24/09/21

Edward Falshaw 0:03

####, thank you very much for me to me this morning just to remind you recording this interview, and it will be transcribed and then used for the study, and anonymized quotes may be used in the future you're happy with all of that, certainly. Great. So first of all, just looking at the idea of engagement. When students are in a lesson with you, can you describe what they're doing, if they're engaged with what they're doing.

Teacher 3 0:35

For me I think there'll be a real, there'll be a focus, there'll be an energy and excitement. It's not always necessarily students working in deadly silence. I think there will be some tasks that require that level of focus but for me, when I'm given instructions to have them paying full attention so when we use Chromebooks, it would be screens closed, everyone looking at me, and to when they're completing activities if they're discussing with each other to see those critical thinking skills come out and for them to. If anything be challenging me be asking further questions, not just performing tasks in a contrary manner so I think it's, it's about the energy in the room I know that's perhaps not the most tangible thing to quantify but that to me is one of the sort of standout features,

Edward Falshaw 1:21

because that's interested in energy and excitement, what does that look like then how can you see that they're excited or that there's that energy.

Teacher 3 1:30

I think in terms of their physical body language, I think it's very clear if students are engaged, they'll be they'll be sat up right, they won't be slouching in chairs leaning on desks, really sort of good eye contact and I think you can tell from how they're looking at you, whether they're sort of understanding and receiving the information they're given which is what made lockdown teaching I think so challenging because you don't see that face to face, connection,

Edward Falshaw 1:55

because so if we see the Chromebook has been a tool that we use. Do you think engagement, improves when children are using a Chromebook.

Teacher 3 2:08

I think it does, if there are clear guidelines and structures in place about when they need to be used when they're using it and when they need to be waiting for instruction so I think it's a tool that students can engage with because I think increasingly digital technology is the world they operate in, but I think there have to be clear structures as to what points of the lesson they use it and what points there needs to be that that face to face communication.

Edward Falshaw 2:36

Okay. And in the survey, emerged that in terms of the cognitive part of engagement, teachers seem to be unsure about whether the Chromebook engages students cognitively. Why do you think that might be, they seem more certain, when it wasn't being used but when the Chromebook is being used, they weren't sure that it was engaging them in, in terms of their thinking skills,

Teacher 3 3:04

that's an interesting one, I think possibly the extra distractions that come with Chromebooks can be an issue and it's ensuring that you know our students on the workplace should be or are they allowing themselves to be distracted with other areas, I think by having that proliferation of information available to them, that could perhaps be seen as distracting. Some students I think,

Edward Falshaw 3:26

so does the Chromebook. In some ways, get in the way of concentration.

Teacher 3 3:33

I think it has the potential to in this was something I was discussing actually with one of my classes yesterday in terms of it was one of my IB groups, looking at the way the role of literature has changed so we were focusing on Charles Dickens we read the Norwell essay about Dickens and how a lot of students now find something like Dickens is very hard to read because it's very gradually developed. It's a very slow paced narrative and I've got them thinking about, you know, why is that so challenging. And what came out from them along with the fact that they used to have an information at their fingertips, there's this expectation that they can get hold of things quickly, and I think that has an impact on areas like research that require that more thorough dedicated approach by having so much available quickly. I think is very much a double edged sword, it means there is a wealth of information, but then those discerning skills about which bits are most relevant most useful I think requires diligence that perhaps, students are less used to now than they might have been even 10 or 15 years ago.

Edward Falshaw 4:36

And this survey also seemed to suggest in terms of behaviour that students were less likely to ask for help. If the Chromebook was involved in an activity or, you know, a process that they were undergoing in our lesson. Do you have you found that, or,

Teacher 3 4:55

to be honest, I haven't necessarily found that to be the case no because I always like to encourage students to continue to ask for help. I want them to be able to find their own solutions but I never want to go down the line of if you're not sure just Google it, because I think that potentially sets up a problematic reliance that I think as as kind of the teachers and professionals in the room, we should be able to help them have the answers if a student asks me a question that I don't have an immediate answer to be honest with him and I will tell them I will then go and find out because I think we have to be that figure of authority, but at the same time, I'm not going to try and pull the wool over their eyes. If, as will happen from time to time a student throws a real curveball, a fascinating question I think that's something that is, is merit worthy and praiseworthy if they're thinking in such a way that actually makes me go right, this is something I need to go away and research and model, doing that for them,

Edward Falshaw 5:51

but maybe the, the idea is that they think well I don't need to ask, because actually I can just look it up myself. Does would we know that that's happening. Because, like I said the survey would suggest that when there's no Chromebook involved, there's more questions being asked the when it is.

Teacher 3 6:11

I think it could potentially come through in the quality of work they produce because they will be able to find answers but I think the ability to find the correct answers, is still a skill that needs to be taught and for a lot of students, my suspicion is that in seeking the answer, it would be to go onto Google to find the first source that comes up, but actually that notion of of fact checking and looking at multiple sources, if they're going for a quick answer wouldn't necessarily be the approach they take.

