

KS3-5

Teachers' toolkit

TEMPLATES
PACK

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Introduction

These tips and templates are designed to provide a range of creative, engaging and effective approaches to support secondary teachers across all subjects. Whether you are a trainee, newly qualified or experienced teacher, there is plenty here to use, adapt and experiment with in your classroom.

Like any toolkit, this contains eclectic ideas and has been designed for you to dip in and out of, selecting whatever you need to enhance your teaching practice. As well as photocopyable templates to use with students, you will also find a range of useful suggestions, resources and links to support your own professional development and wellbeing.

In the teaching tips sections, you'll find simple, quick and evidence-based strategies to help you to expand your repertoire and to grow as a teacher. In the template sections, we have included teaching notes to accompany each printable resource. We've also added research references and suggestions for further reading where relevant.

With our thanks to [TeacherVision](#) for the rights to use and adapt selected content.

About our partner

TeacherVision, a new sister site to Teachit, has offered innovative and reputable resources and thought leadership for K-12 (kindergarten to 12th grade) teachers since 1999. TeacherVision's library of well over 20 000 resources is created, curated and vetted by qualified teachers, thought leaders and experts in education, and also offers a repository of leading partner publisher content.

TeacherVision's mission is to offer teachers support for their students, to guide and supplement their teaching practice, and ultimately to bring their teaching vision to life in the classroom. To take advantage of the benefits that TeacherVision members receive or to sign up for a free trial, click [here](#) now.

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Formative assessment

– teaching tips

We know that formative assessment is a really effective way to improve students' learning and attainment. Educational research, including notably Dylan Wiliam's and Paul Black's article, '[Assessment and Classroom Learning](#)' (*Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 1998), has shown that teachers can help *all* students to make progress by developing their 'learning to learn' skills, emphasising the process of learning and including a variety of approaches alongside peer and self-assessment activities.

Here are eight simple, quick and effective formative assessment approaches that are easy to implement without losing significant teaching time:

1

Write, pair, share. Pose a question or a problem to the class. Students should write down their thoughts before sharing them in a pair to ensure that every student is doing some independent thinking first. Ask for feedback from pairs, who share their ideas/understanding with the class or with other pairs in a group, while you monitor, listen and assess.

2

Self-assessment sorting. Using an exit ticket template (see p.30 for examples), ask students to file their responses in four trays or poly pockets marked 'Understand it', 'Almost there', 'Not really' and 'Not at all'. This approach helps you to gauge students' mastery of a concept or skill *and* their confidence level at the same time. Follow this up by working with the students in the least confident groups to develop their understanding of the learning.

3

Graffiti wall. Pose a series of tasks or questions on A3 paper around the classroom. Encourage students to circulate and annotate the paper with their ideas. Next, ask students to read and add to each other's responses. They could also put a tick or smiley face next to the ideas they agree with or a question mark if they don't fully understand or need to know more. It's a quick way to check whole class understanding and can help scaffold the responses of lower-achieving students through informal modelling.

4

Quiz questions. Ask students to write three quiz questions that they feel best cover the concept, skills or content of the day's lesson. You could encourage students to write one multiple choice, one cloze / fill in the blank and one short answer question, for example. If their questions aren't similar to the questions you would have written, then you know that re-teaching is needed. If their questions work well, put them together and you have a ready-made formative assessment or a quick low-stakes quiz for another lesson!

5

Big ideas. Challenge students to summarise the key ideas from the lesson/topic/term using a fixed number of words. You could use the novelty of the 280 characters of a Twitter post or multiple Instagram hashtags if you want them to focus on key vocabulary. As well as appealing to students who like social media, this activity forces students to engage in focusing on what is most important in their learning.

6

Wrong answers. Project an incorrect answer, explanation or example of a concept or skill on the board. Students should either note down or discuss with a partner whether the answer is right and, if not, how it could be corrected. Support students who are struggling to rework the answer correctly and consider your student pairings carefully – mixed-attainment partners can work well for this activity.

7

Fist to five. This simple visual strategy can help to show you how students feel about their learning, and to make decisions about which students can work independently or in peer groups, and which need more support. Ask students to use their hands to show how they feel about their understanding:



A fist:
I don't understand at all.



Four fingers:
I understand this.



One finger:
I need help.



Five fingers:
I completely understand and can teach someone else.



Two fingers:
I need more practice and examples.



Simplify things with a simple **thumbs up/thumbs down** if you prefer.



Three fingers:
I understand quite well.

8

Red light, green light. With younger students, use a traffic light system. Provide students with cards with red, amber and green circles which they can place in the corner of their desks to show whether they are working with a high level of understanding, need help from a buddy or assistance from the teacher.

