and you do a test if you get a higher grade next time to see if you’ve learnt anything or gotten better at it”
>
> Pupil F: “It’s all based on grades” [All other students in Group 3 agree in background]
>
> Pupil G: “If you get something you didn’t before” Researcher: “So would you base it on grades too?” Pupil G: “Yeah”

Despite the results from the questionnaires signalling that pupils were engaged by their growing knowledge, the interviews revealed that in fact it was grades driving their motivation. The self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 1985), explains that competition is also a motivator. In this group of high-achievers, it would seem that good grades are the driving motivation, however as Schunk (1991) highlights this does not necessarily equate to an enhanced performance in the long term. Pupil D’s response to how progress is defined: “excelling, going forward”, has a semantic of competition. The notion that in order to win one must go forward, does not encapsulate the MFL dogma of progress ‘multiple interconnections and backslidings’ (Mitchell, 2003, p.17). Therefore, the lack of understanding of progress in MFL learning could be a contributing factor toward the complacent ATL I was experiencing with the group. Schunk (1991) suggests that engagement can be enhanced if pupils believe they are making progress, but the perception of progress needs to be based on an inherent interest in learning the language, not to achieve better scores, as highlighted in the study Tachibana, Matsukawa, and Zhong (1996).

6.4 Step 6: Action Research Cycle 1: Intervention (six weeks) and follow-up questionnaires to whole class, feedback to CPL group

6.4.1 Intervention 1

The results of the first intervention were very positive. Visually it was clear that students were engaging with the learning process and starting to track their progress across the unit (see Appendix 9.15). In the initial questionnaires the majority of participants (22/26) said that 'quantity of work' was an indicator from them of their progress and a deciding factor in their engagement levels.

There are three points to observe; firstly, despite worries that high-achieving pupils would claim to know all the learning points when given in advance, in fact all of the pupils recognised that there was far more that the did not know. It is evident that research correctly identified the importance of pupil involvement in their learning (Jones, 2001), since in the interviews they commented that they liked having a clear guidance of what they needed to know by the end of the unit.

Secondly, as pupils gained depth in their learning, learning points which they had previously been placed in the 'know' section, were changed to the 'need to know' section if they realised there was further mastery to be achieved. This reflects Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD theory since it was clear that pupils were beginning to develop the depth of their learning rather than simply repeating phrases or learning from the previous fortnightly review. In my reflective diary I noted that on the third week of cycle-one a pupil asked if they could move a number from the 'know' to the 'need to know' because they had not done enough revision and had therefore forgotten the key concepts. This comment indicates that pupils were beginning to recognise the strategies needed in L2 learning order to make progress. Williams *et al.* (2002) study found that metacognitive strategies for learning French were lower but a high-achieving pupil had developed an awareness of linguistic patterns resulting in higher engagement and resilience in learning French; if there is space for pupils to apply

the developing strategies the dialogue of how to develop metacognitive learning strategies can be initiated, as seen with this group of high-achievers (Clark and Callow, 2002; Pachler *et.al,* 2001)

In observations from my reflective diary, I noted on the 21/02/2018: "the overall reception is positive, and pupils are having meaningful conversations about their learning process". Secondly, it was clear that as the unit progressed pupils were able to add to their answers and practise the learning concepts, mistakes which I highlighted are acted upon and pupils seemed to understand why they were changing their mistakes, rather than just doing it because the teacher had told them to. Lastly, despite being given the same questions, answers were not always copied exactly from the previous fortnightly review. he easy option would have been to copy across their previous answers, but pupils were considering how to implement new vocabulary and tenses to vary their answers, thereby demonstrating independence from the teacher and a curiosity to experiment with new learning concepts.

However, visual impact is not strong enough to claim success, therefore, I wanted to consider two quantitative aspects of the intervention. Firstly, the extent to which their answers were improving as per a GCSE writing framework (Appendix 9.14). Secondly, if their notable progress in the unit was having an impact on their engagement.

An analysis of the quality of work

Over the course of the first intervention it was pleasing to note that *all* pupils improved in all three categories; content (increase of 100%), range and complexity (increase of 75%) and accuracy (increase of 3%) (see figures 9, 10 and 11, pp. 60-61).

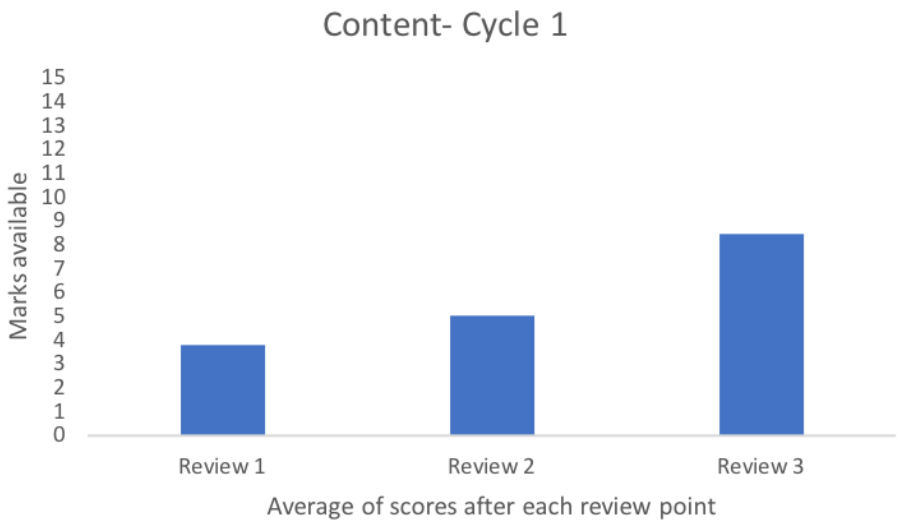


Figure 9 Average of content scores from Cycle 1

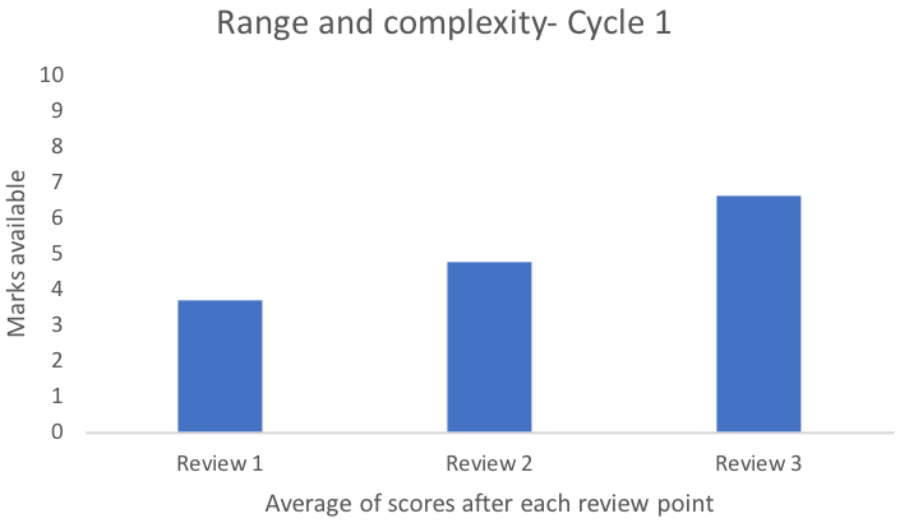


Figure 10 Average of range and complexity scores from Cycle 1

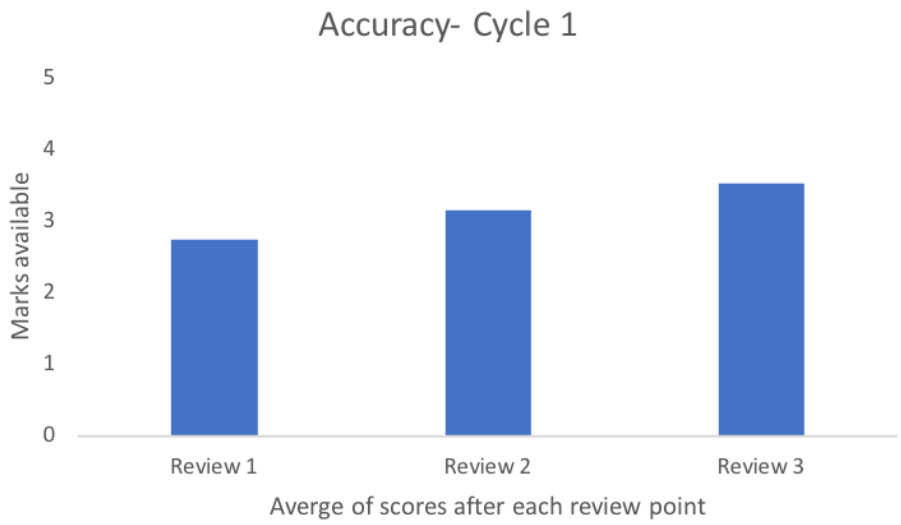


Figure 11 Average of accuracy scores from Cycle 1

The visual growth in quantity of work was corroborated with the increasing points each piece scored, meaning progress was being made in the application of knowledge too. The most notable increase was between week 1 and 5 for content (100% increase). Evidently, pupils were beginning to apply vocabulary and grammatical concepts to make their responses longer. The increased quantity of work was matched by the improved average in range and complexity (increase of 75%), again demonstrating that pupils were taking risks in their answers and not just parroting previous work. Accuracy increased over the first cycle, although it was very minimal (3%), showing that pupils were still using 'safe' phrases which meant they would not make mistakes. As Mitchell (2003) highlights, the flaw in NCMFL levels was that they did not accommodate for error, an important element in L2 learning. The work being produced at the end of cycle-one was accurately secure but to demonstrate that pupils were starting to become independent in their linguistic application, ideally there would be a decrease in the points scored for accuracy.

An analysis of the ATL scores

When comparing the ATL scores in both cycles (figure 7, pg.54) the most notable difference is that ATL scores from the end of cycle one change from a 2 to a 1 across the three criteria: impact on others (17/31), quality of work (18/31) and response to feedback (18/31). Furthermore, pupils at a high risk of disengagement had all (9/31) improved their ATL from a 3 to a 2 in the categories they were showing prior signs of disengagement.

Prior to the intervention fewer students were scoring a 2 or 1 for their quality of work, an indication that they were not applying maximum effort to their learning. The MAC highlighted in the initial interview that high-achieving pupils would rarely cause behaviour issues in the classroom and the lack of engagement can be noted in their quality of work. It was pleasing to note that by the end of cycle-one the majority of pupils were becoming more conscious of their learning. It would seem that in line with the study by Tachibana, Matsukawa, and Zhong (1996), pupils were deploying a greater *effort* to be able to develop their answers. This highlights the success of cycle-one since I was seeking '[to develop] *the individual's own awareness and consideration of his or her cognitive processes and strategies' (Flavell, 1979 in Fisher, 1998, p.2).*

6.4.2 End of Cycle 1 questionnaires

In the follow-up questionnaire, twenty-tree pupils out of thirty-one participated. The purpose of the questionnaire was to determine the success of the intervention and to prepare for the second cycle. The majority of participants enjoyed the intervention (20/26), and there was a small improvement between those who had increased in motivation over cycle-one (35%) (see figures 12 and 13, pg. 63). The results supported the increase in the ATL scores.

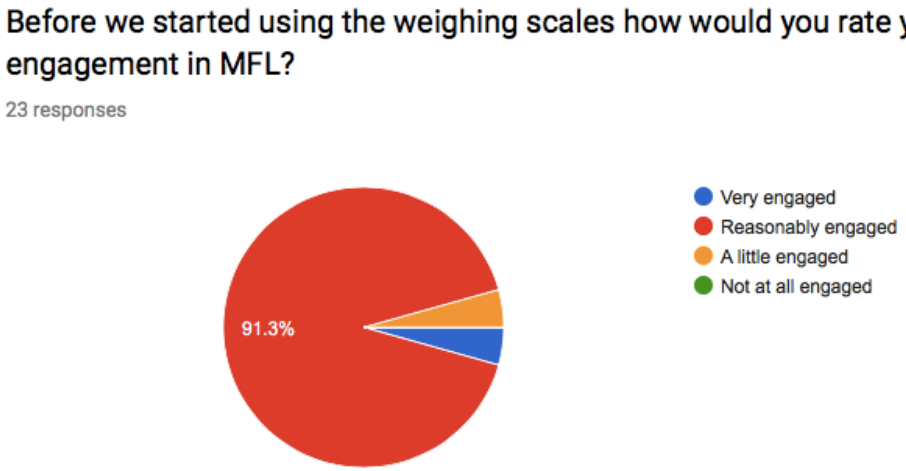


Figure 12 Pupil assessment of engagement pre-intervention 1

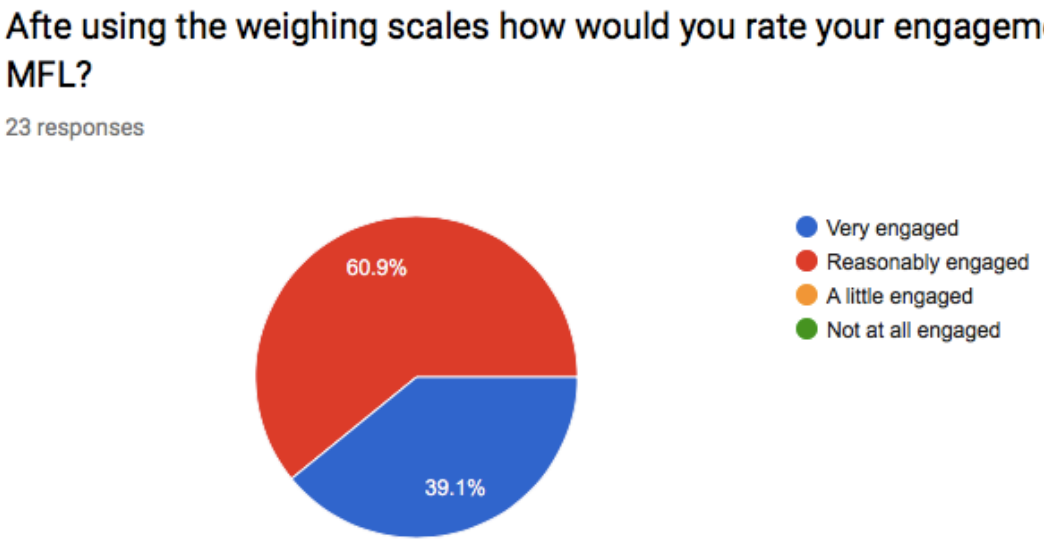


Figure 13 Pupil assessment of engagement post-intervention 1

The main reason for improved engagement was due to pupils visually witnessing their knowledge gaining depth (15/23) of the participants). Furthermore, 14/23 claimed that the review sheet allowed them to reflect on their learning and areas they needed to revise. A key finding in Jones' (2001, p.96) study was that progress must be 'scaffolded by the teacher' since progress in MFL is not automatic. It is possible that improved engagement amongst pupils was due to the learning being

meaningful to pupils. Again, Jones (2001, p.97) suggests that 'it is the 'small picture' of the individual lessons both as single learning opportunities and as part of a unit of leaning that as most meaning to pupils'. The intervention seemed to have allowed pupils to access the learning in a pupil-friendly way, thus encouraging them to monitor their knowledge across the unit. Jones (2001) and Dörnyei (2000) stipulate that mastery of a language can seem very distant for L2 pupils, however, 'proximal sub goals' (Jones, 2001, p.101) can help demonstrate to pupils the direction of their learning. By asking students to practice applying their knowledge in three tenses, it sends the message that in the short-term being able to apply learning in this manner is the key to long term mastery, where changing between the tenses is common practice (Jones, 2001).

There were still a large majority of pupils (22/23), however, who seemed to feel that a grade at the end of the unit was synonymous with progress. The grade culture is very prevalent and therefore it was always unlikely that such a short intervention would reverse such positions. Nonetheless, attitudes were beginning to divide, with 5/23 in the 'somewhat agree' category and 1/23 in the 'strongly disagree' category when asked to agree or disagree with the statement "I know I've made progress if I get a good grade at the end of the unit" (see figure 14, pg. 65), demonstrating that 6/23 participants no longer saw grades as an indicator of progress.

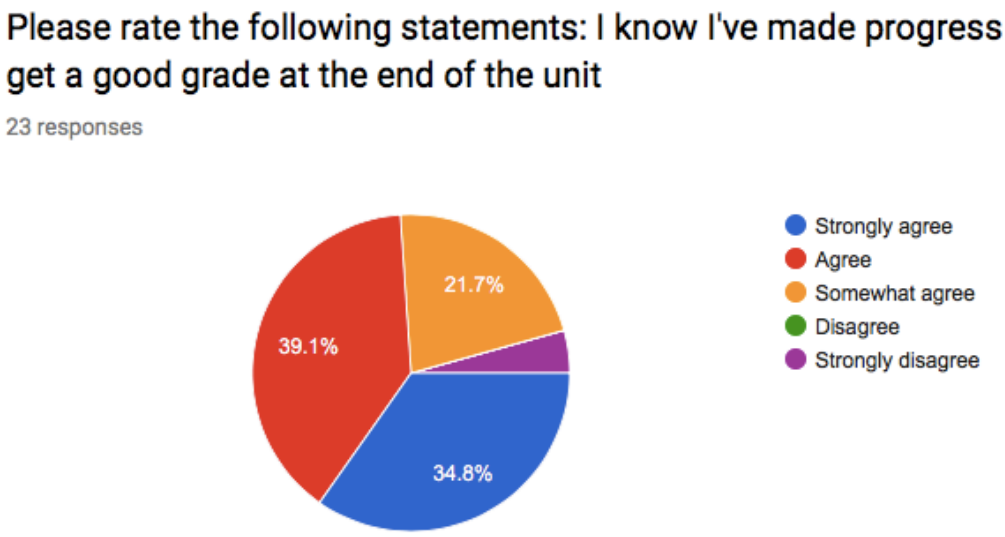


Figure 14 Pupil views of progress at the end of cycle-one

Informational feedback is of high importance in motivating language learners (Williams and Burden, 1997 in Jones, 2001), therefore it would seem that despite pupils being able to record their growing ability to produce sentences (19/23 participants agreeing or strong agreeing that progress is being able to apply learnt knowledge without the teacher's help) and my written confirmation that the work produced was correct, they still wanted the feedback to include a grade. The idea of giving oral feedback only to help pupils to focus on the advice being given rather than the correction was discussed in the follow-up CPL group meeting and would be trialled in the second-intervention.

