CAMPAIGN FOR LEARNING

The Learning to Learn in FE Initiative

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Rearrange into a well-known phrase…

- Teaching
- Grandmother
- Eggs…

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Defining 'learning to learn'

'... a process of discovery about learning. It involves a set of principles and skills which... help learners learn more effectively and so become learners for life. At its heart is the belief that learning is learnable.'

Campaign for Learning, 2003

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Characteristics of learning to learn approaches

- Being explicit about learning process
- Learners active in process, not passive recipients
- Learning as process of enquiry - asking questions and hypothesising are central
- Models encourage co-operation and teamwork
- Systematic and planned
- Feedback and analysis important

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Learning to Learn action research programme

- National action research programme co-ordinated by the Campaign for Learning, supported by DfE, LSC, LSIS
- Completed ten years' action research in schools - now in second year of research in FE and HE
- Aims to explore approaches to creating confident, effective lifelong learners through Learning to Learn
- Tries out and assesses impact of differing approaches to classroom and whole organisational management, teaching & learning, assessment

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Based on reflective practice and professional enquiry

- Based on Stenhouse (1981): 'systematic enquiry made public'
- Action research by individuals (teaching and support staff, learners) rooted in own classroom experience
- Involves:
  - collection of evidence
  - reflection on evidence
  - reflection on process
  - writing up results

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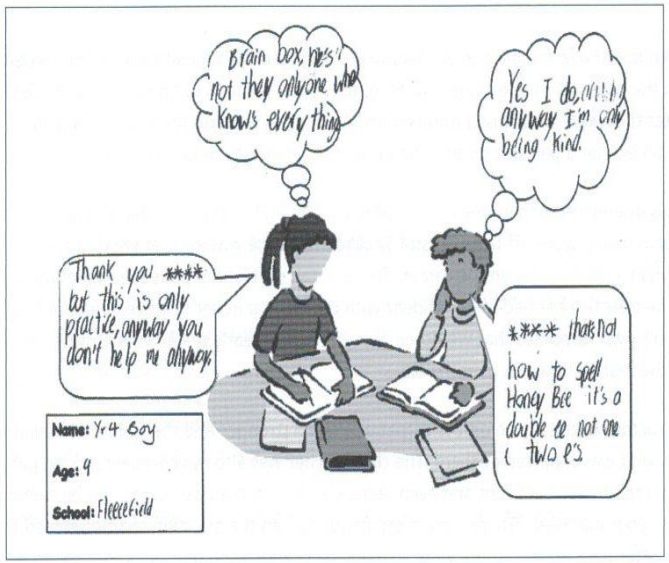
The Learning to Learn hypothesis



- Learning can be learned
- Individual learning dispositions can be developed
- There is a language for talking about learning
- We can share that language
- Everyone from young children to HE staff can use that language and share good practice

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Some theoretical links…

- Cognitive neuroscience
- Emotional intelligence
- Motivational psychology
- Adult education methodology
- Assessment for Learning
- Personalisation
- Metacognition

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Personalisation…

Personalisation:

- **Structured, responsive approach to individuals' learning**
- **Recognises strengths and develops skills**
- **Aims to make learning relevant & accessible**
- **All can progress, achieve and participate**

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Metacognition…

“Being a Learning to Learn school is about a desire to engage students in the learning process in a metacognitive way: students have a grasp of how they learn and how they can improve their learning.”

Camborne Science & Community College

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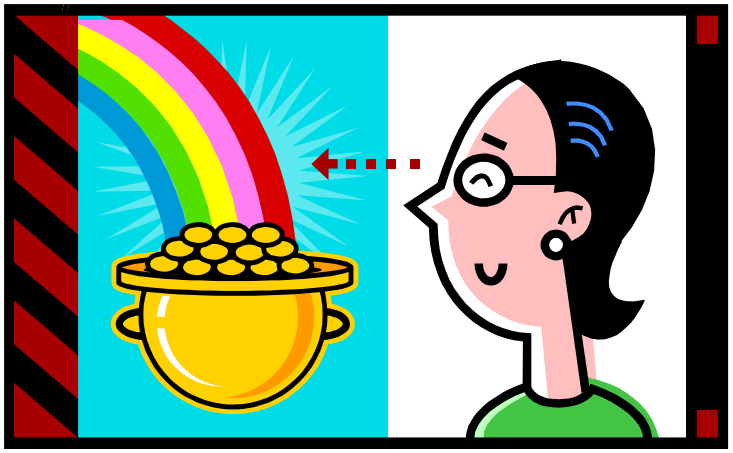
Does it work?

Over ten years of research in schools, we have seen:

- **Enhanced SATs results**
- **Higher coursework submission rates**
- **Better behaviour**
- **Improved attendance**
- **Raised teacher morale**



And in FE..?

In two years of FE research, we have seen:

- **increased confidence (learners and teachers)**
- **enhanced independence & resilience in learners**
- **improved research and data management skills**
- **higher levels of retention and achievement**
- **support for cross-College quality improvement**

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FE participant comments (1)

“ The project has been highly successful… engaging learners in the assessment process from the outset is of great benefit… all three cohorts reported that they were more successful and happier… retention and predicted achievement rates have increased…”

(BTEC First Art & Design group)

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FE participant comments (2)

“ It’s.. like creating an irrigation channel... First of all it goes through...as a dribble and gradually it.. starts moving more quickly... That’s what I like about this live reflective process – if you get people thinking aloud ...in that creative, self reflective and critical way...”(Quality Improvement group)

“ The biggest resource that I have is within me and the time and space that I commit to reflecting on my practice...” (Staff CPD group)

www.campaignforlearning.org.uk/cfl/projects/learningtolearn/learningtolearninfeyear2/_index.asp

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Policy context

- Role of FE sector in responding to recession & youth unemployment
- Adult skills agenda
- CBI: skills gaps in communication, self organisation, teamwork
- Apprenticeships/ higher level Apprenticeships/ 'Technician class'
- HE access issues
- False oppositions – vocational v academic; knowledge v skills....

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Reflecting on employability

“ Since we cannot know what knowledge will be most needed in the future, it is senseless to try to teach it in advance.

Instead, we should try to turn out people who love learning so much and learn so well that they will be able to learn whatever needs to be learned."

John Holt: ‘How Children Fail’, 1966

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Reflecting on knowledge

“Knowledge emerges only through invention and re invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful enquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world and with each other.”

Paulo Freire, 1996

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For more information

- www.campaignforlearning.org.uk\learningtolearn
- www.ncl.ac.uk/cflat/about/Learningtolearnresearch.htm

- Amalathas, E (2010): Learning to Learn in Further Education: A literature review of effective practice in England and abroad

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