Behaviour for learning

Your attitudes to learning and your behaviour make a huge difference to your academic progress. Read the following statements and tick the frequency box that best describes you.

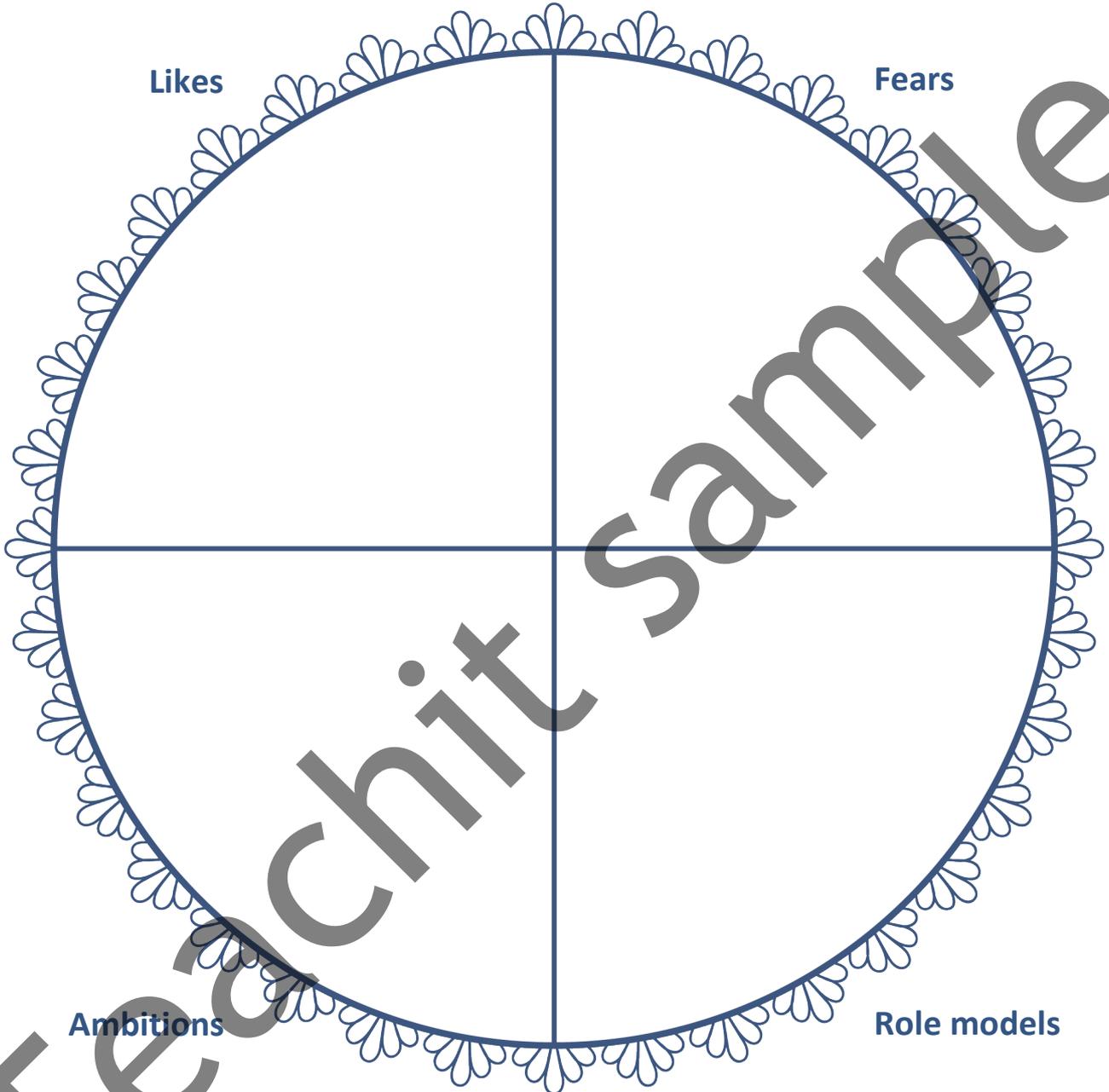
	Always	Sometimes	Never
I have the right equipment for the lesson.			
I arrive on time.			
I am ready to begin straight away.			
I actively listen to the teacher.			
I actively listen to my fellow students.			
I follow instructions the first time.			
I actively participate in discussion.			
I put my hand up when I want to speak.			
I use my time wisely.			
I do my best.			
I am keen to learn.			
I take pride in my work.			
I hand my work in on time.			

Think about your answers to the above statements. If you answered 'Never' or 'Sometimes', choose two of those statements that you will work on:

1.
2.