The main feedback from pupils was the overwhelming response, 15/23 wanted new questions each time. There were comments that the question format was "repetitive" and they thought it demanded extra work. Pupils were not given extra-work, the task of completing the question was set as a two-week extended homework. I believe that the reoccurring comments regarding "extra work" stem from the reluctance to go above and beyond which again supports the previous ATL scores since there were still a few students who could not change the fixed mind-set of not wanting

to do extra. A pupil commented "[…] I feel like I need a different way of checking my grades", they had misinterpreted the aims of the intervention, seemingly when I had explained to the class that it was an intervention to track progress they had automatically assumed this meant tracking their grades.

6.4.3 Feedback to CPL group

During the CPL group the results of the pupil questionnaires were discussed and explored. The key issues addressed were the comments on the repetitive nature of the intervention and the fixation on grades. It was decided that rather than giving pupils the same questions at each review point, pupils should have new questions which correlated directly with the learning during that fortnight. The format of three questions in three different tenses was to be kept. Furthermore, to challenge those who found the writing repetitive, it was decided that pupils should be set a challenge of designing their own fourth question, also to be answered by the end of the fortnightly teaching period. It was hoped that this would focus the pupils' learning further and for them to see the intervention as a collaboration between teacher and pupils, rather than a task to complete which was then reviewed by the teacher.

There was also a discussion regarding how to give feedback. The group and I decided that oral feedback would be better than the traditional written feedback, since it would encourage pupils to identify their errors and reflect on way to improve. The necessity to set targets that are not just clear and meaningful to the learner but also challenging, is a point stressed in Jones' (2001) study. In order for pupils to engage with the progress they must be kept motivated in the transition from the known into the unknown, this is particularly pertinent in L2 learning since progression is based the ability to build on learning (Jones, 2001). By giving pupils the same questions each fortnight, it perhaps did not demonstrate clearly enough how pupils could re-apply their learning. Jones (2001, p.102) argues

that for maximum progress, the early stages of learning must '[…] provide maximum support and extensive and intensive practice of familiar language in short bursts'. It is possible that because pupils were given the same question they mistook this as repetition of learning rather than challenging themselves to apply the learning in a new context, hence the 'safe' accuracy scores in the analysis of the written quality of work. In this instance, extensive practice of the learning concepts had not been considered by the pupils as intensive, therefore the lack of challenge had led to boredom amongst some of the participants. This would support OFSTED finding that there was not enough challenge for the 'more-able' but despite the comments of the repetitive nature of the intervention, the analysis of the work produced confirmed that progress was being made, albeit on a safe scale.

6.5 Step 7: Action Research Cycle-two: Intervention (five weeks), follow-up questionnaires to whole class, concluding interviews with pupils and feedback to CPL group and More-Able Coordinator

6.5.1 Intervention 2

The changes to the first intervention appeared to have a negative impact on pupil engagement during the second cycle. In my reflective diary I documented an increasing disengagement with the learning process, the reasons for this will be explored in this section.

After the first fortnightly review point the pupils requested that the timescale was changed to weekly, since they felt that a shorter period would help them to reflect better on their learning. Given the democratic nature of the project; meaning that the pupils played a crucial role in the action research process (Mertler, 2009), I obliged and at the time thought this would be in line with Jones (2001) advice of shorter bursts of learning practice. Upon reflection this change would be instrumental in the failure of the second intervention. As per the request of the pupils and the advice

from the CPL group different questions were given at the two succeeding review points, which correlated directly with the learning taking place. The result was that pupils only felt they could answer the questions to a very limited extent before being handed a new set of questions and this in turn was seen as failure on their side to understand and the apply concepts (Appendix 9.16). In a study discussed by Bandura (1993), it found that in similar situations, those who displayed characteristics of an individual motivated by self-worth and ability, 'plummeted as they encountered problems […]' (1993, p.121).

An analysis of the quality of work

I analysed the work produced during the second cycle against the same criteria as the first cycle and compared to the findings of the first cycle (see figures 15, 16 and 17, pp. 69-70). In the first cycle there was an increase in all three categories by the end of the three reviews; content (100% increase), range and complexity (75% increase) and accuracy (3%). In the second cycle, however, the increase was not as substantial; content (33% increase), range and complexity (0% increase) and accuracy (0% increase). This highlighted that progress was not being made in the application of pupil knowledge since in 2/3 categories there was no changes by the end of the unit. A consistent average accuracy score of 3 and 5 in range and complexity, again highlighted that pupils were perhaps pupils were reusing vocabulary and structures that they had previously mastered, rather than building on these concepts.

The less than satisfactory improvement in the content average score (33%) supports the findings that changing the questions at each review did not allow the pupils to master previously applied concepts. In turn, this would have appeared to have an impact on their engagement within this unit and will be explored below.

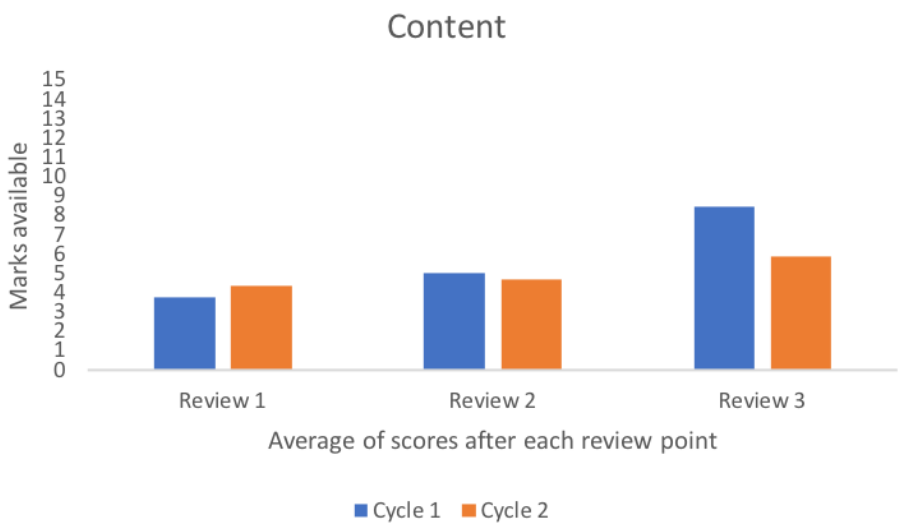


Figure 15 Content analysis comparison of cycles

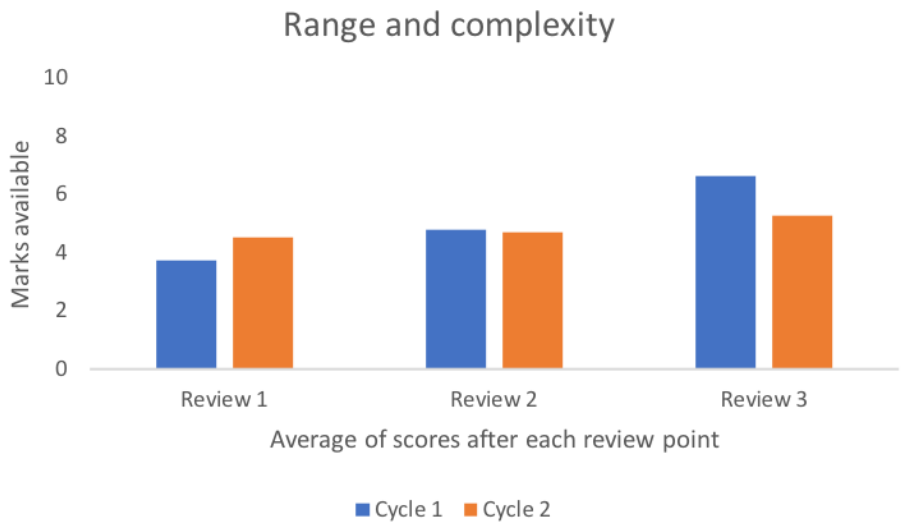


Figure 16 Range and complexity analysis of cycles (series 1 represents cycle 1 and series 2 represents Cycle-two)

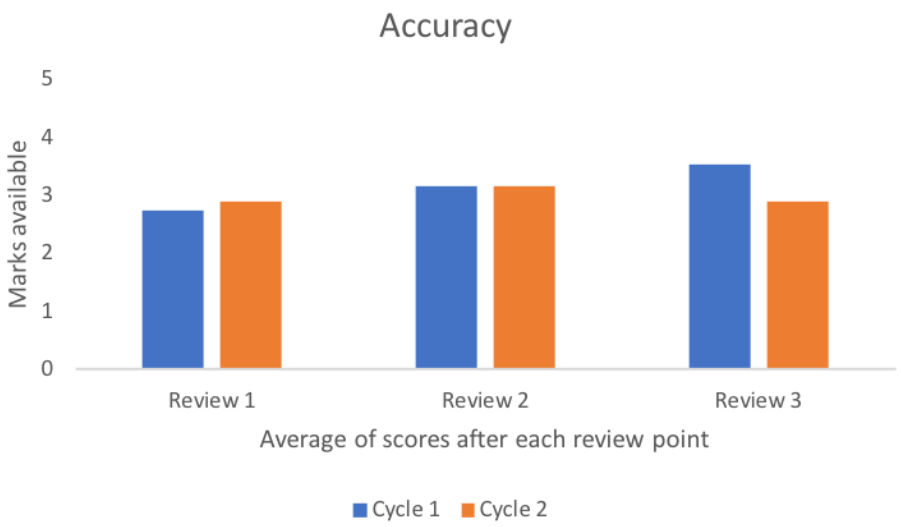


Figure 17 Accuracy comparison of cycles (series 1 represents cycle 1 and series 2 represents Cycle-two)

An analysis of the ATL scores

I assessed pupil ATL against the same criteria as in cycle 1 and found that the majority of pupils were still averaging at a 1 (figure 7, p.54). Pupils were consistent in their ATL scores in all three areas (impact on others, quality of work and response to feedback) meaning that they were exhibiting characteristics of pupils driven by mastery orientation; who are more resilient in the face of adversity (Dweck, 2008; 2008b). Unfortunately, 3/6 pupils who have previously been rated as a 3 had disengaged so much with the process they had slipped back to their initial pre-intervention score. This would suggest that they were driven by the short-term success of their ability to answer the questions in cycle-one, traits of mastery performance, in cycle-one there was minimal risk since pupils could rely on previous answers, where-as Cycle-two forced pupils to re-apply knowledge in an unfamiliar platform. On one hand this could be an inevitable outcome, since research by Waninge et al. (2014) highlighted a tendency for engagement levels to vary in L2 learning.

6.5.2 Final whole-class questionnaire

The purpose of the final questionnaire was to establish how pupil perceptions of progress had changed over the two cycles, and if there was any correlation with their engagement. Twenty-nine pupils out of thirty-one participated and 11/29 said that they did not like the second intervention. The pupils presented a decrease of 11% in their engagement with the intervention between cycle-one and Cycle-two. Their feedback was based on the following reasons:

> Pupil A: "I could only answer one question, so I felt that I couldn't do much and wasn't improving"

> Pupil B: "I liked the first one because I liked being able to build up on the sentences I had written previously and seeing that I had improved"

Regarding pupil opinions regarding progress and engagement 20/29 pupils preferred the first intervention because it helped them to reflect on their progress, and 15/29 said they felt more engaged with the first intervention with 14/29 preferring the second intervention. The interviews would seek to clarify why engagement levels were almost equally split between intervention one and two and if this was because of the short time scale or changing questions.

Before initiating the intervention, the majority of pupils felt that grades were an indicator of progress, however when asked to assess the value of grades when determining progress by the end of the second cycle, the divide was apparent (see figure 18, pg.72). 12/29 participants were still wedded to grades as the final indication of progress, whereas 17/29 now did not see these to be as important. Furthermore, 23/29 pupils agreed that progress could not always be shown by grades, highlighting that pupils had started to engage with the learning process in more depth than prior to starting the intervention.

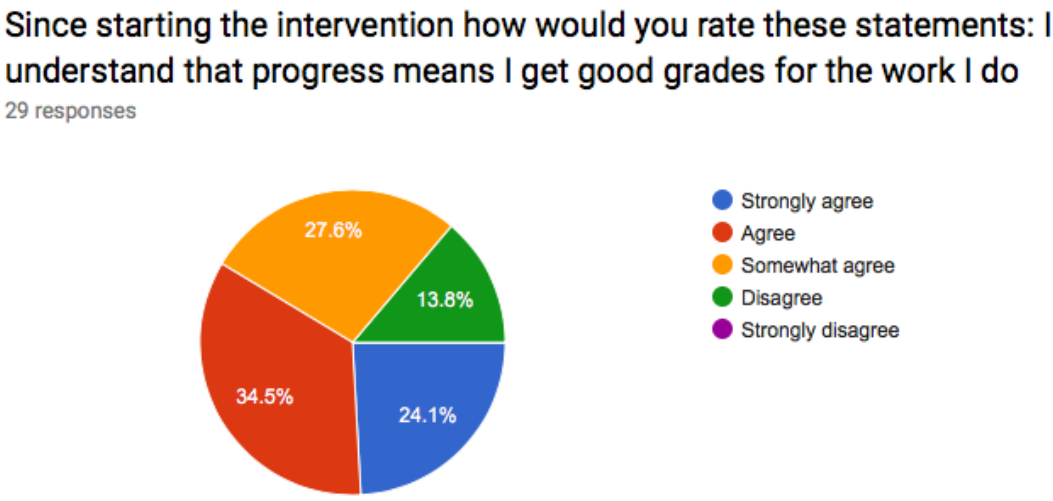


Figure 18 How pupils claimed to assess progress at the end of Cycle-two

6.5.3 Final pupil interviews

The interviews sought to clarify the findings in the questionnaire and to determine, in a more intimate setting, pupil perceptions of progress and its correlation with their engagement. The two groups expressed very similar views which differed largely to the views in the initial interviews and demonstrated how the group had become more coherent over the course of the study. The overwhelming consensus amongst interview participants was the preference of intervention: intervention 1. The opinions below summarise why:

> Pupil A: "Both interventions have gone well […] I preferred the first one because when they are the same questions you could see how much you'd learnt about that thing, whereas when they are changing you can't see how much you're adding on each week because they are different"
>
> Pupil B: "You could transfer words or even rules across from the previous topic"
>
> Pupil C: "I liked having it written down so that I could look back"

In large it would appear that they preferred the original length of time because they liked doing it at home and being able to reflect on their learning. They also enjoyed having the freedom to add to

the same questions at the end of each lesson and to be able to look back at their previous answers. The majority found that they could transfer learning concepts across the skills: listening, reading, writing and reading, despite the intervention focussing on writing. They found that the layout served as a learning diary which helped them to connect their learning and start to see the connections in tenses. One pupil commented that because of repeatedly applying the verb 'to go' in all three tenses, they could recognise and apply this verb again with each during the second cycle.

There were some key drawbacks to the second intervention in particular, relating largely to the change in time-frame. When probed as to why they thought everyone had initially requested a shorter time frame they revealed that there is actually no adequate time frame because they wanted to be able to master the three questions before changing them and given that each pupil moves at a different pace, a time-scale would not apply. In addition, pupils commented on the difficulty of having to fill in the review sheet initially, put they did not say this was off putting, just 'challenging'.

Pupil D: "The first couple of weeks are quite challenging because you don't know much"

I wanted to understand why they thought a large number of pupils had wanted to change the questions each week and again it came to light that it was not actually the repetition of the questions, it was that they were the only questions available.

Pupil E: "It gets a bit boring having the same questions"

The pupils felt that if they had three questions as a base but each review point there were a few extra, this would encourage better engagement so that they could test out their learning in a new environment but also have the confidence to add to the previous questions.

Changes in perceptions of progress

A pleasing outcome was the change in perceptions, despite one pupil who was adamant that grades were the only indication of progress for them, the rest of the pupils were quick to disagree with remarks such as:

> Pupil D: "Without grades pupils who are slower can go at their own pace"
>
> Pupil E: "It's nice to get a grade sometimes but we don't need it all the time"
>
> Pupil A: "I don't need the grade to see I'm improving because I can see that I'm adding stuff"

It was evident that overall pupils did not welcome the pressure to have to apply their knowledge, despite acknowledging the profound impact this had on their understanding of the unit and patterns in the language. They preferred the quick feedback of moving the numbers on the weighing scales which highlighted instantly areas of growth and improvement.

There was a discussion regarding my findings and how this related to motivation theories. A pupil who is very wedded to grades as an indicator of progress, still thought that good grades were synonymous with their engagement in a subject:

> Pupil C: "On my report you can see that I get good grades in the subjects I like so maybe I would put effort in but then eventually give up"

This pupil lacks a lot of confidence, and despite being high-achieving, cannot see past grades and perfection, this is an example of the pupil perceptions of progress which may result in short-term motivation (Ames, 1992a). MFL learning is a slow process and therefore if a pupil cannot see the profound impact of effort on their progress, they will not sustain long-term motivation and resilience (Schunk, 1991; Weiner, 1979).

6.5.4 Feedback to CPL group and More-Able Coordinator

The findings of the project were disseminated to the CPL group, the MFL department and the More-Able Coordinator. It was pleasing that the staff agreed that the interventions seemed to have had an impact on how pupils assess their progress and the long-term affect this would have on their learning. In the CPL group there were discussion regarding how to break the obsession with grades and a science teacher suggested trialling a method of giving percentages rather than grades to encourage pupils to seek a higher percentage, which may in turn encourage them to connect with their progress and learning. In the MFL department there was some concern regarding the sustainability of maintaining the two-week review and keeping on top of the written questions. This is something I will explain at the next INSET in order to coach the department and to demonstrate that the intervention is self-running, once set-up.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Research question 1

Can mastery of learning, instead of grade obsessing, boost high-achieving pupils' engagement in MFL lessons?

