23/09/21

Eddie Falshaw 0:03

So ##### thank you for meeting with me this morning your time is very much appreciated, just to emphasise, we are recording this interview, and you're happy for it to be transcribed and used in the future.

Teacher 2 0:15

Yes, I need to say that not just nod my head.

Eddie Falshaw 0:17

That's right, thank you very much. So, just like to start with this whole idea of engagement, first of all, from your point of view when students are engaged in a lesson, can you describe what they're actually doing or how they're acting

Teacher 2 0:33

So they are on task, so they will be doing something most of the time, so that will be either a written task or a practical task in my sense because I teach Biology so it is going to be a practical task, or there were lots of things I'd have to describe and explain in detail, but if I'm drawing a big diagram representing photosynthesis on the board, and I'm doing a question answer them I'm expecting them to maybe be adding to their notes, or if they can't do that they just need to be listening, actively so I'll just be throwing out students so I don't tend to have hands up, so it needs to be. Everyone knows that they're going to get a question asked that they need to be listening. But I try and keep that to a minimum. So, most of the time they're doing something. Occasionally, they're listening,

Eddie Falshaw 1:20

and even if they're doing something in your mind does that mean that they are engaged in what they are doing

Teacher 2 1:26

That is a good question. So, yes, in that you can hear it, and you can see it if they're engaged, so you will hear the conversations that they're having about the work the questions they're asking each other. Or you'll see them doing it. So yeah, but whether that brain is engaging that is about outcomes, isn't it, you can see the outcome of engagement but you can't necessarily always see the engagement, say that's true.

Eddie Falshaw 1:55

Well, that, that's interesting because the questionnaire that was sent out, teachers, when asked about the cognitive links to the Chromebook seem to be unsure of whether the Chromebook actually engages students cognitively. So why might that be the case do you think,

Teacher 2 2:18

Because I think we've got too many tabs open, physically or metaphorically. It's a case of, so I, we've been through such a transition, haven't we, we couldn't have survived COVID Without the Chromebooks, but I have definitely this term gone back to exercise books. So most of the work in the exercise book, because I want the lids shut, that doesn't mean I don't think Chromebooks are brilliant, and I would hate to not have them. If you took it away. I wouldn't be that would be hard, but I think they need to be used judiciously, because, especially if you're the front which we tend to be more because of COVID, we can move around a bit more now. They're too much of a distraction, if they're not directly doing something, but even just having. So we've got textbooks, exercise books, and there might be say Google Doc with instructions on that, if you were just doing all electronically, that's the minimum of three tabs that they're flicking between, or they might split the screen but still they're flicking between these tabs. Whereas, if you've got your worksheet, your exercise book your text book. I feel as if they are more engaged and focused, because it's just there. I don't know if I have any evidence for them.

Eddie Falshaw 3:34

Yeah, and that's the interesting thing is that teachers indicated that when the Chromebook is not used, they seemed surer that students were being cognitively engaged in what they were doing. So there seems to be this difference between when a Chromebook isn't, and isn't used.

Teacher 2 3:51

However there are things you can do. So if you have Pear Deck open and they're doing it synchronously, you can see what is coming through. Instantly, all in one go, which is nice. So, the only one we've had never worked out how to work out which student it was ways to get them to put their initials in their response, then you can instantly give them feedback so you gave up Jimmy, can you, you need to add more detail to the answer or. So you with your questioning, you can. So that's one good use that you can see that they are all engaged because the answers are all coming up, or a Google doc where you've got, say in [undecipherable] IB high level, they're all working on one document. And again you can see the engagement because it's literally been typed in front of you so that's quite nice.

Eddie Falshaw 4:38

So, when a Chromebook is introduced as a tool. Do you think the engagement is better.

Teacher 2 4:48

I think if you're using a Chromebook, because it's something you can't do any other way other than using the technology, then it is better if you're just using it as a replacement to Google doc typing as opposed to writing it, what's necessarily the advantage there? Whereas if you're using it because the technology is enabling the learning,then that's better. Say like Pear Deck, or because you couldn't do that the same is as easy so

Eddie Falshaw 5:21

okay. The survey also seemed to suggest that from both students and teachers that students are less likely to ask for help when a Chromebook is involved. Is that something that you've seen?

