BLP

Building Learning Power

What is BLP?

Here you can see an ITN news report about BLP. It lasts about 3 and a half minutes and provides an initial point for discussion.
It is anticipated that participants may never have heard of BLP and this will give them a little insight into the general idea.
At the end of the clip ask them what they have understood about BLP so far.

If it does not start when you click you can go to the link here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5QNGPZEYyUU

You can select subtitles from the settings. NB: They are automatically generated and are not always accurate.

What is BLP?

- Building Learning Power is a methodology designed to help students learn.

- It encourages collaboration amongst classmates.

BLP – general information:

BLP was developed in the 80s/90s by Professor Guy Claxton. It is a methodology which is used to encourage the development of strategies to aid learning.
The idea is that children adopt these strategies when they are struggling with the learning process, as a means of achieving their goal.
It does not relate to intellectual capacity, but involves characteristics more usually associated with personality, such as emotional resilience in the face of difficulty or frustration (see Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Learning_power).
The idea is to help students to develop their 'learning muscles' and guide them to use these learning muscles in different situations.
These muscles are often known as the 4 Rs or the 5 Rs (depending on which particular branch you adopt).
The 4 Rs are: Resilience, Resourcefulness, Reciprocity and Reflection.
The 5 Rs are: Resilience, Risk, Relationships, Reflectiveness and Resourcefulness.
We will follow the 5 R route as it is the one students seem to respond to best, in my experience.
The application for CLIL, apart from providing teachers with a (possibly) new methodology, is that BLP encourages collaborative learning , scaffolded tasks and encourages teachers to praise the process of work, by displaying drafts in the classroom. This should help students arrive at their outcomes in CLIL by taking each process slowly and following guidelines. Using this set terminology to focus students

also provides teachers with expressions and methodologies to use in their CLIL classes as routine items. The teachers and students will both recognise the framework.

BLP is also an incredibly useful methodology for *Memory Retention & Maintaining Attention,* which will be our focus in Seminar 3 and will occur again in Seminar 5 when we discuss *Learner Styles.*

Image source:
http://www.fynamore.org.uk/s/cc_images/teaserbox_27312773.jpg?t=1405285674

What is BLP?

- BLP believes that it is important to show the step-by-step process of **how** we arrive at a final piece of work and to show this in the classroom.

- This step-by-step process can be very helpful for CLIL.

- We can give students handouts which encourage them to use the BLP process to improve their work and to help others.

Image source: http://www.schooljotter.com/imagefolders/stmarys7bu/BLP/blp.jpg

The 5 Rs

We will now look at each of the 5 Rs with ideas for application.
At the end I will give an example of a CLIL project I created using the 5 Rs for scaffolding and as an introduction to create mindfulness of the concept amongst EAL students.

The 5 Rs

1 - Resilience

- Concentrate

- Avoid distraction

- Notice things

- Don't give up

- FOCUS

RESILIENCE is all about encouraging students to focus on what they are doing. This includes concentrating and avoiding distraction. This does not mean that students should work individually, but rather they should not be distracted by each other to stop concentrating on the task. They can help to keep each other on task. Teachers can offer 5 R rewards when they see that someone is working particularly well in one of the areas. These could be stickers or stamps. Children who are able to collect stickers or stamps in all 5 areas could receive a special reward.

Encourage them by using positive language.

Encourage students to notice things. If they say "I can't do it" or "I can't find the answer" encourage them to notice items in their work which could provide keys/clues. If they are really stuck allow peers to help them focus.

Image: http://www.brisbanekids.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/resilience-in-kids-703x468.jpg

All logos come from Avonburne & Harewood Colleges.

The 5 Rs

1 - Resilience

- Encourage students to *notice* things which will help them reach a solution.

- Point out what they have done well up to the point where they have difficulties.

- Use encouraging language...

Great work
Notice
Look
You **can** finish this
Can you find...
Can you see....
Do your friends have a solution?

AISLi

The text box on the right has some words which teacher's can use to promote *Resilience* with CLIL students.
Brainstorm any other words/sentences that could be useful.

The 5 Rs

2 - Reflectiveness

- Think about your work before you start

- Prepare

- Make a plan

- Read through

- Edit

- Improve

REFLECTIVENESS is all about planning, revising and improving.

CLIL students should be encouraged to think before they write anything.
They can be given frameworks to make a plan, including *Mind Maps.*
They can be asked to contribute to each others' plans before they begin to work.
They should read through and edit their own work and that of others. When editing work they can use the green pen of learning so that it's clear what is their first draft/own work.
CLIL students should follow this process for all work and make it habitual.

Image: http://barrigasdeamor.pt/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/mindfulness-kids.png

The 5 Rs

2 - Reflectiveness

- Use *Mind Maps* to brainstorm ideas and plan.

- Encourage students to review their plans and the plans of others.

- Students should use the *Green Pen of Learning* so that teachers can see what additions have been made.
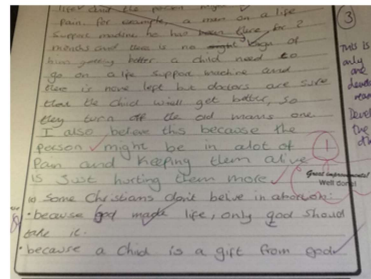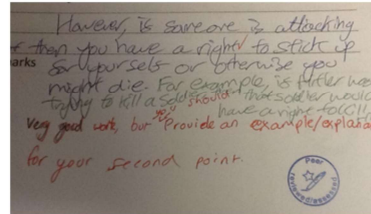
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Image: https://missdcoxblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/11/2013-09-25-14-51-29-e1383383973354.jpg

The 5 Rs

3 - Resourcefulness

- Ask questions

- See links

- Collect resources

- Use authentic materials

- Imagine

RESOURCEFULNESS is all about asking questions, seeing links, imagining and collecting resources from lots of different places.