A key limitation of this project was the time-scale, since over two terms it was impossible to change the mind-set of all the pupils. It was, however, pleasing to note that over the course of the study the participating pupils were starting to recognise the value of mastering learning concepts and that progress was not based solely on grades. Jones (2001) suggests that the previous MFL descriptors can be used as means to show pupils how they can build their language skills and add depth. Evidently pupils need to understand how they can progress, therefore if the skills to make progress can become the focus gradually MFL pupils may start to associate progress more with the skills they

have mastered rather than the grade the skill equates to. Overall, there was a slight improvement in pupil engagement in the first intervention where it was clear to pupils that they were gaining depth in their knowledge. One can therefore conclude that indeed mastery of learning is far more effective in engaging MFL learners, since relying on grades alone had previously shown that pupils were reluctant to progress in their learning, particularly if they had already achieved their expected target. When pupils could clearly see how to progress in a learning concept; developing their meta-cognitive awareness (Flavell, 1979), pupils could engage in a fruitful discussion with the teacher with how to add depth.

7.2 **Research question 2**

If high-achieving pupils in MFL engage with the learning can they challenge themselves to transfer it to all four skills?

Given that the intervention was largely based on pupils writing out responses to questions I was sceptical that the pupils would see how learning concepts could be transferred to all four L2 skills. Nonetheless, it was evident from the pupil interviews that by repeatedly revising grammar points they were able to transfer their acquired knowledge across all four skills. A pupil commented that because they knew how to say 'I went' from the first unit and having repeatedly used this word in the first intervention when answering the questions, they understood how to apply it in a listening and speaking in the second unit. This was a breakthrough, since I had previously felt that pupils did not actively seek to make connections between units, often leading them to start at point zero. However, the process of writing out an answer to the same question over six-weeks had evidently prompted students to recognise the same structure in a new learning context. Due to the infrequency of the questions in the second intervention pupils felt they could remember or recognise many of the structures in unit 2 and they related this to how they felt before the start of

the study when they were given end of unit assessments. The feeling of confidence and being able to not just add depth to their learning but also transfer it across the skills, appeared to encourage the pupils to want to develop their fluency in Spanish, which was proving to be a key motivation in the *effort* they applied to developing their conceptual awareness (Dörnyei and Csizér, 1998).

7.3 Research question 3

Can high-achieving pupils in MFL start to set their own targets for improvement based on the learning taking place?

The study has highlighted that when pupils have a foundation of what is expected of them, they are more open to try and engage with the learning process. The studies led by Dörnyei and Csizér (1998); Tachibana, Matsukawa, and Zhong (1996) and Waninge *et al.* (2014) all highlight the importance of achievement and successful L2 learning for pupils. The evaluation each fortnight of the concepts they knew or did not know prompted students to be independent in their learning in order to be able to conquer the points they did not know. The pressure of the time-frame meant that they were tasks to be completed imminently rather than at some vague point in the future. In the first intervention the longer time frame meant that pupils had a longer period to try and improve on the targets they had set for themselves, however the shorter time frame in the second intervention added to the pressure to be able to improve their learning and demonstrate their learning at the same time. I believe a key contributing factor in the failure of the second intervention was due to the pressure of trying to improve on the areas they did not know, as identified in the first section of the review sheet, and answer the questions showing depth from their previous answers. When pupils could not achieve this, I believe it caused many of them to become disengaged with the task in hand and thus led them value of having the same question, in spite of the repetitive nature.

7.4 Recommendations

Although the first intervention proved to be most successful, one cannot forget the comments made about the repetitive nature of the questions. When rolling out the intervention in the department on a larger scale, there are two key changes to be made. Firstly, the time-frame will be recommended to be two-weeks but not set. Secondly, there will be three set questions provided at each review, but also between one and two extra questions relating specifically to the learning covered during the teaching point. It is important to allow high- achieving to have the space to trial new learning concepts and for them to be able to reflect on prior progress, however to avoid restlessness high-achieving pupils need to be challenged beyond the ZPD and made to not only review prior learning but constantly re-apply.

There were some interesting comments on how to improve the intervention. Pupils wanted a choice, a mixture of three questions which remained the same, but also a selection of different questions. They also wanted an extended period to be able to complete the questions and the possibility to work in pairs so that their partner could set them a challenge question.

The findings of this study corroborate findings of studies led by Dörnyei and Csizér (1998); Tachibana, Matsukawa, and Zhong (1996) and Waninge *et al.* (2014) which all highlight the importance of achievement and successful L2 learning for pupils, particularly in order to keep pupils motivated. Through this study and a careful consideration of pupil perceptions of progress and how this correlate to their engagement, it is evident that high-achieving pupils are willing to engage with the learning process, if given then platform to do so. Potential methods as explored by Jones (2001) as to how progress can be monitored, and targets can be set through clear feedback could be developed in a long-term project. It is clear that once high achieving MFL pupils are aware of the progress they are making they become far more engaged with the learning process. Referring to

grades as a measure of progress for pupils needs to be replaced with a focus on mastery of learning concepts; as highlighted by Flavell (1979) progress is *'the [development] of the individual's own awareness and consideration of his or her cognitive processes and strategies'* (adapted from Flavell, 1979 in Fisher, 1998, p.2). This is the approach to teaching MFL that should be taken by MFL teachers if they wish to maintain levels of engagement, particularly when coping with increased difficulty of GCSES's and A-Levels.

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9 APPENDICES

9.1 Approval from Central University Research Ethics Committee

From: Sibel Erduran [mailto:sibel.erduran@education.ox.ac.uk]
Sent: [redacted]
To: [redacted]
Cc: Education Research Office
Subject: CUREC application for [redacted] (MSC Learnng and Teaching, Part 3)

Dear [redacted]

Project: How do *perceptions of progress* impact on the engagement of Year 8 more-able students in Modern Foreign Languages?
Reference Number ED-CIA-17-010

The above application has now been considered on behalf of the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) in accordance with the procedures laid down by the University for ethical approval of all research involving human participants.

I am pleased to inform you that, on the basis of the information provided to DREC, the proposed research has been judged as meeting appropriate ethical standards, and accordingly, approval has been granted.

If your research involves participants whose ability to give free and informed consent is in question (this includes those under 18 and vulnerable adults), then it is advisable to read the following NSPCC professional reporting requirements for cases of suspected abuse http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/questions/reporting_child_abuse_wda74908.html

Should there be any subsequent changes to the project which raise ethical issues not covered in the original application you should submit details to research.office@education.ox.ac.uk for consideration.

Good luck with your research study.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted] (on behalf of DREC)

9.2 Approval from Head teacher

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

15 Norham Gardens, Oxford OX2 6PY
Tel: +44(0)1865 274024 Fax: +44(0)1865 274027
general.enquiries@education.ox.ac.uk www.education.ox.ac.uk

Director Professor Jo-Anne Baird

[redacted]

Dear [redacted]

I am writing to enquire about permission to conduct research at [redacted] this academic year. I am studying for the Master's in Learning and Teaching at Oxford University, supervised by [redacted]. In my final research project [*"How does progress impact upon the engagement of more-able pupils in Year 8 in Modern Foreign Languages?"*] I will explore how the more-able students identify progress and how they attribute good or bad progress in MFL and whether this has an effect on their engagement.

The research will take place with one Year 8 Spanish class, who will be choosing their options in this academic year. I am developing an intervention which will encourage students to consider their view of progress and to become more self-motivated in their learning, as opposed to being extrinsically motivated by grades. By participating in the research, the school would be contributing to a project that will encourage the more-able students to make better progress in subjects.

I hope to conduct this research between 01/12/17 and 25/07/18. I would interview and audio-record the selected more-able students to track their engagement with the intervention as well as teachers from other departments in order to gauge a broad definition of progress. Furthermore, I will photocopy the student's work to document the impact of the intervention as well as administer questionnaires to the selected class and the more-able coordinator.

Oxford University has strict ethical procedures on conducting ethical research, consistent with current British Educational Research Association guidelines. The University also recognises, however, that my study is a piece of practitioner research, and that schools already operate with the highest ethical standards. Therefore, only <u>your</u> formal consent as Head teacher is necessary, and not that of individual parents or staff. However, throughout the research, students and other teachers will be able to refuse to participate in any research activities at any time.

All participants, including students, teacher and the school, would be made anonymous in all research reports. The data collected would be kept strictly confidential, available only to my supervisor [redacted] and me, and only used for academic purposes. It will be kept for as long as it has academic value.

If you are happy for me to proceed with this study, please confirm that using the attached reply form. If you have any concerns or need more information about what is involved, please contact me or my supervisor. Further, if you have any questions about this ethics process at any time, please contact the chair of the department's research ethics committee, though: <u>research.office@education.ox.ac.uk</u>

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Please tick as appropriate and return the slip to me. Thank you for your help.

How do *perceptions of progress* impact on the engagement of Year 8 more-able students in Modern Foreign Languages?

✓ o I agree for [redacted] to carry out this research at [redacted]

o I do not agree for [redacted] to carry out this research at [redacted]

[redacted] 30/10/2017

Head teacher's signature

[redacted]

University of Oxford, Department of Education

9.3 Initial interview with More-Able Coordinator (with invitation to participant)

Research project
How the perceptions of progress impact on the engagement of Year 8 more-able students in Modern Foreign Languages.
Invitation
You are being invited to participate in an interview about your views on progress and how this affects the engagement of more-able students in your subject. Your participation is completely voluntary so please take the time to read the following information before you decide if you wish to participate. If you have any further questions, please ask.
Purpose of the project
The aim is to investigate if students like a subject more, if they know they are making good progress. It will seek to understand what students see as progress and how they currently feel about their language lesson.
Why you have been chosen
You have been chosen you are a teacher and have an opinion of progress.
Do I have to do it?
You do not have to take part in the interview if you do not wish to. Even if you say you want to then change your mind, you can do so at any point and you do not have to give a reason.
What do I have to do?
I will need about 15 minutes to ask you questions about progress and how you define progress. As well as how you think more-able students' progress in your subject. All the results are completely anonymous (no names are provided).
What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?
Participating in the interview is not intended to make you feel uncomfortable. All the results are anonymous, so that you cannot be identified.
What are the advantages of taking part?
There is no direct advantage in taking part. In the long term, you may contribute to understanding the importance of progress in Modern Foreign Languages.
Will I be identified if I take part?
You will not be individually identifiable.
How will the information be recorded?
The information will be recorded on a voice recorder to facilitate the conversation. All recordings will be destroyed upon completion of the research (September 2018).
What type of questions will be in the interview?
Your opinion about progress and how you define progress. How progress effects the engagement of more-able students.
What will happen to the results?
Your results will be published in the final thesis, but neither you or the school will not be identifiable.
Who is organising the research?
The project is a partnership between [redacted] and Oxford University. [redacted] is organising the research as part of her final Master's thesis.
Has the questionnaire been ethically reviewed?

This project has been ethically approved by CUREC (the Central University Research Ethics Committee), through the Departmental Research Ethics Committee.
Thank you for taking part in this research.

Please tick as appropriate

Name:

o Having read the information about the project I agree to taking part in this interview

o Having read the information about the project I do not agree to taking part in this interview

1. Can you tell me about what the difference is between the more-able and scholars? Are they the same thing?
2. Do the labels refer to academic progress? Are they identified as more-able from their English and Mathematics attainment?
3. How can we label an MFL high-achiever? Is data important in this identification process?
4. Can students who dip in engagement lose their title as 'more-able'?
5. What problems are we currently facing with the more-able?

9.4 Initial questionnaire to staff (with invitation to participants)

Research project: How the perceptions of progress impacts on the engagement of Year 8 high-achieving students in Modern Foreign Languages.

Invitation:
You are being invited to participate in a questionnaire about your views on progress and how this impacts on the engagement of high-achieving students in your subject. Your participation is completely voluntary so please take the time to read the following information before you decide if you wish to participate. If you have any further questions please ask.

Purpose of the project:
The aim is to investigate if students are more engaged in a subject, if they know they are making good progress. It will seek to understand what students see as progress and how they currently feel about their language lesson.

Why you have been chosen:
You have been chosen because you are a teacher and have an opinion of progress.

Do I have to do it?:
You do not have to take part in the questionnaire if you do not wish to. Even if you say you want to then change your mind, you can do so at any point and you do not have to give a reason.

What do I have to do?:
I will need about 15 minutes for you to fill in this form about progress and how you define progress. As well as how you think high-achieving students progress in your subject. All the results are completely anonymous.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?:
Participating in the questionnaire is not intended to make you feel uncomfortable. All the results are anonymous, so that you cannot be identified.

What are the advantages of taking part?:
There is no direct advantage in taking part. In the long term, you may contribute to understanding the importance of progress in Modern Foreign Languages.

Will I be identified if I take part?:
You will not be individually identifiable.

How will the information be recorded?:
The information will be recorded on a google sheet to facilitate data analysis. All recordings will be destroyed upon completion of the research (September 2018).

What type of questions will be in the questionnaire?:
The questions will focus on your opinion of progress and how you define progress and how progress effects the engagement of more-able students.

What will happen to the results?:
Your results will be published in the final thesis, but neither you nor the school will be identifiable.

Who is organising the research?:
The project is a partnership between [redacted] and Oxford University. [redacted] is organising the research as part of her final Master's thesis.

Has the questionnaire been ethically reviewed?:
This project has been ethically approved by CUREC (the Central University Research Ethics Committee), through the Departmental Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you for taking part in this research.

*Required

Please read each statement and select your option: *
Having read the information about the project I agree to taking part in this questionnaire
Having read the information about the project I do not agree to taking part in this questionnaire

What term do you prefer to use for a talented student in your subject: *
More-able
Scholar
High-achieving
Gifted and Talented
Other:

Could you briefly explain your choice:
Your answer

What characteristics define a 'high-achieving' student'
Excellent results in a test
Thinks creatively
Asks questions which show an interest in your subject
Gives 100% effort in every activity
Goes above and beyond, even if the quality of work is questionable
Other:

How do you identify high-achieving students in your subject?
If they are part of the Scholar's Programme
If they have consistently high grades in assessments
If they show a flair for your subject, despite getting bad grades
Teacher judgement
Other:

If a high-achieving student is making good progress in your subject they will be more engaged
True
False
Please explain your choice:

How do you gauge progress among the high-achievers
Their test results

How well they can apply knowledge independently
If they can apply previous learning in a new situation
If they are independent in their work
Other:

What does progress mean to you?
Your answer

How important is progress for a high-achiever's engagement in lesson?

Extremely important
1
2
3
4
5
Not important at all

SUBMIT

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

9.5 Initial questionnaire to pupils (with invitation to participants)

Research project

How the perceptions of progress impact on the engagement of Year 8 students in Modern Foreign Languages.

Invitation

You are being invited to participate in a questionnaire about your views on progress and how this affects your engagement in Modern Foreign Languages. Your participation is completely voluntary so please take the time to read the following information before you decide if you wish to participate. If you have any further questions, please ask.

Purpose of the project

The aim is to investigate if students like a subject more, if they know they are making good progress. It will seek to understand what students see as progress and how they currently feel about their language lesson.

Why you have been chosen

You have been chosen because you are currently in Year 8 and do Spanish.

Do I have to do it?

You do not have to take part in the questionnaire if you do not wish to. Even if you say you want to then change your mind, you can do so at any point and you do not have to give a reason.

What do I have to do?

You will need 15 minutes to answer the questions about progress and your Spanish lesson. All your results are completely anonymous (no names are provided). You may also be asked to do a follow-up interview based on the overall results of the questionnaires (not at all based on what you put down).

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

Participating in the questionnaire is not intended to make you feel uncomfortable nor will it impact on your grades in your normal assessments. All the results are anonymous, so that you cannot be identified.

What are the advantages of taking part?

There is no direct advantage on your grades if you take part. In the long term, you may contribute to understanding the importance of progress in Modern Foreign Languages.

Will I be identified if I take part?

You will not be individually identifiable because you will not write your name on the questionnaire or give any information that makes you stand out.

What type of questions will be in the questionnaire?

Your opinion about progress and how you define progress. Your opinion about Spanish.

What will happen to the results?

Your results will be published in the final thesis, but neither you or the school will not be identifiable. The questionnaires will be destroyed upon completion of the research (September 2018).

Who is organising the research?

The project is a partnership between [redacted] and Oxford University. [redacted] is organising the research as part of her final Master's thesis.

Has the questionnaire been ethically reviewed?

This project has been ethically approved by CUREC (the Central University Research Ethics Committee), through the Departmental Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you for taking part in this research

Please tick as appropriate

Name:

o Having read the information about the project I agree to taking part in this questionnaire

o Having read the information about the project I do not agree to taking part in this questionnaire

Please circle the correct answer

Are you:

MALE- FEMALE

Are you part of the football team?

YES – NO

Are you part of the rugby team?

YES – NO

Do you go to a lunchtime- club?

YES – NO

Are you part of the scholar's programme?

YES – NO

Section 1:

When you are in a Spanish lesson how would you describe your engagement in what is happening?

VERY ENGAGED– REASONABLY ENGAGED- A LITTLE ENGAGED- NOT AT ALL

In a lesson what do you base your engagement on? Tick all the boxes that apply to you

- How much work you do.
- How neat your work is.
- If you understand what is being taught.
- Your last ATL grade on your report.
- You can make your own sentences in Spanish based on what you've learnt.
- You can get 90% on a listening or reading activity.

Do you find Spanish easy?

YES-NO

Section 2

If your Spanish teacher says, 'you need to make better progress' what do you think this means?

Do you know how to 'make better progress' in Spanish?

YES-NO

If you answered YES, please write 2 ways you try to make better progress:

-

How do you know you've improved in Spanish?