Teacher 2 5:41

Possibly. I think maybe the temptation to Google stuff is that so they're not necessarily going to be thinking, or maybe their first port of call of the textbooks. They don't use.

Eddie Falshaw 6:00

But you haven't noticed a big shift in that when I'm not using the Chromebook. Actually I get more questions and I'm more on it but when the Chromebooks open. That seems to drop away.

Teacher 2 6:12

Yeah, but then I don't if I not wanting to use a Chromebook, then it's shut. So maybe that's why. Because it's not always open. I mean when they're actually using it.

Eddie Falshaw 6:26

And, and so does behaviour change. When a Chromebooks been used in the lesson, do you think,

Teacher 2 6:34

I think it could do if you're not on top of it. I mean, you can use Senso equally you can stand at the back, it's easier to stand at the back of the room and see what they're doing. I just think it's too easy to get distracted. I think so. For some, and I maybe there is a bit of an SEN thing here. For some students, it can be a brilliant tool but at the same time if you're not used to it, it can be it can make it worse, so.

Eddie Falshaw 7:04

And that is a question that I was going to ask that that part of the survey was literally a mirror image of students saying one thing in the teacher saying almost the opposite and that was about the Chromebook as a distraction. No surprise, the students say no, isn't the teacher saying, yeah, absolutely it is. So, you've obviously seen that as a . How do you know they're being distracted or not on task,

Teacher 2 7:32

because they literally have 25 tabs open I'm not exaggerating. And they're sort of like, Well, which one is it, and even if it's not, they're not purposely being distracted their emails just popped up, or because they've got it open say it pings, or, you know it like the Google Classroom, they've got it up from the previous lesson or, so it's not even that they're doing it naughtily, it's just, it is distracting.

Eddie Falshaw 7:58

That's interesting, actually that you talk about that sort of innocent distraction, as opposed to, perhaps, I'm deliberately going to go and look at supercars, or something else in my lesson,

Teacher 2 8:13

I don't, well I don't think I've had it deliberately happen because you try and keep on task, you know, as you would in any lesson, I think is inadvertent yeah I don't think they doing it on purpose necessarily, maybe the odd one, but I don't think it's more than nature of it, but it's the same as all of us with our phones or we're used to it you watch the telly but you have faffing on your phone or you'd like it. And that's, it's not just school that's life. So we almost need to control it more maybe,

Eddie Falshaw 8:45

so we teaching them life skills.

Teacher 2 8:48

Well no, I don't no. That's why I'm always like, lids close your lids, even though I love the Chromebooks.

Eddie Falshaw 8:55

And do you find that you use, I mean, you mentioned using the Chromebook for specific tasks that couldn't be ordinarily done. Is there a difference between the learning in that medium and sort of analogue learning, do you think,

Teacher 2 9:11

I think so because I think the feedback can be better. So, for example, marking the mocks that they did online through exam net. And then we had moat. So then you're giving them personalised verbal feedback on specific sections of their work, which you couldn't do, or it would be difficult to, so you've got that ability to be like the teacher, out of the classroom giving personal feedback so that's. So there's some things which are just absolutely brilliant.

Eddie Falshaw 9:44

And what's your sort of go to, to really engage students with their learning, when you're, when you're going to use the Chromebook. Is it that personal feedback, are there any other ways you use it to engage them in what they're doing,

Teacher 2 10:02

I think so, but it's all the just the little things that add to the lesson I suppose. So like doing a little Google Forms multiple choice starter activity while you're taking the register. It does streamline things because you can do electronically what you used to do, no photocopies no bits of paper so things like that. Things like jam boards, Things like Pear Deck, all those little things that are starters, plenaries or add to it. Well they even just doing a Kahoot the fact they've all got a device and we'll can do the Kahoot at the end, it does. They do like it, they do engage with it. So you've got all of those options. As add-ons, but they don't replace the main thing.

Eddie Falshaw 10:54

Do you think they enjoy using the Chromebook more than, so if you did your starter when it's on a Chromebook. Are they enjoying that more than if you said, here's a piece of paper complete.

Teacher 2 11:06

I don't know, I think I don't think I've asked them that I tend to mix and match it, so it depends really.

