

# The architecture of Classroom cultures

**Relating** - How you relate to your students; gradually sharing more of the responsibility for learning with them

- **Model contrary points of view**
  - » Always show students there is a different way of viewing every issue
- **Importance of compromise**
  - » Model readiness to think Win-Win
- **School concerns in local, national and global context**
  - » Broaden students' awareness of the wider world and the ways in which thinking globally requires action locally

**A shift in relationships**



**Talking** - How you talk about learning; the sort of language content and style you use to enhance and explain learning

- **How things are, how things could be**
  - » Explore goals based on current reality and future aspirations
- **See things from other peoples' points of view**
  - » Provide opportunities for individuals to see things through others' eyes and encourage them to value different opinions.
- **Actively listen to people's contributions**
  - » Encourage everyone to be aware of what students are really saying and seek first to understand before drawing their own conclusions

**A shift in learning language**



**Constructing** - How you construct learning activities; the tasks and classroom routines you use to build positive learning habits

- **Enquiry based challenges**
  - » Enable people to dig beneath the surface to deepen levels of engagement and understanding
- **Active listening**
  - » Enable students to use a variety of listening routines developed to suit different circumstances
- **To the contrary**
  - » Design tasks that encourage students to argue in favour of views contrary to their own current viewpoint

**A shift in how learning is constructed**

**Celebrating** - What you celebrate about learning; what you prize, recognise, display; the outward signs of beliefs about learning

- **Value everyone's contribution**
  - » Foster a culture of mutual respect where all views are welcomed and given due regard
- **Work towards shared well being**
  - » Ensure that all individuals leave a lesson feeling better about themselves and each other
- **Value silence**
  - » Give students time to think; silence is recognised as a valuable resource

**A shift in what is celebrated and valued**

## Making the shift

Students will first need to embrace the language of learning and be offered opportunities that enable them to become conscious of using their learning behaviours. Teachers need first to gradually shift the culture of the classroom and devolve more responsibility for learning to students. Later they take a more forensic approach to designing classroom activities using the learning behaviours to deepen engagement and understanding.

For many teachers this shift is likely to call for changes in practice. Take it steady! Think about what you might...

### Stop

Giving the answer

### Start

Waiting longer for answers

### Start slowly

Re-framing topics and issues in terms of wider contexts.

### Experiment with

Training listening techniques with students