CLIL students should be encouraged to ask questions like *why, how* and *what if…?*
They can be given frameworks for question asking, like those in *Bloom's Fact Pack.*
They can be asked to show and consider links by using *Mind Maps.*
They should collect lots of resources from original language sources. These benefit by being authentic and error free. Students often find a more varying array of resources when searching for authentic materials. Teachers should show students how to use search engines on the net effectively when looking for authentic materials.
CLIL students should try to imagine themselves in the position of others. Using their imagination in another language can be more daunting (they prefer to copy and paste).
They will need guidelines as it is easy to produce work which can be confusing when there are no restrictions.

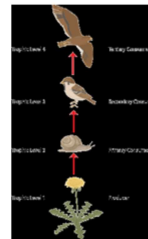Image: http://www.childrensillustrators.com/portfolioIllustrations/6401.jpg

The 5 Rs

3- Resourcefulness

- Ask *why, how* and *what if...?*

- Show and consider links through *Mind Maps*

- Collect lots of resources in authentic language.

- Ask students to *imagine...*, but give them guidelines, to stop their work ɔm becoming confusing.

KNOWLEDGE
Identification and recall of information

Who	?
What	?
Where	?
When	?
How	?
Describe	.
What is	?

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Image: Bloom's Fact Pack

The 5 Rs

4 - Risk

- Step out of your comfort zone

- Encourage positivity

- Be confident

- Take risks with others

- Find the positives in failure

- Learn from mistakes as a class

RISK is all about stepping out of your comfort zone.

CLIL students should be encouraged to attempt something more difficult than usual (e.g. watching an authentic video without subtitles; creative writing…).
Ask them to think outside the box. Creating a play instead of writing an essay about life in the war.
Encourage them to be positive, confident and curious. Help them to look for the positives and believe in their own work without having to always be perfect.
Join in with others who are taking a risk. Performing something in front of the class.
Encourage an environment of positivity.
Look at the good points in failure.
Learn from mistakes as a class. It's good to make mistakes because that's how we can learn.

Image: http://www.dmu.ac.uk/webimages/art-design-and-humanities-images/school-of-arts/drama-studies-undergraduate/401-drama-performance-project.jpg

The 5 Rs

4 - Risk

- Ask students to suggest things which they find difficult and then set these as whole class tasks (e.g. watching an authentic news report without subtitles).

- Encourage them to perform and write plays instead of essays.

- Through collaboration they will build confidence and language ability whilst sharing ideas.

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Image: http://www.selwyn.newham.sch.uk/images/Extend-and-Enrich/WW2%20day/100_3650.JPG

The 5 Rs

5 - Relationships

- Choose to work alone or in a team

- Listen

- Be firm about your ideas

- Take different roles

- Support others

- Give advice

RELATIONSHIPS is about knowing when to learn alone or with others, standing your ground, team work, listening, supporting, sharing, taking advice from those with experience, understanding other points of view.

CLIL students should be encouraged to decide for themselves if they want to work alone or as a group.
They should be encouraged to listen to others, but be firm about their own ideas/beliefs.
They should take an active part in team work trying different roles within the group (these could be picked from a hat – e.g. team leader, secretary etc..).
They should support others of all abilities.
They should give and take advice (*Green Pen*).
They should understand other points of view, this may require researching what other people believe (not just their classmates). You coud encourage school twinning with other schools and colleges from different countries and backgrounds.

Image: http://napcan.org.au/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/growingrespect.gif

The 5 Rs

5 - Relationships

- Put different roles into a hat and each time students work in teams get them to choose a role. If they get the same role as before they can build on what they have already learnt.

- Encourage them to give and take advice using the *Green Pen of Learning.*

- They may need to do research to consider other points of view. Try twinning your school with another from a different background.

Partner with a school

A teacher working with partner school in Nigeria.

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There are lots of websites that offer school twinning, including the British Council:
https://schoolsonline.britishcouncil.org/partner-school

Applying BLP

- Create a sheet, for the wall in your class/to stick in your students' workbooks, which encourages students to use the 5 Rs of BLP.

- Create a worksheet which students can complete when planning a task based on Reflectiveness.

- Create a worksheet about the *Green Pen of Learning.*

- Consider the different roles a team member could take for a project in your classroom.

Task: Based on the time available and the dynamic of your group ask participants to do one or a number of the tasks above.
They could work individual and then share ideas in small groups or feedback to the whole group or they could work in pairs or as a whole.

After they have completed this activity show them the *Seminar 2 Fact Pack* and direct them to look at the BLP project which I created using the 5 Rs for scaffolding and as an introduction to create mindfulness of the concept amongst EAL students.

In Conclusion

BLP can be used:
- when students hit a difficulty
- as the basis for a particular task
- as a general strategy for every lesson

BLP encourages:
- peer sharing
- peer learning
- peer support

The preparation is just as important as the final result in BLP.

Any Comments?

THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

LANGUAGE POINT
International Education Group

AISLI