Edward Falshaw 6:42

Okay. And if you compare a lesson perhaps where you're not using a Chromebook to one way. Is there a difference in the behaviour of children. Generally,

Teacher 3 6:56

yeah I think potentially there can be with without the Chromebook. I think it's much clearer you have their, their focus perhaps it feels that the attention is there, I mean I certainly find when we're using Chromebooks I've had to reinforce quite frequently this idea of, particularly this year you come in. It's not the default setting that you're there on your Chromebook and some students in the first few weeks have still had that look on set, you know, make it very clear. Chrome and closed, there may be a time when you use it but yes I think the way we had to do things last year with heavy use of Chromebooks, it was inevitable but yeah I think students will genuinely focus better when they don't have the screen, and they don't have the screen, I think so, yeah,

Edward Falshaw 7:37

okay. Now you mentioned this earlier, about distraction, this was a really interesting but maybe not surprising, from the survey that was almost mirrored, which was about the Chromebook being a distraction, children saying, No, it isn't quite strongly, and teachers say, actually yes it is quite strongly. So, how do we square that off then the children seem to be suggesting it isn't and the staff seem to think well, it is a distraction

Teacher 3 8:06

to certain extent, I can see both sides to it I think though, again, this came up in conversations I had with my EB IV girls yesterday, I think the way a lot of our students will approach tasks that does seem to be much more of a multitask, multifaceted approach to how they do things, they will do prep they will have music on in the background, or even if they're watching a TV show, they'll have music on they'll have a social media stream so I think they whether rightly or wrongly, I think they are set up to be, to have those multiple things going at once where I think as members of staff we may be a little more single tracks in terms of how we do things so I think there was probably a compromise to reach but I do feel if students have got multiple other tabs open that are not rillette directly related to what we're doing. That is a distraction but I think they probably don't perceive it in that way because I think for a lot of them, that is, that is pretty much how they operate.

Edward Falshaw 9:04

Okay. And how do you use the Chromebook to engage children in their learning.

Teacher 3 9:12

I think it, particularly with using Google education suite I think for collaborative learning, It can be really effective so they can, I will get groups doing research presentations so for example, we've had students recently we've started doing Macbeth, so we look at various different contextual aspects to Shakespeare, which are really important. And I think getting them to work together to collaborate, to have clearly defined roles, but also in fact they can all be editing on that same document. Now it does need some setup, and that has to be explained to them that when they're working together they you know they should be trying to help each other and not delete other people's work, but I think, certainly for collaborative learning it can be a really effective tool,

Edward Falshaw 9:53

and that engages them in the process. Absolutely. That may be a piece of paper. Could I think

Teacher 3 10:02

certainly, there will be some students who are quite artistically minded and will like to do sort of hand drawn maps, mind maps and colourful stuff I think for a lot of students they are more digitally literate and this is a medium level we used to.

Edward Falshaw 10:15

So do you think then learning is more effective when a Chromebook is used.

Teacher 3 10:23

I would say yes, with, with, with the structures in place, I think it's, for me it's something that is a part of a lesson, I don't think it's necessarily the entirety of think there has to be guidance and direction in terms of how our lesson flows, and also in terms of how those Chromebooks to us, but I am largely in favour of them being used and I kind of feel that one of the roles we have an education is about preparing children for the future, and to a certain extent, in some cases, preparing them for professions and roles that don't currently exist I think we have to have a responsibility to try and move forward with that technology but in a way that still promotes sensible use, and doing it effectively.

Edward Falshaw 11:07

Okay. And could you maybe recall a time, a lesson, any lesson where you felt as the, the children didn't want it to end or the lesson gone really quickly and oh my god, it's the end of the lesson, can we carry on with it. What were you doing or what was happening in the lesson and

Teacher 3 11:28

one thing I have found again sometimes for the teaching of Shakespeare. One thing I like to do I think it's important for students to see part of it in performance but I'm particularly interested with key scenes, I'll use, let's say Macbeth again as an example of looking at how different versions different film versions of that scene are done, so getting students, possibly with with earphones in to watch those scenes individually to kind of then make notes on the stylistic features of how they differ and then the impact on the audience and I find tasks like that they can get really drawn into because they almost don't realise that analysing Shakespeare, because they're thinking about the visuals and the characterization and how different characters are portrayed and actually they're demonstrating some of the analytical skills that can be applied to the text, but in their mind that watching film clips I don't think they necessarily view it in the same way,

Edward Falshaw 12:24

and final thing I'd just like to ask, do you think we should be using Chromebooks, more to support learning.

Teacher 3 12:33

I think where opportunities allow, absolutely, I mean, we're still in a position where students are hampered the vast majority will be handwriting exams so think whilst that remains the case for public examinations, we have a duty to make sure that they are hand writing, think in terms of the time in the pacing, but also the physical stamina of writing for an hour or two at a time. If we move to a point in the future where exams are no longer handwritten, and I suspect, further down the line that will be the case, then we can move further forward but I think the handwriting still has to feature because of how we're assessing them at the end points.

Edward Falshaw 13:11

So do you think we've got the balance about right

Teacher 3 13:13

or I would say so. I think for me the key is the students being educated on the appropriate use of it and understanding it as a learning tool and being able to differentiate from this device that at home they may use for social media for gaming, but actually within a classroom context, it serves a different function.

Edward Falshaw 13:31

Okay. Great. Any other things that you want to mention about the Chromebook and how it's used.

Teacher 3 13:38

I think in terms of the the monitoring of students on it that's still problematic because even with, with things like sensor I find the seem to be students who find ways of bypassing it so here on class I had last year when I was teaching them in job building, I actually resorted when they were using the Chromebooks to just be stood at the back of the room watching their screens because when I'm sat at Senso I'd see the class in front of me, all on their Chromebooks, yet there was some who were repairing on centre was as having as being disconnected. So I think the inevitable challenge with technology is that some students are always going to try and be one step ahead.

Edward Falshaw 14:15

And that can some. Sometimes they mitigate against the distraction element, if you know somebody stood behind you, watching what you're doing, you're probably less inclined, then to open another tab and

Teacher 3 14:30

I think so. I found it was in those circumstances very effective once I'd explained and set the task up and if they had let's say 10 or 15 minutes where they had to be focused and working on it, I would be quietly stood at the back of the room so I would still take questions and anyone happen, but I then have eyes on every single screen.

Edward Falshaw 14:48

Great, ####, thank you very much for your time. Okay, very helpful. Thank you.

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