The Learning Power Approach(es) LPA

Susie Taylor-Alston

“The future belongs more to confident explorers not compliant knowers.”

Professor Guy Claxton
• What the LPA is - and is not

• Why is the LPA important?

• How we have been trialing it...

• What next?

• Q and A
“The aim of the Learning Power Approach (LPA) is to develop all students as confident and capable learners, ready, willing and able to choose, design, research, pursue, trouble-shoot and evaluate learning for themselves, alone and with others, in school and out.”
What does the LPA involve?

The 4 psychological dimensions of learning and the **behaviours or muscles** of powerful learners.

**Emotional strength**
- Resilient

**Cognitive capability**
- Resourceful

**Social sophistication**
- Relating/Reciprocity

**Strategic awareness**
- Reflective

Formerly know as BLP - Building Learning Power - in the UK.
Layers of Learning

- **Knowledge** (information, concepts, ideas, theories...)
- **Literacies and expertise** (linguistic, mathematical, digital)
- **Learning habits** (attitudes, dispositions, beliefs)
- **Values and interests** (passions, vocations, identity)

NB these layers are flowing and happening all the time...
We simply call them learning muscles!
And we talk about using them AND stretching them, honing them etc...
RESILIENCE – emotional strength

- **Inquisitive**: has a questioning and positive attitude to learning
- **Persistent**: stays determined, positive and patient in the face of difficulty or mistakes
- **Adventurous**: willing to risk and ‘have a go’; up for a new challenge
- **Focused**: observant, concentrates well, ignores distractions, becomes engrossed

RESOURCEFULNESS – cognitive capability

- **Imaginative**: comes up with creative ideas and possibilities; visualises
- **Connecting**: looks for links and relationships; likes to ‘hook things up’; uses metaphor
- **Crafting**: keen to work on improving products; practising and developing skills
- **Capitalising**: makes good use of resources, tools and materials

RELATING – social sophistication

- **Collaborative**: a good team-player; helps groups to work well together
- **Open-minded**: asks for, listens to and makes good use of information, feedback and advice
- **Independent**: able to ‘stand their ground’; shows initiative
- **Empathic**: understands others; offers helpful feedback and suggestions; receptive and imitative

REFLECTION – strategic awareness

- **Methodical**: well-organised; thinks things through carefully
- **Self-evaluative**: makes honest and accurate judgements about ‘how it’s going’
- **Self-aware**: knows their own strengths, styles and interests as a learner
- **Transferring**: looks for other applications and lessons for the future
What does a Learning Powered teacher do?

1. Notice and comment on children’s developing learning muscles
2. Focus ‘feedback’ on aspects of learnable power
3. Get students talking and writing about the ‘how’ of learning
4. Model inquisitive and fallible learners
5. Display learning images and work in progress
6. Plan activities that deliberately stretch various learning muscles
7. Encourage extended, difficult learning projects
8. Involve learners as resources, teachers and co-designers
9. Look for links with the outside world
Questions to ponder...

• Is the LPA new? Or different? Or better?

• Which ‘problem’ is it most suited to address?
  o Teacher capacity
  o Grades
  o Post-school

• What are the challenges?
  o Limiting assumptions
  o Dilution
  o Limited budgets/CPD opportunities
  o Assessment system
  o Deep shifts and resistance
  o We do it already!
  o Susie solo

• How else could the LPA be adapted for the South African context?

• What have I/we learnt so far?

• What should my/our next steps be?
Is the LPA new? Or different? Or ‘better’?

Building **teacher expertise** - but also empowering the **learner** to understand how to be a better learner.

Epistemological apprenticeship - cultural change - less prescriptive and **more expansive**.

**Builds upon** the prior work...adds to Bloom, De Bono, etc?

Works at a **deeper** (learning) level than, say, LeMov?
“The biggest effects on pupils’ achievement occur when teachers become learners about their own teaching, and when pupils become their own teachers.”

Professor John Hattie
What and where have we been trialing?

1. Learning Gym Coaches as Role Models
2. First Steps in the LPA - In-school CPD trainings
3. Introduction to the LPA - pre-service teachers
4. First Steps LPA App
The Government Schools and NGO

Siyazakha Primary, Brown’s Farm
- 2 years of The Learning Gym
- After School Literacy Programme
- Methodology - Reciprocal Teaching
- 24 Coaches, 4 Head Coaches
- 120 learners
- And???

(Sophumelelo and Zisukhanyo High Schools, Phillipi)
- Role Modeling - again using Reciprocal Teaching methodology and Coaches

SACS High School
- Training Oct 2016
- Action Research group 2017 - using the LPA app, Google classrooms
The Independent Schools

Woodhill College, Pretoria
• Headed by principal, Kenneth Checkley
• Guy Claxton June 2015
• Trained in ‘First Steps’ June 2016
• Ongoing CPD - designing
• High School and Primary

Blouberg International School, Cape Town
• Trained in ‘First Steps’ July 2016
• High School and Primary

Cambridge International Exam board Schools
• Trainings in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Johannesburg March 2017
Initial Teacher Training

Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT)

- Brief course ‘Introduction to the LPA’
- Oct 2016 - cohort of 14 final year primary trained pre-service teachers
- 4 week course, plus ongoing access to LPA app
- Further, longer course proposed for 2017 for Foundation, Intermediate and Senior phase trainees
Online

Thanks to Rethink-Education

Learning Power App

- First Steps Teaching Tweaks
- Next Steps in development
- Web-based app, so uses no memory and less data
- Could be used to reach rural teachers

Please have a look!

learningpower.rethink-education.com
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First Steps Teaching Tweaks...

Celebrate Curiosity!

The Wonder Wall
First Steps Teaching Tweaks...

Nurture Adventurousness!
Designing learning...

Teaching ‘Split-screen Lessons’

- Science and questioning
- History and empathy
- English and risk-taking
- Maths and self-evaluating
- PE and feedback cycles
Coaching learning...

• Language of the classroom
• Feedback and assessment
• Classroom environment
• Student involvement

What is my job as a teacher?
Whole school transformation...

• Vision and mission
• Cultural shift
• Language of learning
• All stakeholders - staff, students, parents...
• Embedded into policy and curriculum
• CPD
• Gathering data and evaluating
• Partnering overseas
• Accreditation???

• In it for the long haul...
Questions or comments please?
Thank you...
I would absolutely love to hear from you!

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