Section 3:

If you agree with these statements circle YES if you do not circle NO

I am in Year 8	YES-NO
I feel more engaged if I understand the lesson	YES-NO
I know how to improve in Spanish	YES-NO
I am good at Spanish	YES-NO

9.6 Initial interview with pupils (with invitation to participants)

Research project
How the perceptions of progress impact on the engagement of Year 8 students in Modern Foreign Languages.
Invitation
You are being invited to participate in an interview about your views on progress and how this affects your engagement in Modern Foreign Languages. Your participation is completely voluntary so please take the time to read the following information before you decide if you wish to participate. If you have any further questions please ask.
Purpose of the project
The aim is to investigate if students like a subject more, if they know they are making good progress. It will seek to understand what students see as progress and how they currently feel about their language lesson.
Why you have been chosen
You have been chosen because you are currently in Year 8 and do Spanish.
Do I have to do it?
You do not have to take part in the questionnaire if you do not wish to. Even if you say you want to then change your mind, you can do so at any point and you do not have to give a reason.
What do I have to do?
I will need 15 minutes to ask you questions about progress and your Spanish lesson. All your results are completely anonymous (no names are provided).
How will the information be recorded?
The information will be recorded on a voice recorder to facilitate a natural conversation. All results will be destroyed upon completion of the research (September 2018).
What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?
Participating in the questionnaire is not intended to make you feel uncomfortable nor will it impact on your grades in your normal assessments. All the results are anonymous, so that you cannot be identified.
What are the advantages of taking part?
There is no direct advantage on your grades if you take part. In the long term, you may contribute to understanding the importance of progress in Modern Foreign Languages.
Will I be identified if I take part?
You will not be individually identifiable because your name will not be provided nor, will you answer questions which may make you stand out.
What type of questions will be in the questionnaire?
Your opinion about progress and how you define progress.
What will happen to the results?
Your results will be published in the final thesis, but neither you or the school will not be identifiable.
Who is organising the research?
The project is a partnership between [redacted] and Oxford University. [redacted] is organising the research as part of her final Master's thesis.
Has the questionnaire been ethically reviewed?
This project has been ethically approved by CUREC (the Central University Research Ethics Committee), through the Departmental Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you for taking part in this research

Please tick as appropriate

Name:

o Having read the information about the project I agree to taking part in this interview

o Having read the information about the project I do not agree to taking part in this interview

Questions:

1) If I said to 'define progress' who would be able to give me their definition?

2) How do you judge your progress?

3) Do you think that progress is important in how much you engage with a subject?

4) Would you base your engagement in a lesson on grades, ATL scores or knowledge?

5) If you ruled the school for a day what your message to teachers be about progress?

9.7 End of Cycle-one questionnaire to pupils (with invitation to participants)

Research project: How the perceptions of progress impacts on the engagement of Year 8 students in Modern Foreign Languages.

Invitation:
You are being invited to participate in a questionnaire about your views on progress and how this impacts your engagement in Modern Foreign Languages. Your participation is completely voluntary so please take the time to read the following information before you decide if you wish to participate. If you have any further questions, please ask.

Purpose of the project:
The aim is to investigate if students are more engaged in a subject, if they know they are making good progress. It will seek to understand what students see as progress and how they currently feel about their language lesson.

Why you have been chosen:
You have been chosen because you are currently in Year 8, studying Spanish.

Do I have to do it?:
You do not have to take part in the questionnaire if you do not wish to. Even if you say you want to then change your mind, you can do so at any point and you do not have to give a reason.

What do I have to do?:
I will need 15 minutes to ask you questions about progress and your Spanish lesson. All your results are completely anonymous (no names are provided).

How will the information be recorded?:
The information will be recorded on an anonymous google survey. All results will be destroyed upon completion of the research (September 2018).

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?:
Participating in the questionnaire is not intended to make you feel uncomfortable nor will it impact on your grades in your normal assessments. All the results are anonymous, so that you cannot be identified.

What are the advantages of taking part?:
There is no direct advantage on your grades if you take part. In the long term, you may contribute to understanding the importance of progress in Modern Foreign Languages.

Will I be identified if I take part?:
You will not be individually identifiable because your name will not be provided nor will you answer questions which may make you stand out.

What type of questions will be in the questionnaire?:
Your opinion about progress and how you define progress.

What will happen to the results?:
Your results will be published in the final thesis, but neither you nor the school will be identifiable.

Who is organising the research?:
The project is a partnership between [redacted] and Oxford University. [redacted] is organising the research as part of her final Master's thesis.

Has the questionnaire been ethically reviewed?:
This project has been ethically approved by CUREC (the Central University Research Ethics Committee), through the Departmental Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you for taking part in this research

*Required

Please read each statement and select your option: *

Having read the information about the project I agree to taking part in this questionnaire

Having read the information about the project I do not agree to taking part in this questionnaire

Are you: *

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

Are you part of the football team? *

Yes

No

Are you part of the rugby team? *

Yes

No

Are you part of the scholar's programme? *

Yes

No

Did you like the weighing scales review sheet? *

Yes

No

If you answered YES above, tick all the reasons why: *

I knew what I was learning

I could see my knowledge getting better each time

I liked being able to track my progress

It showed me what I needed to revise

Other:

If you answered NO, could you explain why? *

Your answer

Before we started using the weighing scales how would you rate your engagement in MFL? *

Very engaged

Reasonably engaged

A little engaged

Not at all engaged

Afte using the weighing scales how would you rate your engagement in MFL? *

Very engaged

Reasonably engaged

A little engaged

Not at all engaged

Please rate the following statements: I know I've made progress if... I am focused in each lesson *

Choose

Please rate the following statements: I know I've made progress if... I get a good grade at the end of the unit *

Choose

Please rate the following statements: I know I've made progress if... I produce lots of work *

Choose

Please rate the following statements: I know I've made progress if... I get high scores on activities in class *

Choose

Please rate the following statements: I know I've made progress if... I know how to apply different words and tenses without help from the teacher *

Choose

Please rate the following statements: I know I've made progress if... The teacher tells me *

Choose

Please rate the following statements: I know I've made progress if... I understand what I've learnt and can apply it in new situations *

Choose

Why is progress important for you? *

Your answer

How would you change the weighing scales?

Different questions each time

Allow me to make up my own questions

No questions to answer

Other:

SUBMIT

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

9.8 End of Cycle-two questionnaire to pupils (with invitation to participants)

Research project: How the perceptions of progress impacts on the engagement of Year 8 students in Modern Foreign Languages.

Invitation:
You are being invited to participate in a questionnaire about your views on progress and how this impacts your engagement in Modern Foreign Languages. Your participation is completely voluntary so please take the time to read the following information before you decide if you wish to participate. If you have any further questions, please ask.

Purpose of the project:
The aim is to investigate if students are more engaged in a subject, if they know they are making good progress. It will seek to understand what students see as progress and how they currently feel about their language lesson.

Why you have been chosen:
You have been chosen because you are currently in Year 8, studying Spanish.

Do I have to do it?:
You do not have to take part in the questionnaire if you do not wish to. Even if you say you want to then change your mind, you can do so at any point and you do not have to give a reason.

What do I have to do?:
I will need 15 minutes to ask you questions about progress and your Spanish lesson. All your results are completely anonymous (no names are provided).

How will the information be recorded?:
The information will be recorded on an anonymous google survey. All results will be destroyed upon completion of the research (September 2018).

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?:
Participating in the questionnaire is not intended to make you feel uncomfortable nor will it impact on your grades in your normal assessments. All the results are anonymous, so that you cannot be identified.

What are the advantages of taking part?:
There is no direct advantage on your grades if you take part. In the long term, you may contribute to understanding the importance of progress in Modern Foreign Languages.

Will I be identified if I take part?:
You will not be individually identifiable because your name will not be provided nor will you answer questions which may make you stand out.

What type of questions will be in the questionnaire?:
Your opinion about progress and how you define progress.

What will happen to the results?:
Your results will be published in the final thesis, but neither you nor the school will be identifiable.

Who is organising the research?:
The project is a partnership between [redacted] and Oxford University. [redacted] is organising the research as part of her final Master's thesis.

Has the questionnaire been ethically reviewed?:
This project has been ethically approved by CUREC (the Central University Research Ethics Committee), through the Departmental Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you for taking part in this research

*Required

Please read each statement and select your option: *

Having read the information about the project I agree to taking part in this questionnaire

Having read the information about the project I do not agree to taking part in this questionnaire

Are you: *

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

Are you part of the football team? *

Yes

No

Are you part of the rugby team? *

Yes

No

Are you part of the scholar's programme? *

Yes

No

Did you like the 2nd version of the weighing scale sheet? *

Yes

No

If you answered YES above, tick all the reasons why: *

I knew what I was learning

I was able to transfer learning from the previous topic

I liked being able to track my progress

It showed me what I needed to revise

I liked the shorter time frame (1 week instead of 2 weeks)

Other:

If you answered NO, tick all the reasons why: *

I didn't like having different questions each week

I couldn't tell if I understood a question because they changed each week

The time-frame was too short (1 week)

I could only write a short amount each time and this didn't feel like I was making progress

Other:

After the 1st weighing scale sheet how would you have rated your engagement in MFL? *

Very engaged

Reasonably engaged

A little engaged

Not at all engaged

After the 2nd weighing scale sheet, how would you rate your engagement now in MFL? *

Very engaged

Reasonably engaged

A little engaged

Not at all engaged

Which weighing scale helped you to reflect on your progress most *

Weighing scales 1 with the same questions and 2 weeks to think about my answers

Weighing scale 2 with different questions and a shorted time to think about my answers

With which weighing scale did you feel most engaged? *

Weighing scales 1 with the same questions and 2 weeks to think about my answers

Weighing scale 2 with different questions and a shorted time to think about my answers

Since starting the intervention how would you rate these statements: I understand that progress means I have to understand what I'm learning *

Choose

Since starting the intervention how would you rate these statements: I understand that progress means I get good grades for the work I do *

Choose

Since starting the intervention how would you rate these statements: I understand that progress may not always been shown by grades *

Choose

Since starting the intervention how would you rate these statements: I understand that progress means I have need to keep going over a learning point until I can use it in new situations *

Choose

Since starting the intervention how would you rate these statements: I can apply learning points in new topics (past tense/opinions) *

Choose

How would you change the weighing scales? *

Your answer

Which weighing scale would you prefer to continue with next term *

Weighing scales 1 with the same questions and 2 weeks to think about my answers

Weighing scale 2 with different questions and a shorter time to think about my answers

Why is progress important for you? *

Your answer

Do you think it is important to be engaged when learning a Foreign Language?

Yes

No

Why (not)?

Your answer

SUBMIT

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

9.9 Concluding interview with pupils (with invitation to participants)

Research project
How the perceptions of progress impact on the engagement of Year 8 students in Modern Foreign Languages.
Invitation
You are being invited to participate in an interview about your views on progress and how this affects your engagement in Modern Foreign Languages. Your participation is completely voluntary so please take the time to read the following information before you decide if you wish to participate. If you have any further questions please ask.
Purpose of the project
The aim is to investigate if students like a subject more, if they know they are making good progress. It will seek to understand what students see as progress and how they currently feel about their language lesson.
Why you have been chosen
You have been chosen because you are currently in Year 8 and do Spanish.
Do I have to do it?
You do not have to take part in the questionnaire if you do not wish to. Even if you say you want to then change your mind, you can do so at any point and you do not have to give a reason.
What do I have to do?
I will need 15 minutes to ask you questions about progress and your Spanish lesson. All your results are completely anonymous (no names are provided).
How will the information be recorded?
The information will be recorded on a voice recorder to facilitate a natural conversation. All results will be destroyed upon completion of the research (September 2018).
What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?
Participating in the questionnaire is not intended to make you feel uncomfortable nor will it impact on your grades in your normal assessments. All the results are anonymous, so that you cannot be identified.
What are the advantages of taking part?
There is no direct advantage on your grades if you take part. In the long term, you may contribute to understanding the importance of progress in Modern Foreign Languages.
Will I be identified if I take part?
You will not be individually identifiable because your name will not be provided nor, will you answer questions which may make you stand out.
What type of questions will be in the questionnaire?
Your opinion about progress and how you define progress.
What will happen to the results?
Your results will be published in the final thesis, but neither you or the school will not be identifiable.
Who is organising the research?
The project is a partnership between [redacted] and Oxford University. [redacted] is organising the research as part of her final Master's thesis.
Has the questionnaire been ethically reviewed?
This project has been ethically approved by CUREC (the Central University Research Ethics Committee), through the Departmental Research Ethics Committee.

Thank you for taking part in this research

Please tick as appropriate

Name:

o Having read the information about the project I agree to taking part in this interview

o Having read the information about the project I do not agree to taking part in this interview

Questions:

1) Could you tell me which intervention you preferred and why?

2) How have you found both of the interventions?

3) What did you enjoy?

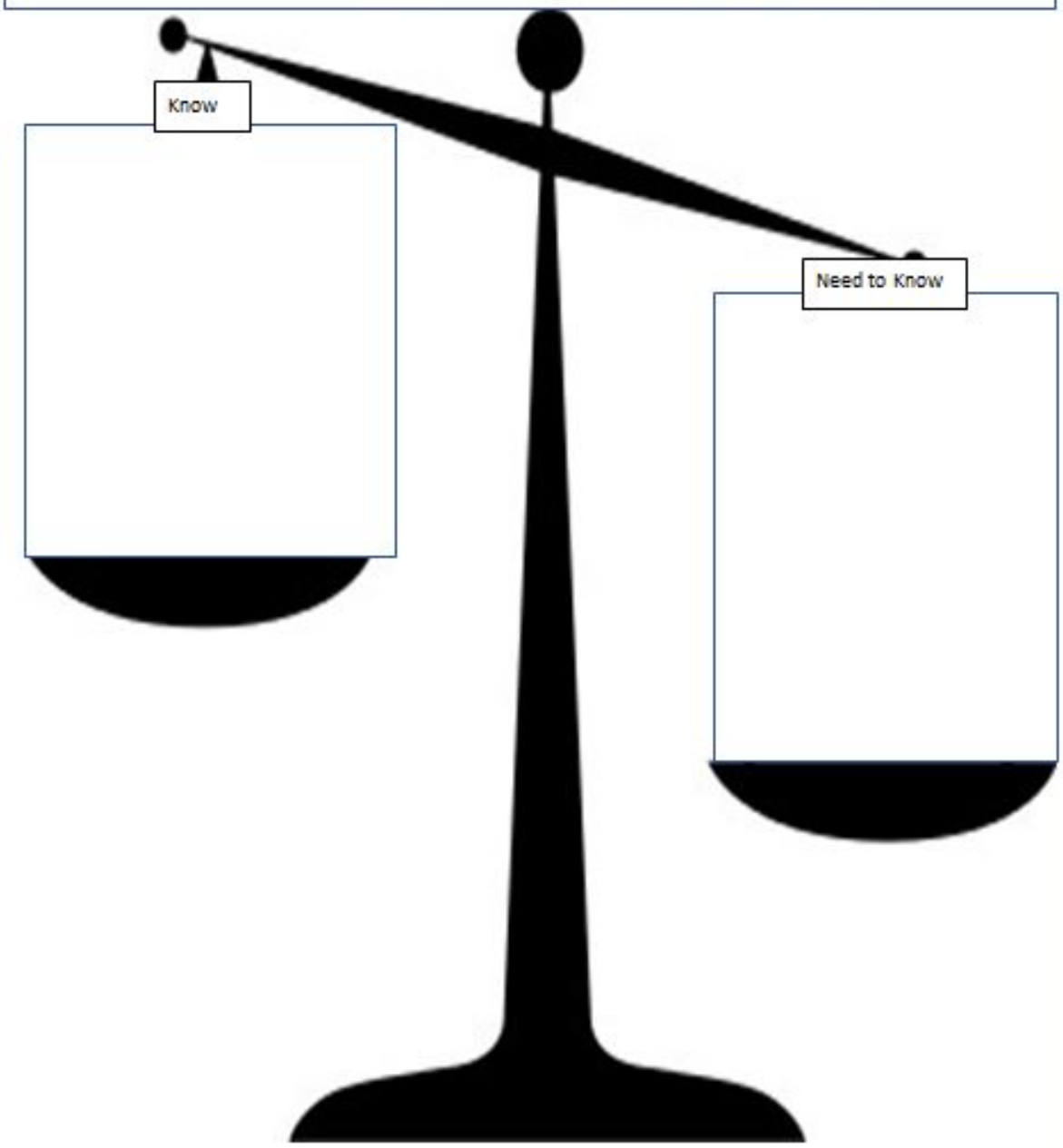
4) How would you edit the intervention?

5) How important was it for your engagement levels you to see your progress?

9.10 **First intervention- first cycle (page 1)**

Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Countries
2. Ask someone where they went on holiday
3. Say where you went on holiday
4. Say what it was like
5. Adjectives
6. Modes of transport
7. Say how you travelled
8. Ask where somebody usually holidays
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you did on holiday
11. Time phrases
12. Say how long you spent on holiday
13. Say where you usually go on holiday
14. Ask questions about where someone stayed and for how long
15. Ask someone how they travelled
16. Ask what someone did
17. To talk about future holidays



First intervention- first cycle (page 2)

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

Remember a Gold answer will have:

- ☐ 3 tenses (past/present/future)
- ☐ Opinions & justifications
- ☐ Speaking about someone else
- ☐ Detail in your answer

¿Qué haces normalmente durante las vacaciones?

¿Adónde fuiste las vacaciones?

¿Adónde vas a ir de vacaciones el año que viene?

