The Outstanding Lesson

Compiled by J. Richards

1. GENERAL CATEGORIES AND TIPS

Clarity about objectives

Language in objectives: not just to 'know' - 'describe,' 'list,' 'compare / contrast'
(see SOLO taxonomy, below)

Amount of content - not too much

Structure of lesson - Students are novices and need learning stepping stones appropriately spaced and sequenced. It is too easy to forget this and fail to script the learning narrative for students.
http://leadinglearner.me/2014/11/15/diy-teaching-cpd-structure-and-sequence/

Clear steps through the lesson

Quality of debate

Assessment for Learning:
begin with what they showed they understood in the last lesson, base learning outcomes on this

Big body language

Keep all students equally engaged

Shape structure of lessons to enable students to be more effective, independent learners

Do not allow 'drift' - e.g. when pupils are focused on one activity for an extended period

Begin with an enquiry question: the process of learning will lead to the question being answered by the end of a lesson or series of lessons

Inclusion and differentiation: instead of planning one big task, differentiated for different abilities (which can lead to good differentiation that is achieved at the expense of whole class teaching), plan sequenced activities, taking pupils up, deeper into the inquiry, into more complex levels of understanding, and within each one providing some extra challenge for stronger students and extra support for those students who need it.

If the learning is outstanding then the teaching is outstanding.

Beginning of lesson: "this is what we've been doing," "this is where we're going..."

Pace

Everyone to produce a lot, relative to their ability levels

Lead the students to master the learning

Pick up on the little opportunities to extend the learning

Respond to contributions with enthusiasm

Manage a wide range of abilities effectively

Be responsive to students' answers

Help students to understand the relevance of what they're learning

Don't miss opportunities to interpret what the children are saying and get more out of them

Make the learning kinaesthetic - get them up and moving

Make the activities tactile - get them doing things

Get them to classify

Integration: use mathematical learning in Kodesh - e.g. sort Kodesh categories using Venn and Carroll diagrams

Remember certain principles: make sure everyone is extended at their own level, make sure the resources are available so everyone can get on without waiting for things, make sure the children are moving in some way, and make the learning relevant to the children.

Challenge.

Have they understood? Check, and repeat if necessary, explain in different ways, lead them to understanding with clues - don't give it away to soon.

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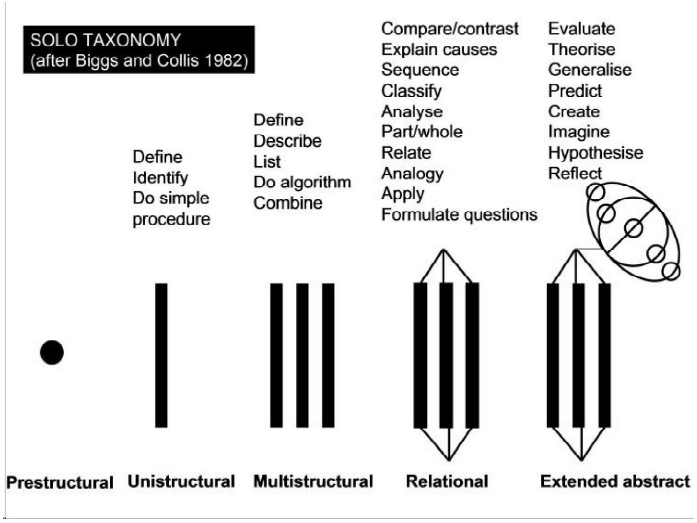
2. SOLO TAXONOMY:

http://leadinglearner.me/2013/04/14/redesigning-classrooms-using-solo-to-increase-challenge/

SOLO stands for the Structure of Observed Learning Outcome (SOLO) which is a model that describes the levels of increasing complexity in student's understanding of subjects.



When a student leaves your class what level of understanding does s/he have:

A pile of facts?
Facts organised and related to each other? Or
A conceptual framework of the topic covered with the information and facts organised accordingly?
How would you help a student to move from one stage to the next?
Imagine teaching particle theory or the causes of World War or the three different types of rainfall - what is the knowledge required? How does this knowledge link together? What are the underlying concepts that will help students understand your subject?

Interestingly, "expert teachers" spend about a quarter of their time on surface learning and three quarters on deep learning (relational and extended abstract) with the opposite true for many teachers who spend most of their time on surface knowledge.