Eddie Falshaw 11:13

But there's no discernible difference they just get on with the task.

Teacher 2 11:19

Yeah, but I think it is easier, like if you've got say 10 markers exam question you want to do for a bit of assessment. It's easier to give them a piece of paper, they will sit there quietly on their piece of paper, I think it is easier still, I think they engage quicker.

Eddie Falshaw 11:35

Okay. So just want you to think of the first thing that pops into your head. Can you share a lesson time when you felt that the students were so engaged in the lesson. They didn't want it to stop or it was like sort of oh is it the end of lesson already, or no, we want to keep going I don't want to leave, have that moment,

Teacher 2 12:02

It's interesting because a practical,

Eddie Falshaw 12:07

But it could be practical. I mean, what was the practical about what were they doing

Teacher 2 12:12

Actually to be fair, sometimes I do have to boot Jimmy out of the room because he's looking at the right down the microscope, or all he, you know, they've asked a question which is off the topic but related so the extension thing that they wanting them to find out more, and I suppose Chromebooks can be good for that because it does mean theyve got that opportunity to use Google and just to have a bit of a search around as a stretching them

Eddie Falshaw 12:38

sort of inquiry and wanting to go a bit further. And the Chromebook helps with that. Okay. So final question. Should we use Chromebooks more to support the learning of our students

Teacher 2 12:57

more than we already do? I don't know because everyone's doing it differently. I think it's not necessarily more but better. It's the how of using it. But also, I think because this is why I wrote down in advance to this is two things that I don't know whether it ties up because I don't think we do teach them touch typing do we at any point. I think thats the most ridiculous, like that is insanity, because they I feel as if some of them, actually we assume that they have good IT skills, and some of them really don't, especially as I said, hang out with #### a lot. And they, because I know, obviously it's gone into computer science rather than IT, which is all good. And we're meant to be embedded with IT skills into our lessons, and we're all using the Chromebooks all the time. But when did we teach them to touch type, we give them this tool we haven't taught them how to... and that baffles me. Year seven ATL touch typing course. First term, why do we not do that.

Eddie Falshaw 14:06

So, helping them with their IT skills and then on the other side, the teachers as well. In terms of,

Teacher 2 14:14

because they can, you know, like ##### for example, she's in year # she's got an access to reason because she's so very dyslexic, of a computer for exams, but she can't type. So, it's like we're giving them a tool but in one hand we're not providing them the opportunity to use it properly...that's my biggest frustration.

Eddie Falshaw 14:37

So upscaling them would probably then help with what further engagement better learning.

Teacher 2 14:45

Yeah, actually. Yeah, or like you'll say to a kid I had a kid in Year Ten who's broken his arm and I was like you know you can talk into the Google Doc. So he was like oh no. And so I showed him, and I can't be the only teacher that has told him that, but maybe I am because they don't know. So have we actually taught them how to use it we just make making an assumption that they can all use Google Classroom. I mean I am the least computer literate person ever. I'm rubbish so if I can do it then, so then, so you

Eddie Falshaw 15:19

put yourself, lower down on the skills spectrum Do you in terms of.

Teacher 2 15:24

Yeah, but then I don't know if I'm not doing anything wrong comparing myself to you so I don't know. That's not a. That's just me.

Eddie Falshaw 15:34

##### is there anything else that you want to

Teacher 2 15:37

No, I think that was my basic thing was that we need the skills there.

Eddie Falshaw 15:43

I think when we introduced them. There was a certain element of here's the machine everyone, its great, it can do this and a bit of that, and then off we went. Yeah,

Teacher 2 15:52

and then we had to learn very quickly because we had a pandemic and we were locked down and it's all that, and thank goodness for them. But maybe we now need to go back to the beginning and go. Actually, what are they most used for and how do we get the best out of them.

Eddie Falshaw 16:06

So linking into that last question do you think we've got it sort of maybe about right from what you think about the use don't need to use the more necessarily but you wouldn't like to see them disappear.

Teacher 2 16:18

I'd hate to see them disappear. But I think we need to use them better and judiciously. Yeah.

Eddie Falshaw 16:25

Great. #### Thank you very much.

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