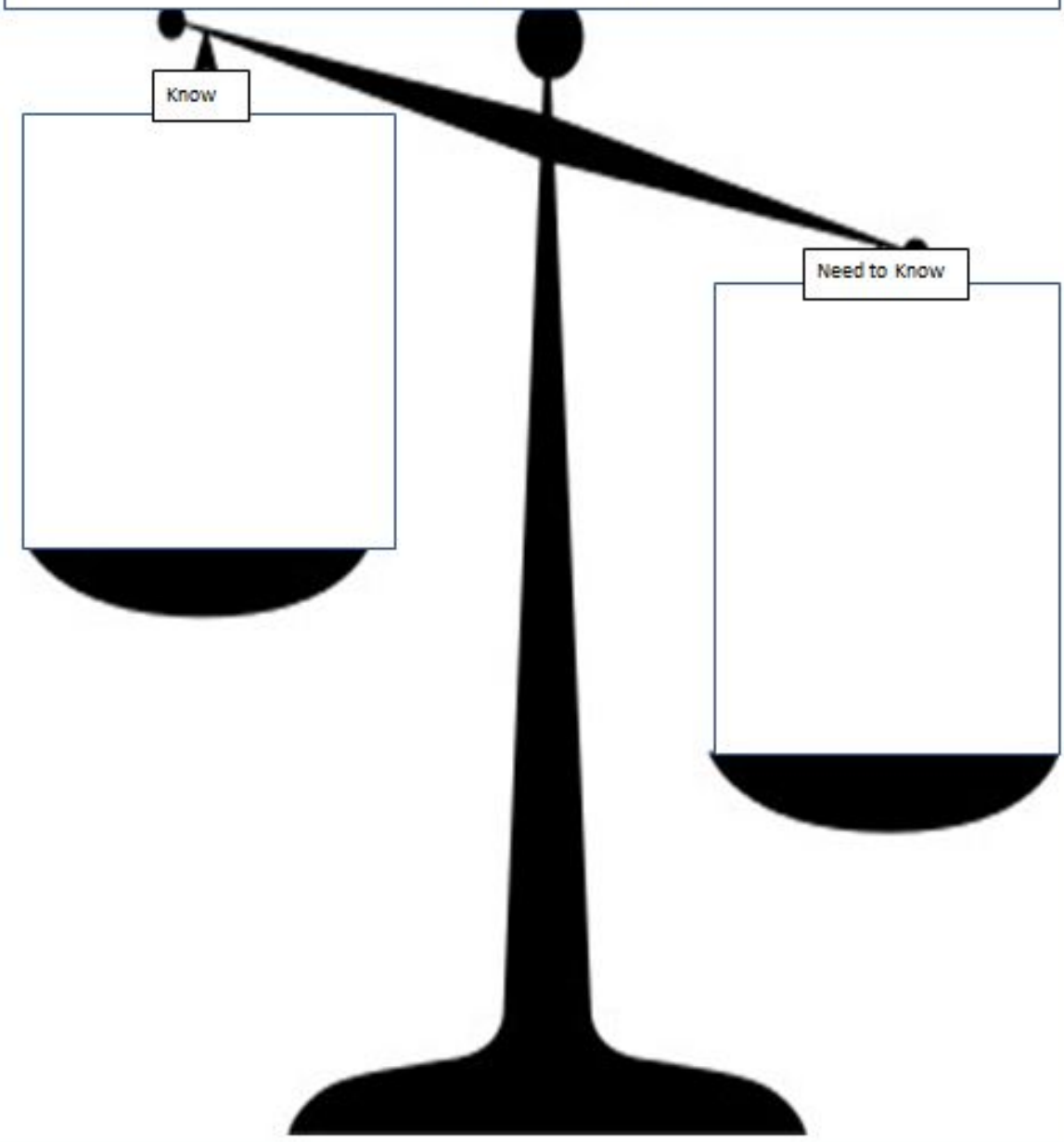
How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☐ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☐ I understand what to write
- ☐ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☐ I can use the tenses correctly
- ☐ I can write something for each question

9.11 **Second intervention- Review 1- second cycle (page 1)**

Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Food
2. Numbers
3. Ask someone what they had
4. Say what you had
5. Opinions in the past
6. Opinions in the present
7. Adjectives
8. Adverbs of frequency
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you would like
11. Regular preterite
12. Food options in the future tense (I'm going to have...)
13. How you will order (transport)
14. Saying if you are hungry or not
15. Cost of items
16. Days you go out
17. When you will have the food (breakfast/lunch/dinner)



Second intervention- Review 1- second cycle (page 2)

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

¿Qué comes y bebes normalmente?

¿Qué comiste y bebiste?

¿Qué vas a comer y beber?

¿...? →Can you think of your own question to answer?

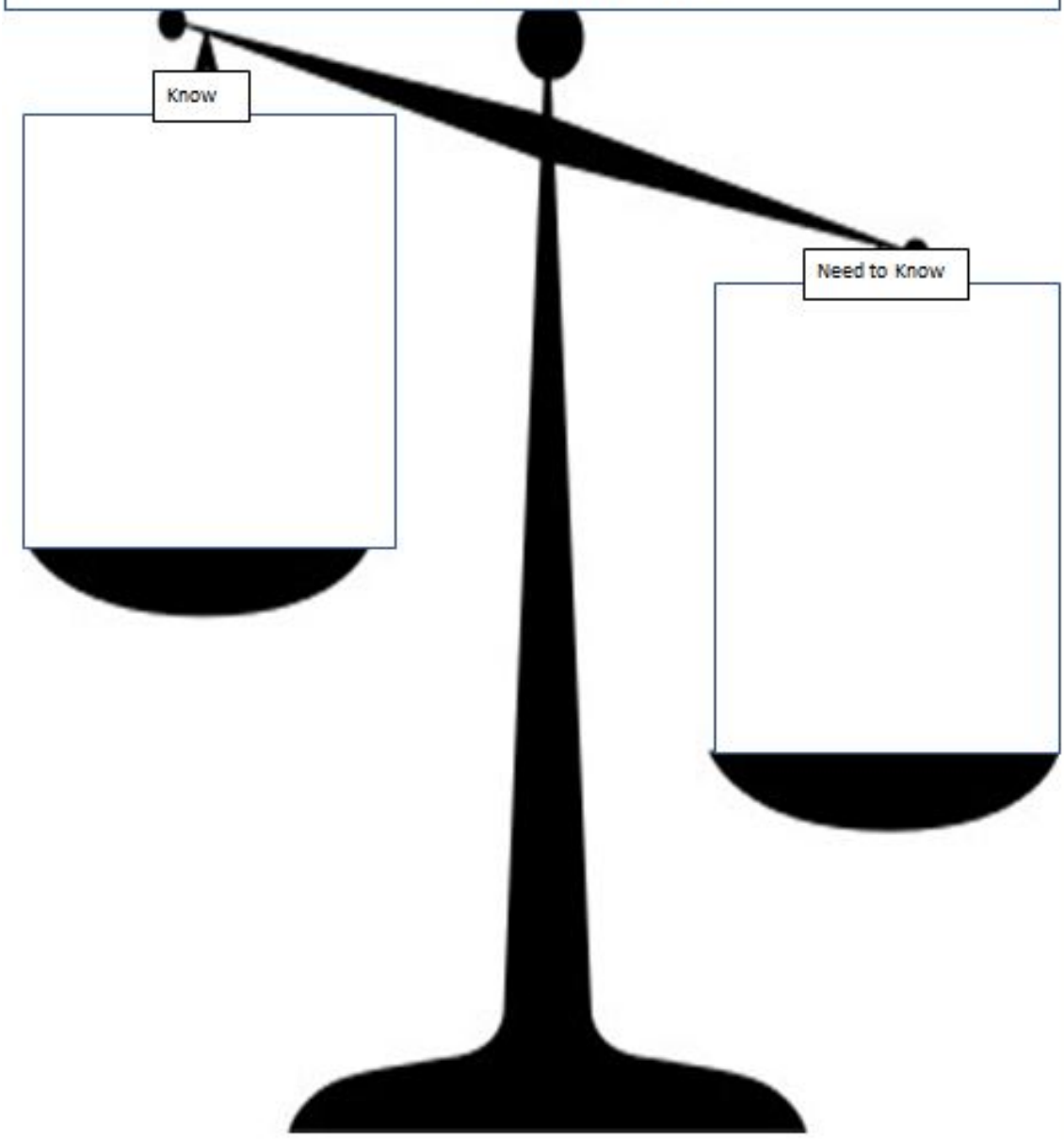
How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☐ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☐ I understand what to write
- ☐ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☐ I can use the tenses correctly
- ☐ I can write something for each question

9.12**Second intervention- Review 2- second cycle (page 1)**

Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Food
2. Numbers
3. Ask someone what they had
4. Say what you had
5. Opinions in the past
6. Opinions in the present
7. Adjectives
8. Adverbs of frequency
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you would like
11. Regular preterite
12. Food options in the future tense (I'm going to have...)
13. How you will order (transport)
14. Saying if you are hungry or not
15. Cost of items
16. Days you go out
17. When you will have the food (breakfast/lunch/dinner)



Second intervention- Review 2- second cycle (page2)

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

¿Qué te gusta comer y por qué?

¿Qué comiste ayer?

¿Qué vas a tomar en el restaurante?

¿...? →Can you think of your own question to answer?

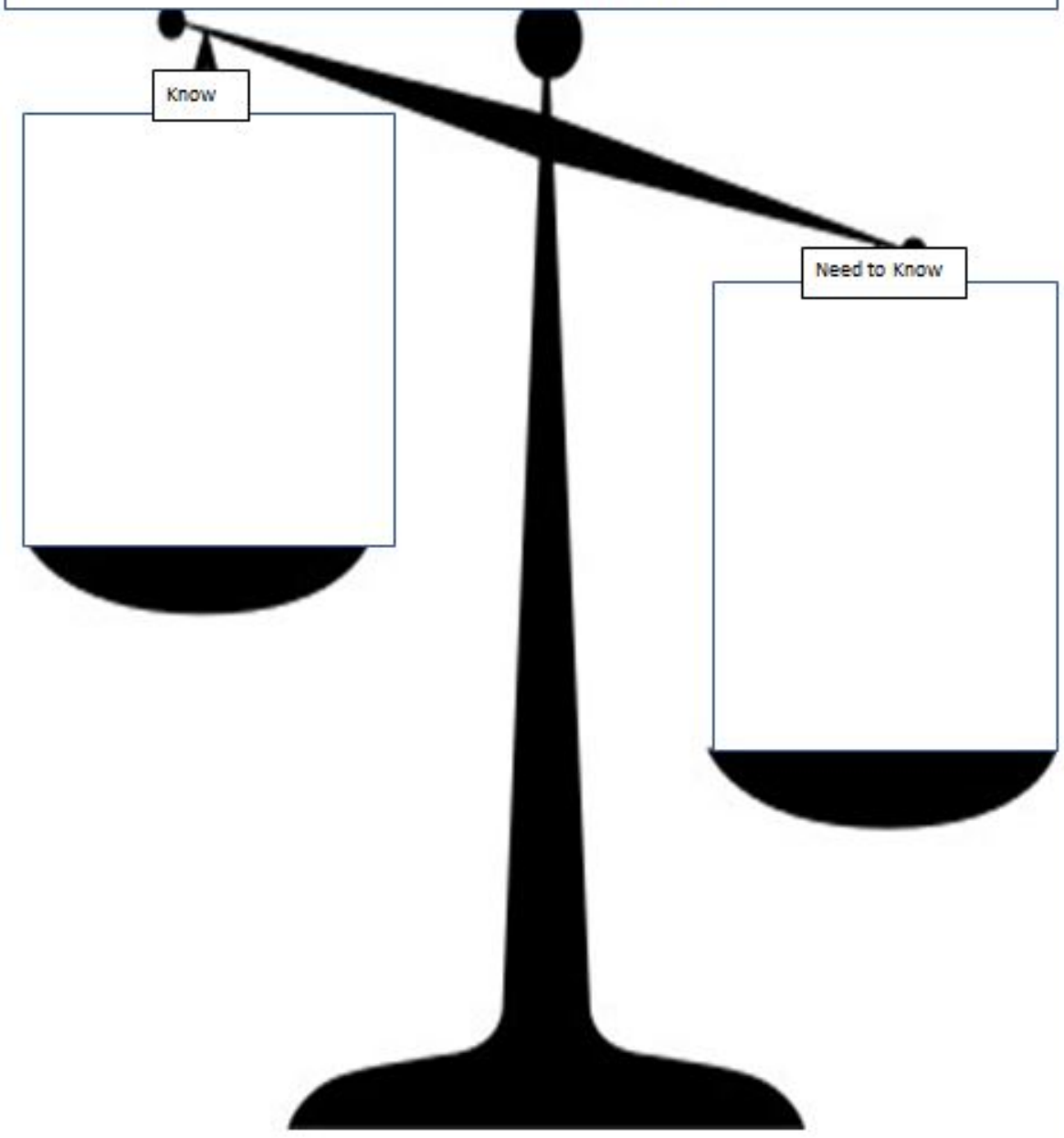
How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☐ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☐ I understand what to write
- ☐ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☐ I can use the tenses correctly
- ☐ I can write something for each question

9.13 **Second intervention- Review 3- third-cycle (page 1)**

Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Food
2. Numbers
3. Ask someone what they had
4. Say what you had
5. Opinions in the past
6. Opinions in the present
7. Adjectives
8. Adverbs of frequency
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you would like
11. Regular preterite
12. Food options in the future tense (I'm going to have…)
13. How you will order (transport)
14. Saying if you are hungry or not
15. Cost of items
16. Days you go out
17. When you will have the food (breakfast/lunch/dinner)



Second intervention- Review 3- third-cycle (page 2)

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

¿Qué desayunas y cenas?

¿Qué compraste en el mercado?

¿Qué vas a comprar en el supermercado?

¿...? →Can you think of your own question to answer?

How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☐ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☐ I understand what to write
- ☐ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☐ I can use the tenses correctly
- ☐ I can write something for each question

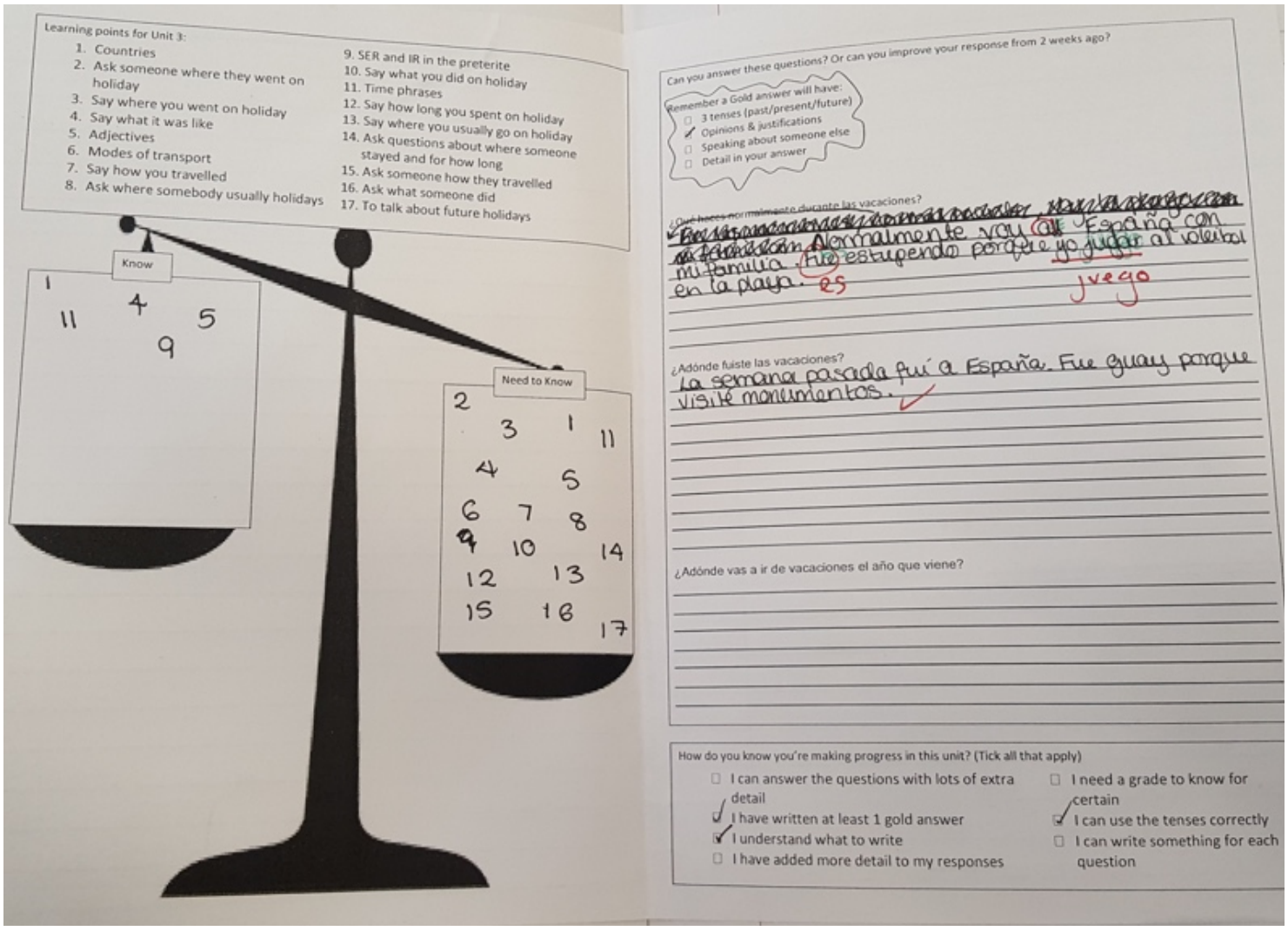
9.14 Writing criteria when analysing intervention

Writing Assessment Criteria

Communication and content	
13-15	Very detailed. Has flair. Good narration. No ambiguity with communication. Excellent linking. Pleasant to read. Can still have minor errors.
10-12	Detailed but some omissions. Bit over-ambitious. Reasonably linked.
7-9	Beginning to expand. Some linking. Some ambiguity when more ambitious language attempted.
4-6	No description or opinions apart from simple likes/dislikes. Not easy to read. No linking.
1-3	Not comprehensible. Much ambiguity. Isolated items comprehensible.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.
Knowledge and application of language	
9-10	Confident use of more complex structures – e.g.: negatives, comparisons, tenses. No repetition. Wide range of vocabulary. Fluent sentences.
7-8	Some ambitious structures – e.g.: past infinitives, comparisons, negatives, adverbs – not necessarily correct. Generally good verb use. Not just present and perfect used.
5-6	Can conjugate verbs reasonably with evidence of more than one tense. – not just using infinitives. Some subordination – e.g.: because.
3-4	No real verb control. Language is basic and limited. Some simple subordination and some use of adjectives.
1-2	Very limited. Very little language awareness.
0	Nothing worthy of credit.
Accuracy	
5	High level of accuracy.
4	Generally accurate. Accuracy can be variable **when** more complex language attempted.
3	More accurate than inaccurate. Basic. Verbs inconsistent.
2	Many basic errors make it hard to understand.
1	Isolated examples of correct language. Very poor verb formation.