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3. QUALITY OF TEACHING: http://leadinglearner.me/2015/01/01/the-year-of-greatteaching/

Quality of Teaching	Assessment	Expected Learning Gains	Pedagogy	Student Behaviour	Delivery Focuses On	Outcome
Increasingly Higher Quality of Teaching	Closes the Gap	Retaught (Tighter)	Refined & Fluent	Inter-dependent	The Learner (Looser)	Wisdom & Growth
	Defines Curriculum Excellence	Structured & Sequenced (Tight)	Researched & Practised	Engaged	The Plan (Tighter)	Achievement
	Consistent	Weakly Defined (Loose)	Silver Bullets	Increasingly Compliant	The Activities (Tight)	Missed Opportunities
	After Thought	Incidental & Haphazard (Loose)	Ineffective	Disruptive	Survival (Loose)	Lack of Progress

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4. SATISFACTORY TO GOOD: http://leadinglearner.me/2013/06/15/consistently-good-to-outstanding/

Helping a teacher move from satisfactory to good involves a level of up-skilling in terms of developing additional pedagogical approaches and strengthening subject knowledge. However, too often we take the same approach in trying to help teachers move from good to outstanding. The teacher who consistently teaches good lessons is encouraged to do more and more of the same and eventually ends up confused, trying to tick too many boxes or even worse going backwards. This is a misguided approach as consistently outstanding is about a mindset shift, and as Dylan Wiliam would say, "giving up good things to do great things." Outstanding is not simply doing more it's doing different:

Absolute clarity of how knowledge and understanding are vertically integrated in your subject and helping students to work at a conceptual level. The teacher needs to be thinking here first.

Keeping the lesson plan 'loose' so that you can respond to the learner as s/he makes their learning visible to you at the beginning, during and end of lessons. The last assessment forms the new starting point for the next lesson.

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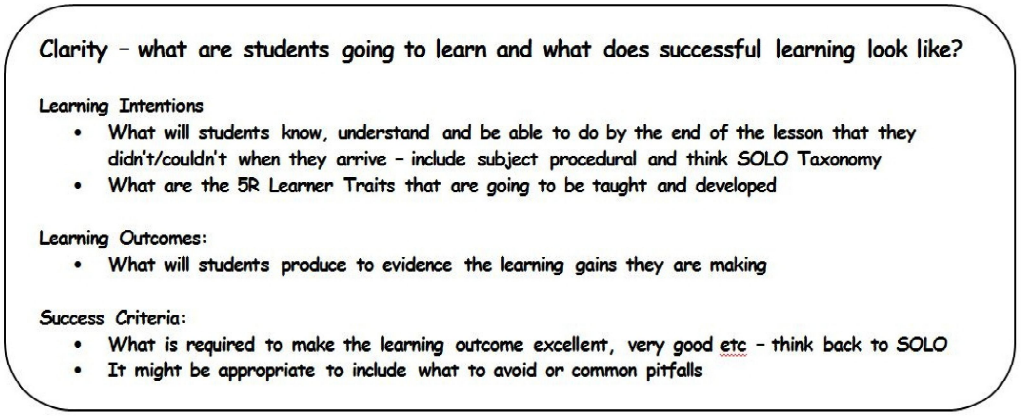
5. LEARNING INTENTIONS: http://leadinglearner.me/2013/11/24/when-solo-met-bloom-taxonomy/

One of the main themes in Professor John Hattiers (2009) book is the importance attached to teachers clearly communicating the intentions of the lesson (learning intentions) and the notions of what success means for these intentions (success criteria). Put simply students achieve more when they know where they are supposed to be going and what it looks like when the get there!



"There are two parts in targeted learning: the first is being clear about what is to be learned from the lesson(s) (the learning intention); the second is having a way of knowing that the desired learning has been achieved (the success criteria). Targeted learning involves the teacher knowing where he or she is going with the lesson and ensuring that the students know where they are going. These pathways must be transparent for the students."

Hattie (2012), Visible Learning for Teachers, p. 47

Material compiled from:

1. the video series, 'From Good to Outstanding.' These videos can be found here: http://archive.teachfind.com/ttv/www.teachers.tv/series/from-good-to-outstanding.html

2. https://leadinglearner.me/