9.15 **Examples of work from the first cycle intervention**

*Exemplar pupil A work from **first** fortnightly review*



Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Countries
2. Ask someone where they went on holiday
3. Say where you went on holiday
4. Say what it was like
5. Adjectives
6. Modes of transport
7. Say how you travelled
8. Ask where somebody usually holidays
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you did on holiday
11. Time phrases
12. Say how long you spent on holiday
13. Say where you usually go on holiday
14. Ask questions about where someone stayed and for how long
15. Ask someone how they travelled
16. Ask what someone did
17. To talk about future holidays

Know

1 11 4 5 9

Need to Know

2 3 1 11 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 14 12 13 15 16 17

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

Remember a Gold answer will have:
- ☐ 3 tenses (past/present/future)
- ☑ Opinions & justifications
- ☐ Speaking about someone else
- ☐ Detail in your answer

¿Qué haces normalmente durante las vacaciones?

Normalmente voy a España con mi familia. Fue estupendo porque yo jugar al voleibol en la playa. es

juego

¿Adónde fuiste las vacaciones?

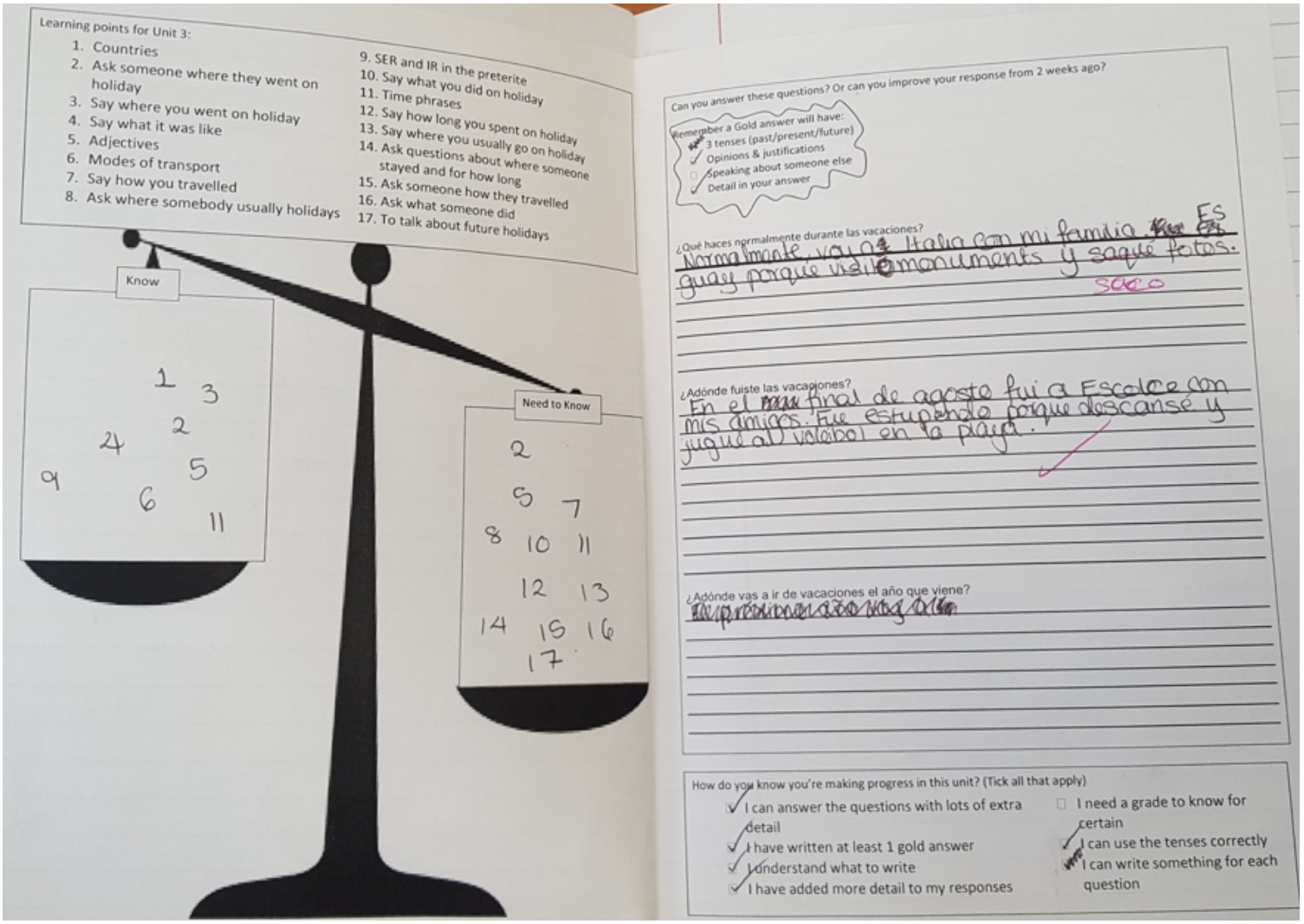
La semana pasada fuí a España. Fue guay porque visité monumentos.

¿Adónde vas a ir de vacaciones el año que viene?

How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☑ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☑ I understand what to write
- ☐ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☑ I can use the tenses correctly
- ☐ I can write something for each question

*Exemplar pupil A work from **second** fortnightly review*



Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Countries
2. Ask someone where they went on holiday
3. Say where you went on holiday
4. Say what it was like
5. Adjectives
6. Modes of transport
7. Say how you travelled
8. Ask where somebody usually holidays
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you did on holiday
11. Time phrases
12. Say how long you spent on holiday
13. Say where you usually go on holiday
14. Ask questions about where someone stayed and for how long
15. Ask someone how they travelled
16. Ask what someone did
17. To talk about future holidays

Know

1 3 2 4 5 9 6 11

Need to Know

2 5 7 8 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

Remember a Gold answer will have:
- 3 tenses (past/present/future)
- Opinions & justifications
- Speaking about someone else
- Detail in your answer

¿Qué haces normalmente durante las vacaciones?

Normalmente, voy a Italia con mi familia. Es guay porque visito monuments y saqué fotos. SOSO

¿Adónde fuiste las vacaciones?

En el final de agosto fui a Escalce con mis amigos. Fue estupendo porque descansé y jugué al volebol en la playa.

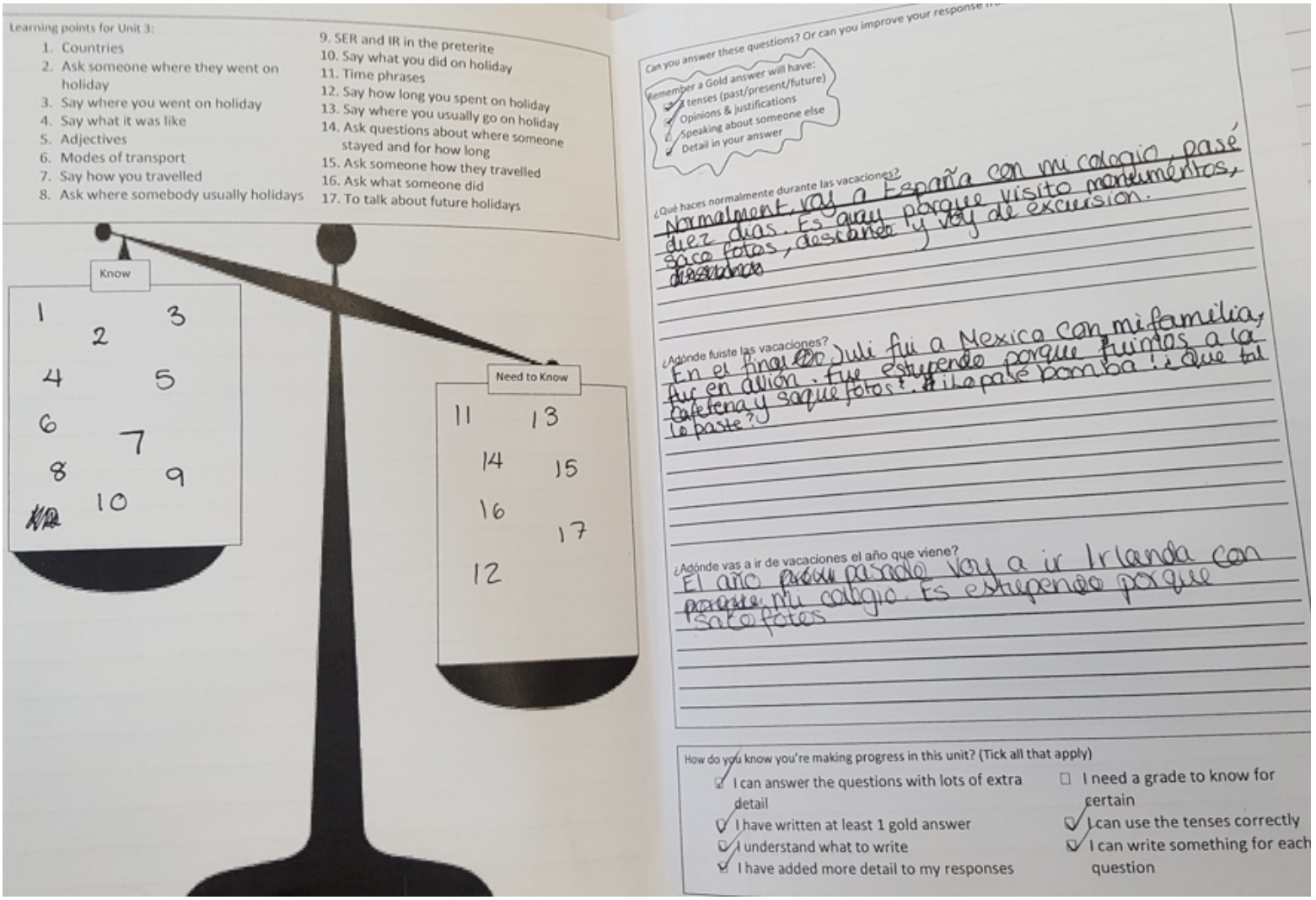
¿Adónde vas a ir de vacaciones el año que viene?

El próximo año voy a ...

How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ✓ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ✓ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ✓ I understand what to write
- ✓ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ✓ I can use the tenses correctly
- ✓ I can write something for each question

*Exemplar pupil A work from **final** fortnightly review*



Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Countries
2. Ask someone where they went on holiday
3. Say where you went on holiday
4. Say what it was like
5. Adjectives
6. Modes of transport
7. Say how you travelled
8. Ask where somebody usually holidays
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you did on holiday
11. Time phrases
12. Say how long you spent on holiday
13. Say where you usually go on holiday
14. Ask questions about where someone stayed and for how long
15. Ask someone how they travelled
16. Ask what someone did
17. To talk about future holidays

Know

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 ~~11~~ 12

Need to Know

11 13 14 15 16 17 12

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response

Remember a Gold answer will have:
- ✓ 3 tenses (past/present/future)
- ✓ Opinions & justifications
- ✓ Speaking about someone else
- ✓ Detail in your answer

¿Qué haces normalmente durante las vacaciones?
Normalment, voy a España con mi colegio, pasé diez días. Es guay porque visito monumentos, saco fotos, descanso y voy de excursion.

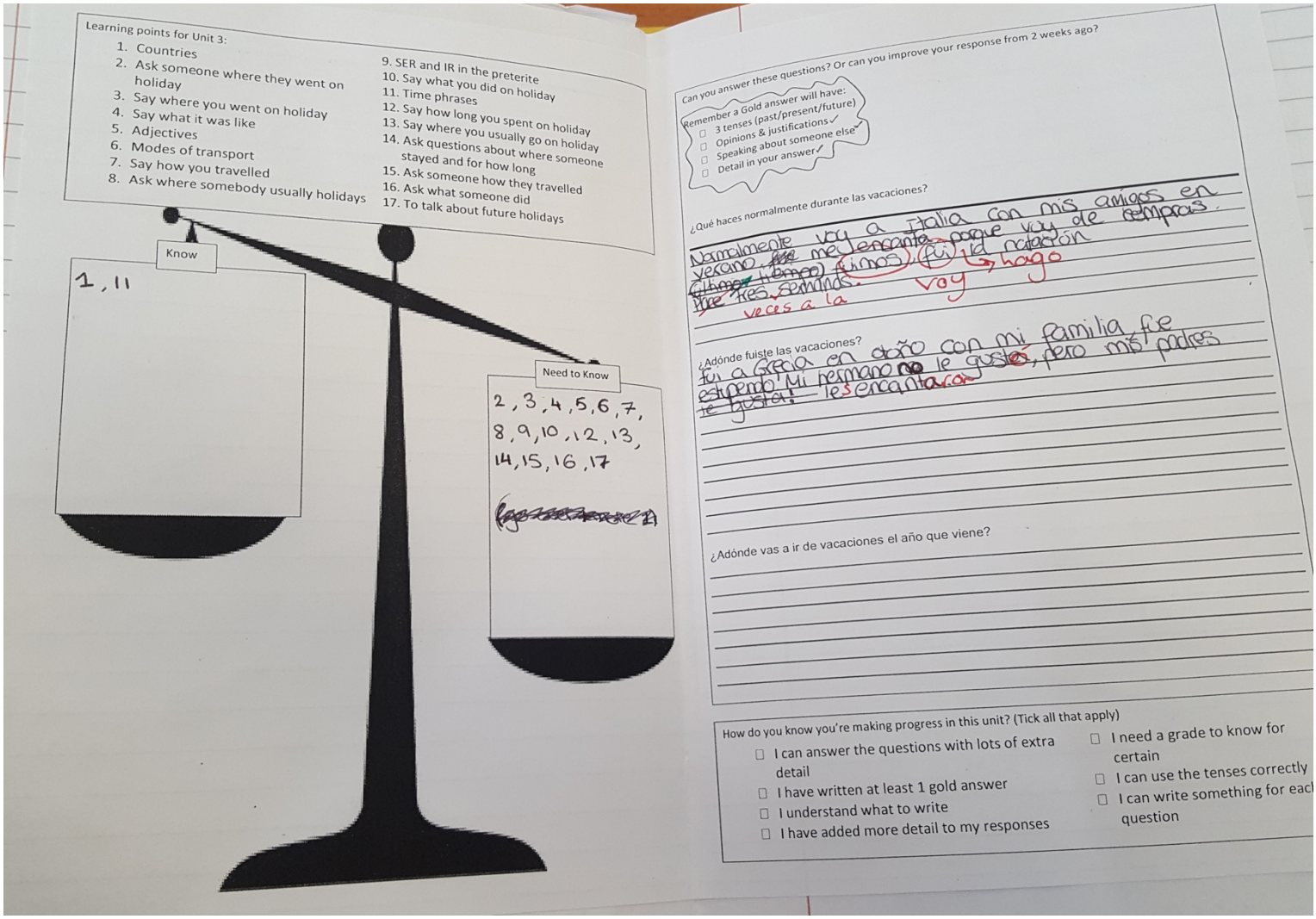
¿Adónde fuiste las vacaciones?
En el final de Julio fui a Mexico con mi familia, Fui en avión. Fue estupendo porque fuimos a la cafetería y saque fotos. ¡Lo pasé bomba! ¿Que tal lo pasaste?

¿Adónde vas a ir de vacaciones el año que viene?
El año pasado voy a ir Irlanda con mi colegio. Es estupendo porque saco fotos

How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ✓ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ✓ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ✓ I understand what to write
- ✓ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ✓ I can use the tenses correctly
- ✓ I can write something for each question

*Exemplar pupil B work from **first** fortnightly review*



Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Countries
2. Ask someone where they went on holiday
3. Say where you went on holiday
4. Say what it was like
5. Adjectives
6. Modes of transport
7. Say how you travelled
8. Ask where somebody usually holidays
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you did on holiday
11. Time phrases
12. Say how long you spent on holiday
13. Say where you usually go on holiday
14. Ask questions about where someone stayed and for how long
15. Ask someone how they travelled
16. Ask what someone did
17. To talk about future holidays

Know: 1, 11

Need to Know: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

Remember a Gold answer will have:
- ☐ 3 tenses (past/present/future)
- ☐ Opinions & justifications ✓
- ☐ Speaking about someone else ✓
- ☐ Detail in your answer ✓

¿Qué haces normalmente durante las vacaciones?

Normalmente voy a Italia con mis amigos en verano. Me encanta porque voy de compras. Fuimos (fui) la natación ~~Fue~~ tres semanas. Voy → hago veces a la

¿Adónde fuiste las vacaciones?

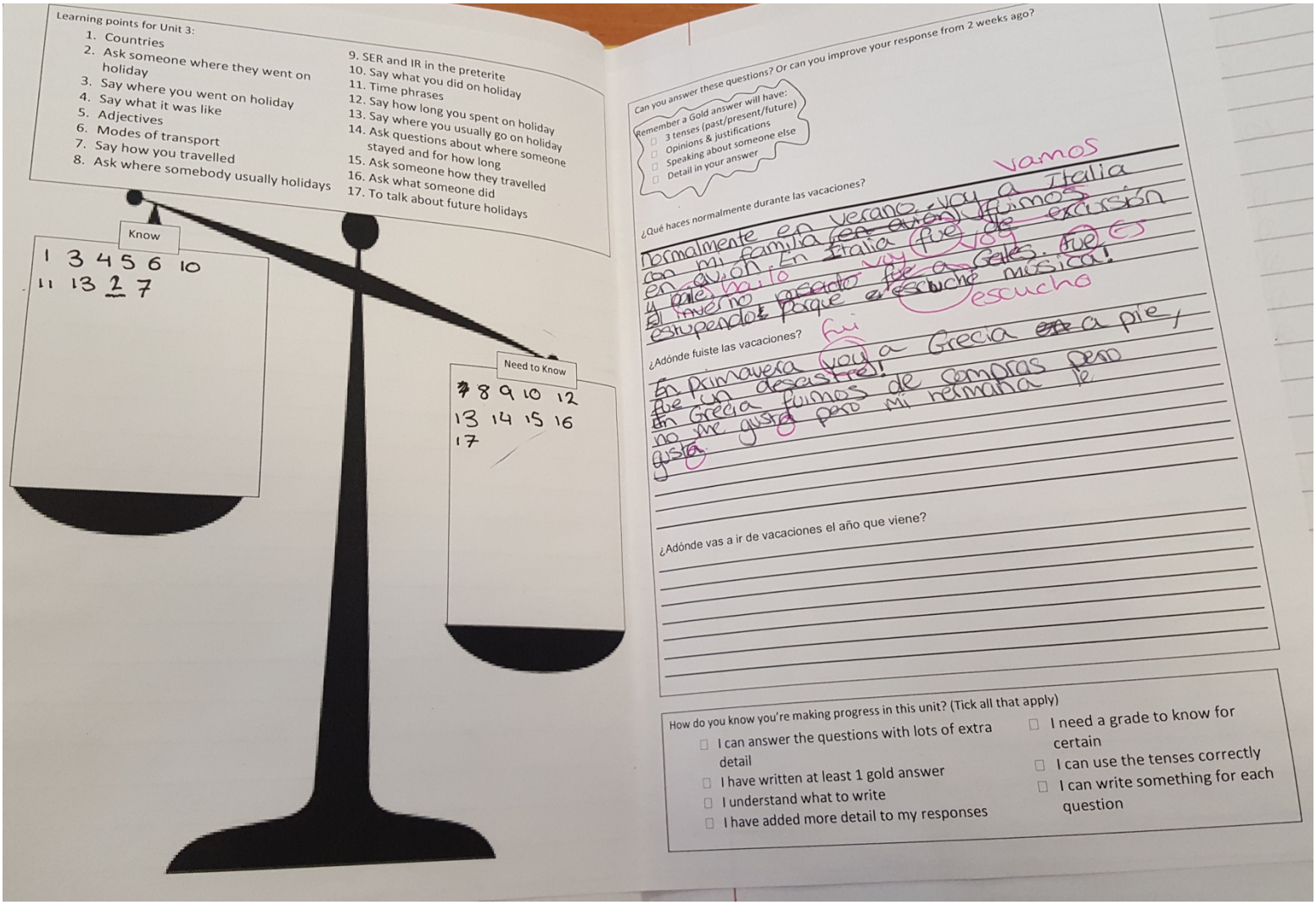
Fui a Grecia en año con mi familia fue estupendo. Mi hermano no le gusta, pero mis padres ~~le gusta~~ les encantaba

¿Adónde vas a ir de vacaciones el año que viene?

How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☐ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☐ I understand what to write
- ☐ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☐ I can use the tenses correctly
- ☐ I can write something for each question

*Exemplar pupil B work from **second** fortnightly review*



Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Countries
2. Ask someone where they went on holiday
3. Say where you went on holiday
4. Say what it was like
5. Adjectives
6. Modes of transport
7. Say how you travelled
8. Ask where somebody usually holidays
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you did on holiday
11. Time phrases
12. Say how long you spent on holiday
13. Say where you usually go on holiday
14. Ask questions about where someone stayed and for how long
15. Ask someone how they travelled
16. Ask what someone did
17. To talk about future holidays

Know: 1 3 4 5 6 10 11 13 2 7

Need to Know: ~~8~~ 9 10 12 13 14 15 16 17

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

Remember a Gold answer will have:
- 3 tenses (past/present/future)
- Opinions & justifications
- Speaking about someone else
- Detail in your answer

¿Qué haces normalmente durante las vacaciones?

Normalmente en verano ~~voy~~ vamos con mi familia ~~en avión~~ a Italia en avión. En Italia fue de excursión y el hotel ~~era~~ fue muy bueno porque ~~me~~ ~~gusta~~ estuvo ~~estupendo~~ porque fue a Gales. Fue ~~en~~ invierno ~~pero~~ escucho música!

¿Adónde fuiste las vacaciones?

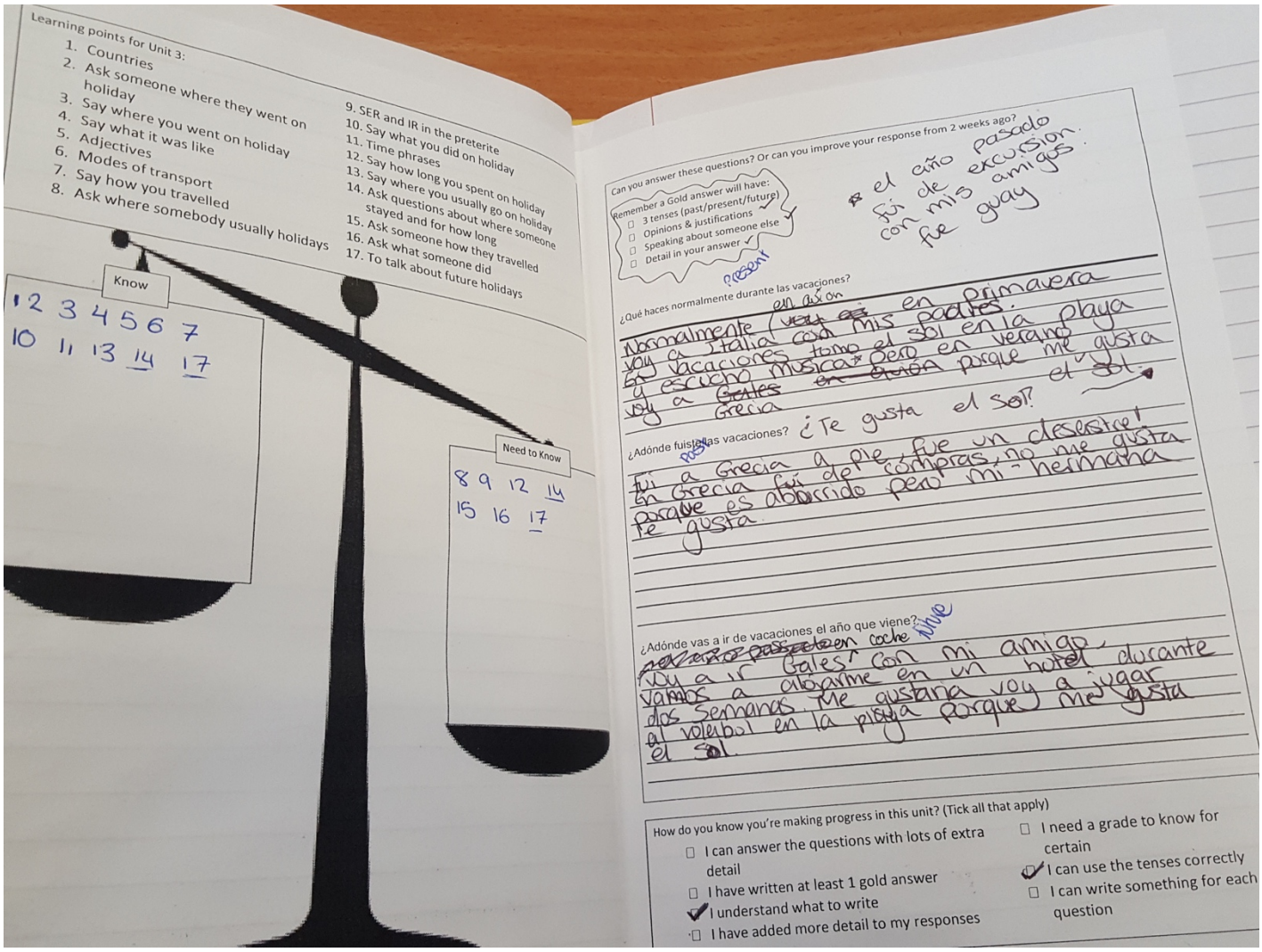
En primavera fui a Grecia a pie y fue un desastre! ~~En~~ Grecia ~~no me gusta~~ fuimos de compras pero no me gustó pero mi hermana le gustó

¿Adónde vas a ir de vacaciones el año que viene?

How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

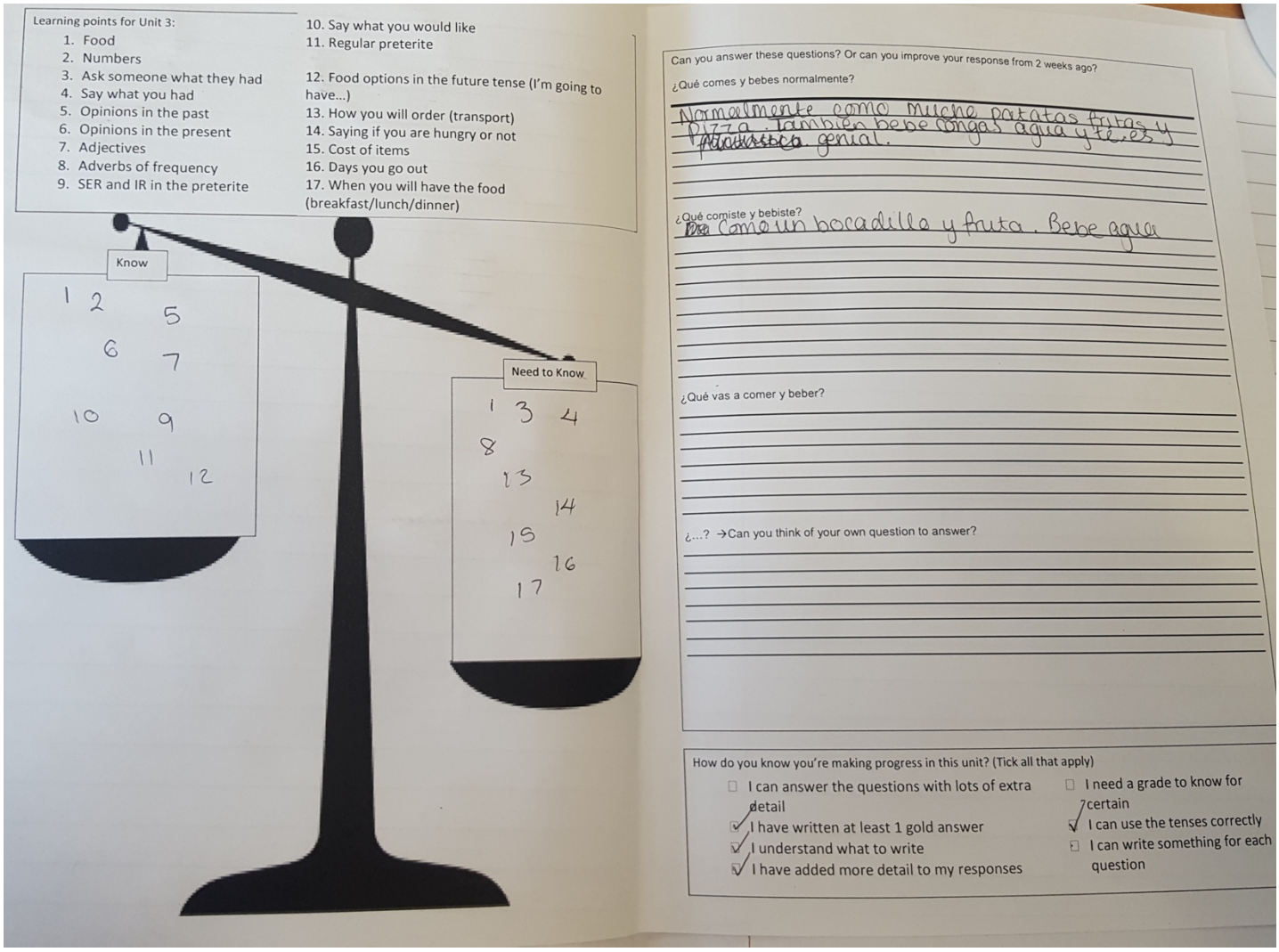
- ☐ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☐ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☐ I understand what to write
- ☐ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☐ I can use the tenses correctly
- ☐ I can write something for each question

*Exemplar pupil B work from **final** fortnightly review*



9.16 **Examples of work from the second cycle intervention**

*Exemplar pupil A work from **first** fortnightly review*



Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Food
2. Numbers
3. Ask someone what they had
4. Say what you had
5. Opinions in the past
6. Opinions in the present
7. Adjectives
8. Adverbs of frequency
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you would like
11. Regular preterite
12. Food options in the future tense (I'm going to have...)
13. How you will order (transport)
14. Saying if you are hungry or not
15. Cost of items
16. Days you go out
17. When you will have the food (breakfast/lunch/dinner)

Know: 1 2 5 6 7 10 9 11 12

Need to Know: 1 3 4 8 13 14 15 16 17

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

¿Qué comes y bebes normalmente?

Normalmente como mucha patatas fritas y pizza. También bebe cangas agua y te. es y ~~patatas~~ genial.

¿Qué comiste y bebiste?

Ayer comí un bocadillo y fruta. Bebe agua

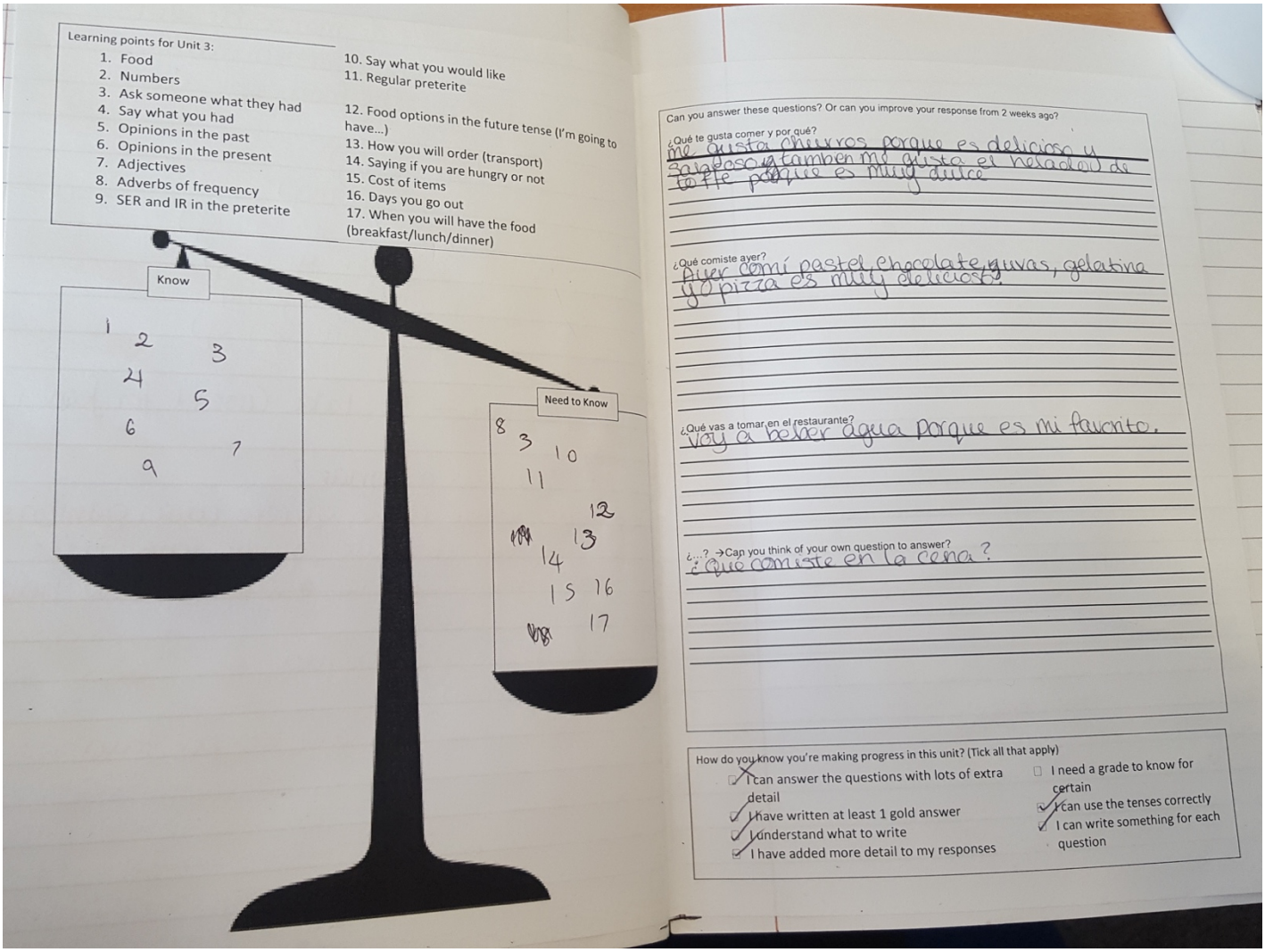
¿Qué vas a comer y beber?

¿...? →Can you think of your own question to answer?

How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☑ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☑ I understand what to write
- ☑ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☑ I can use the tenses correctly
- ☐ I can write something for each question

*Exemplar pupil A work from **second** fortnightly review*



Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Food
2. Numbers
3. Ask someone what they had
4. Say what you had
5. Opinions in the past
6. Opinions in the present
7. Adjectives
8. Adverbs of frequency
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you would like
11. Regular preterite
12. Food options in the future tense (I'm going to have...)
13. How you will order (transport)
14. Saying if you are hungry or not
15. Cost of items
16. Days you go out
17. When you will have the food (breakfast/lunch/dinner)

Know

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9

Need to Know

8 3 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

¿Qué te gusta comer y por qué?
Me gusta churros porque es delicioso y sabroso también me gusta el helado de toffe porque es muy dulce

¿Qué comiste ayer?
Ayer comí pastel chocolate, uvas, gelatina yo pizza es muy delicioso!

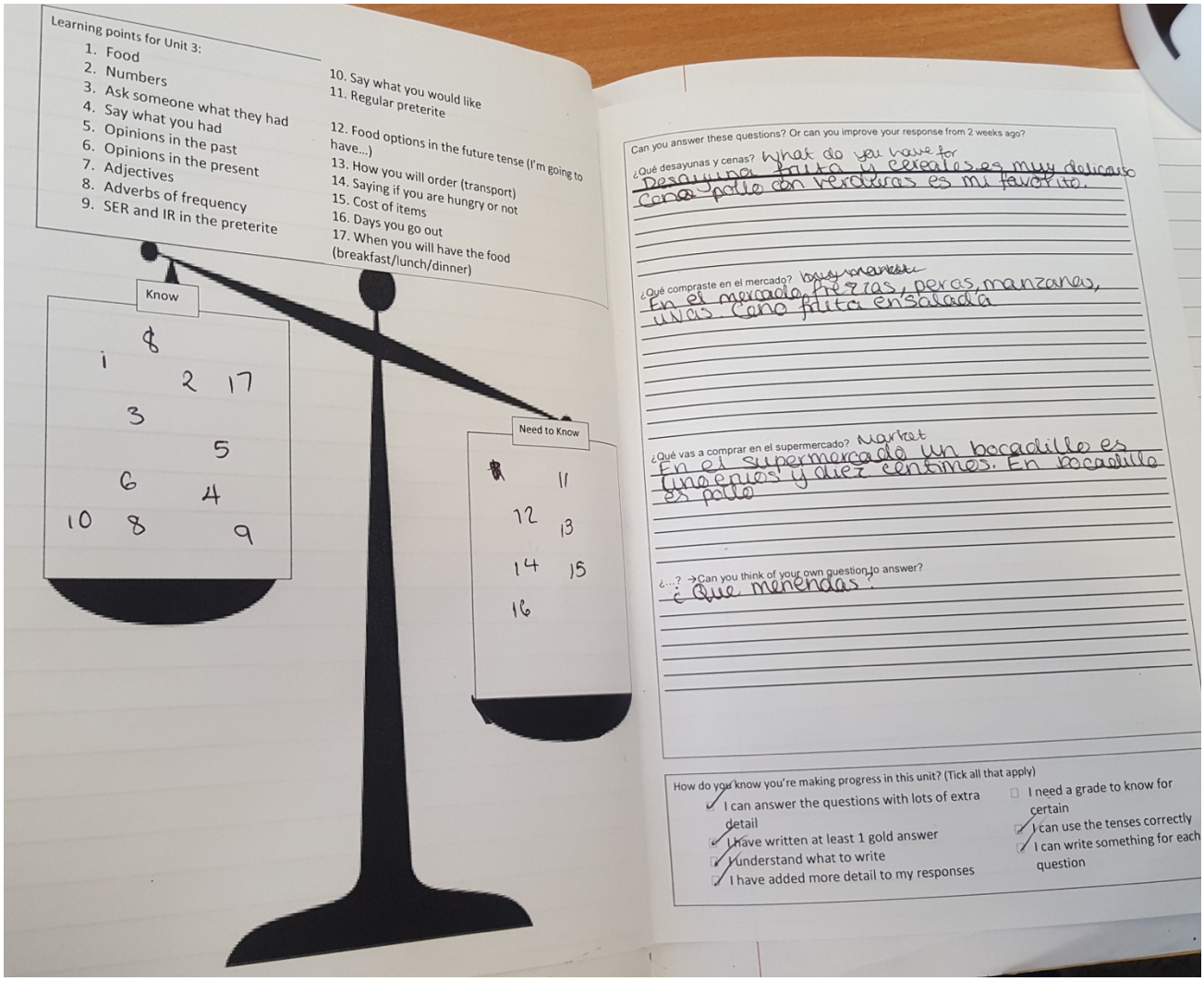
¿Qué vas a tomar en el restaurante?
Voy a beber agua porque es mi favorito.

¿...? →Can you think of your own question to answer?
¿Qué comiste en la cena?

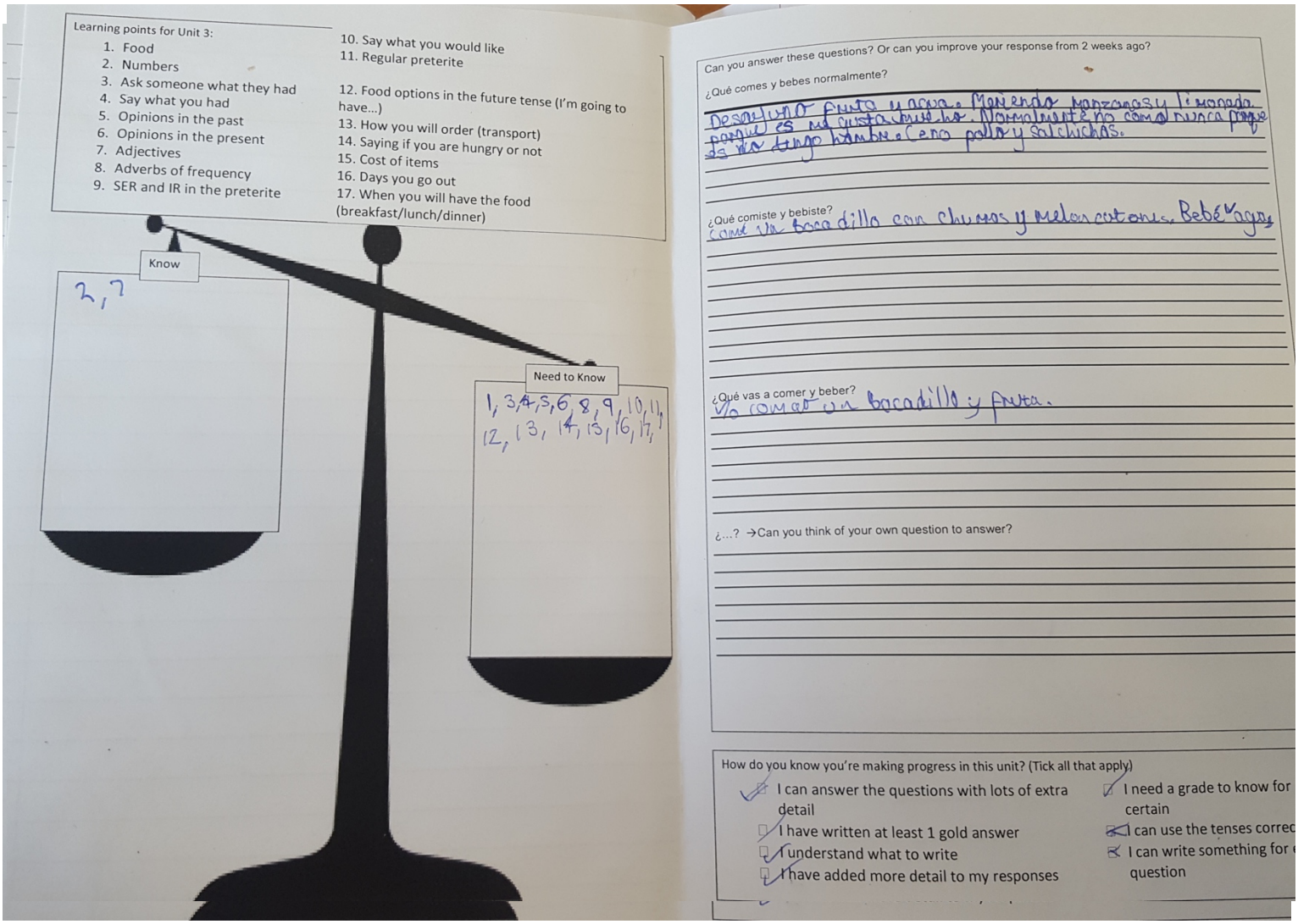
How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ☒ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☑ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☑ I understand what to write
- ☑ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☑ I can use the tenses correctly
- ☑ I can write something for each question

*Exemplar pupil A work from **final** fortnightly review*



*Exemplar pupil B work from **first** fortnightly review*



Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Food
2. Numbers
3. Ask someone what they had
4. Say what you had
5. Opinions in the past
6. Opinions in the present
7. Adjectives
8. Adverbs of frequency
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you would like
11. Regular preterite
12. Food options in the future tense (I'm going to have...)
13. How you will order (transport)
14. Saying if you are hungry or not
15. Cost of items
16. Days you go out
17. When you will have the food (breakfast/lunch/dinner)

Know

2, 7

Need to Know

1, 3, ~~4~~, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

¿Qué comes y bebes normalmente?

Desayuno fruta y agua. Manzana, naranja y limonada porque es mi fruta preferida. Normalmente no como nunca porque no tengo hambre. Cena pollo y salchichas.

¿Qué comiste y bebiste?

Comí un bocadillo con churros y melocotones. Bebí agua.

¿Qué vas a comer y beber?

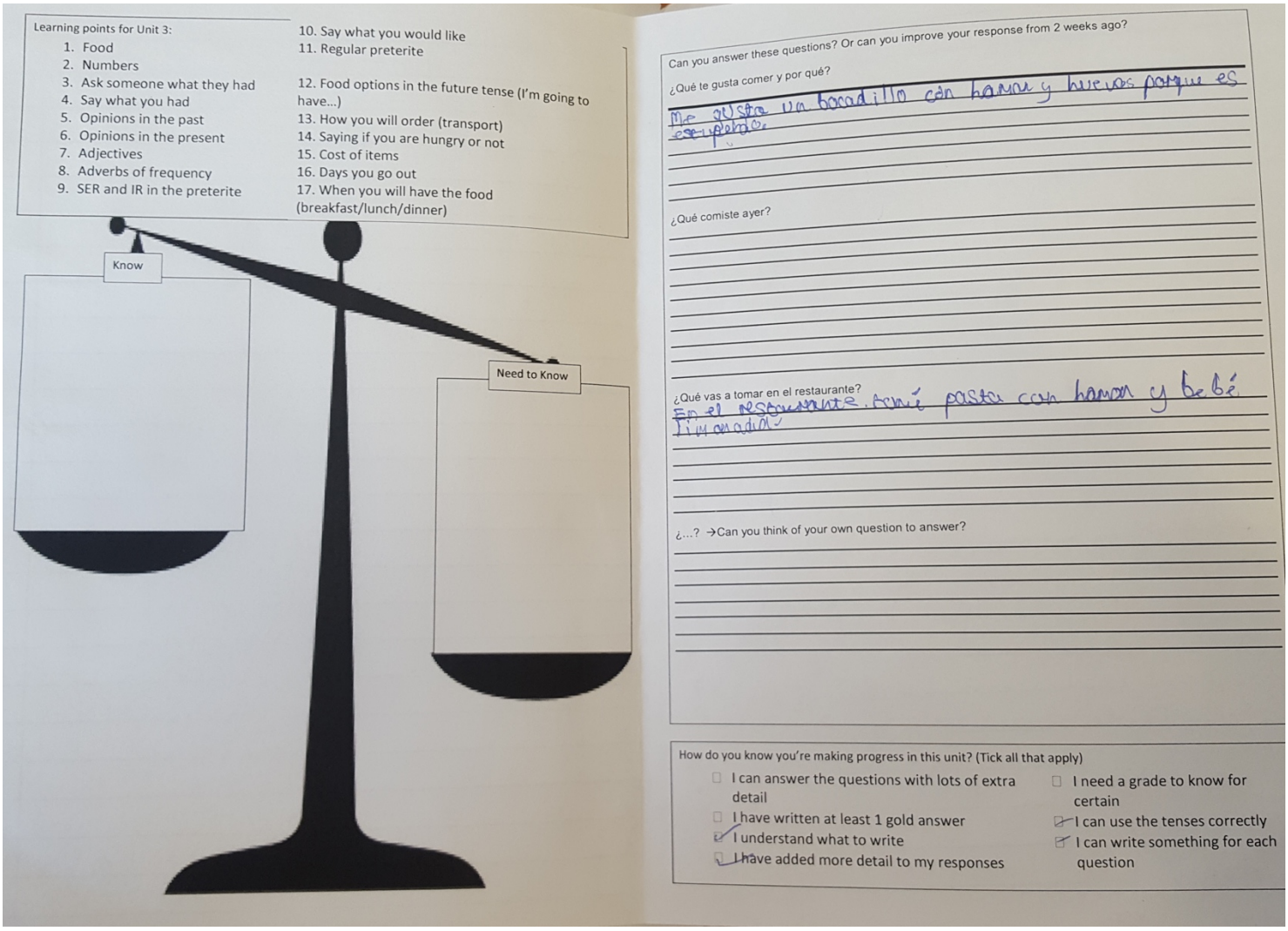
Voy a comer un bocadillo y fruta.

¿...? →Can you think of your own question to answer?

How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ☑ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☐ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☐ I understand what to write
- ☐ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☑ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☒ I can use the tenses correc
- ☒ I can write something for question

*Exemplar pupil B work from **second** fortnightly review*



Learning points for Unit 3:

1. Food
2. Numbers
3. Ask someone what they had
4. Say what you had
5. Opinions in the past
6. Opinions in the present
7. Adjectives
8. Adverbs of frequency
9. SER and IR in the preterite
10. Say what you would like
11. Regular preterite
12. Food options in the future tense (I'm going to have...)
13. How you will order (transport)
14. Saying if you are hungry or not
15. Cost of items
16. Days you go out
17. When you will have the food (breakfast/lunch/dinner)

Know

Need to Know

Can you answer these questions? Or can you improve your response from 2 weeks ago?

¿Qué te gusta comer y por qué?

Me gusta un bocadillo con hamon y huevos porque es sabroso.

¿Qué comiste ayer?

¿Qué vas a tomar en el restaurante?

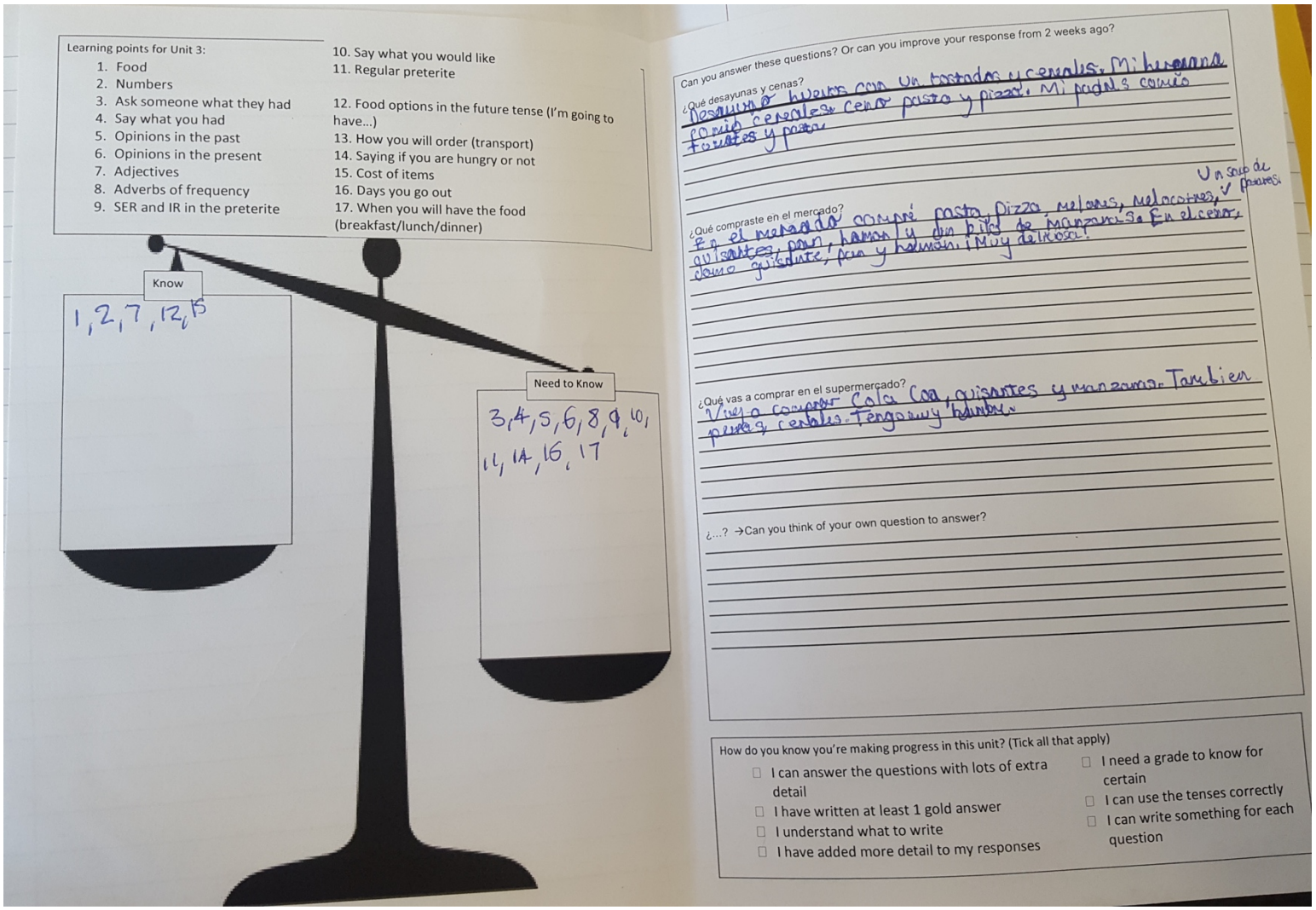
En el restaurante. Tomé pasta con hamon y bebé limonada.

¿...? →Can you think of your own question to answer?

How do you know you're making progress in this unit? (Tick all that apply)

- ☐ I can answer the questions with lots of extra detail
- ☐ I have written at least 1 gold answer
- ☑ I understand what to write
- ☑ I have added more detail to my responses
- ☐ I need a grade to know for certain
- ☑ I can use the tenses correctly
- ☑ I can write something for each question

*Exemplar pupil B work from **final** fortnightly review*



9.17 **ATL pro-forma used in my workplace to assess pupil engagement and behaviour**

	3	2	1
Impact on others	• can have a negative impact on others in lessons and multiple reminders of expectations are often needed • can show little respect for the learning of others and themselves • temper can become an issue if provoked	• follows instructions, actively listens to others and is polite to adults and peers • shows respect for the learning and feelings of others in lessons • keeps temper in check and remains calm even when criticised or provoked	• has a positive impact on others: offers help, is inclusive of others, leads on finding solutions • encourages ideas from others • is able to find solutions during conflicts
Quality of work	• lacks homework and classwork • work can be completed to a low standard and organisation can be an issue	• homework is completed routinely • classwork is done to a good standard	• homework is completed fully and with care • classwork is always of highest quality and there is evidence of excellent organisation aiding learning
Response to feedback	• does not try hard and gives up when work is a challenge • focus on goals can be lacking in lessons • does not use feedback to improve work/learning	• works with focus believing that effort will improve the quality of learning even when it is challenging • asks for help from peers/students • acts on the feedback given	• always focuses on improving understanding/learning • tries very hard even when experiencing failure • gets over frustration and setbacks quickly • seeks and gives help routinely in lessons