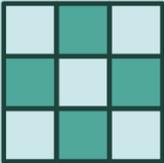
Personal mandala

Create and decorate your own personal mandala by adding key words, symbols, drawings and decoration to the template below.



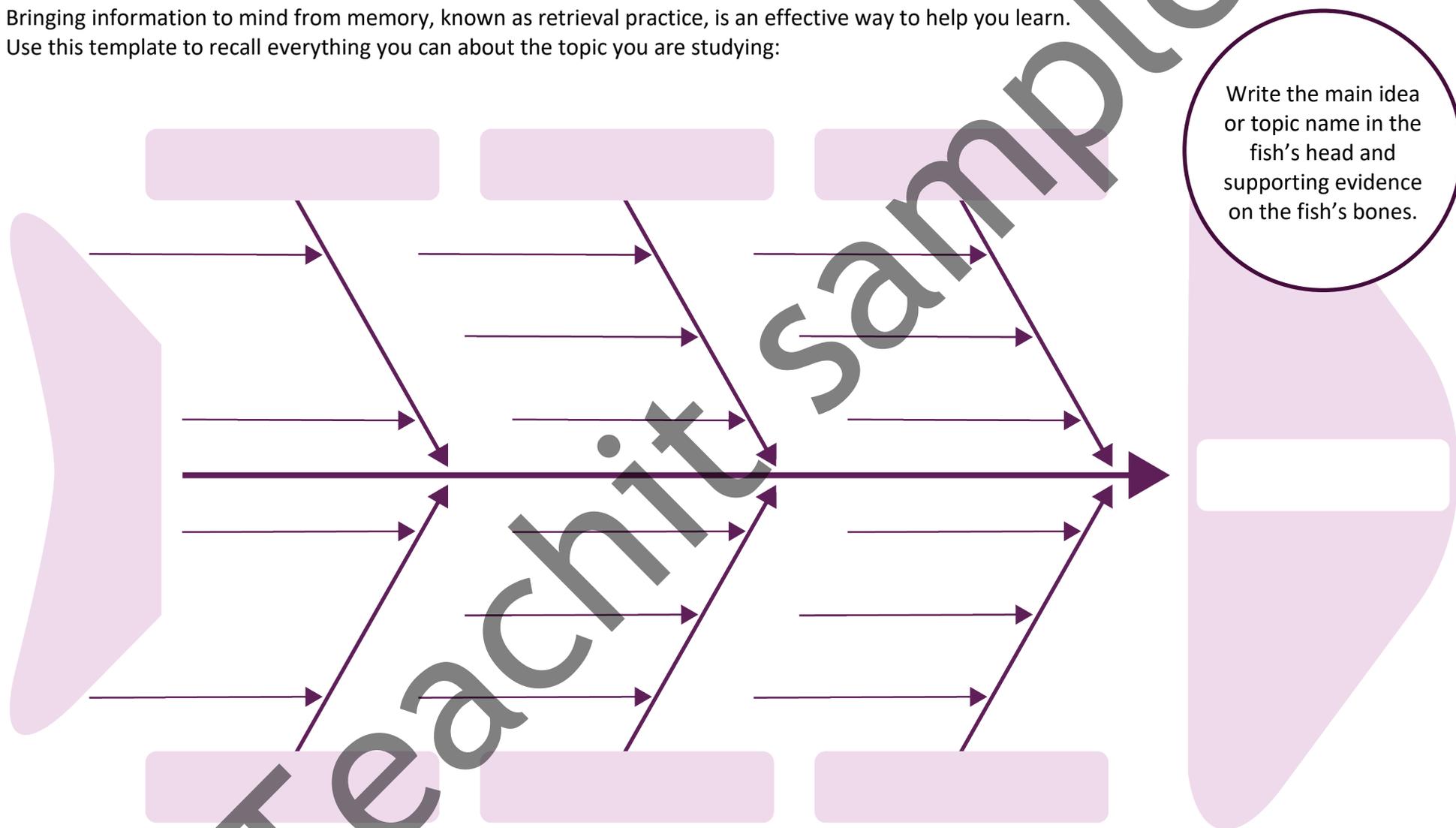
Pick-and-mix starters

Choose from the following activities:

<p>Agree/disagree You will be given statements relating to your learning, the topic you are studying or a contentious/relevant issue in your subject.</p> <p>Create a human continuum – decide where to stand on a line of agreement.</p>	<p>Question time Write down any questions you have on the topic/area you are studying. Put these into a hat and pick some out.</p> <p>Who can answer them?</p> <p>???</p>	<p>Pictionary or blind draw Draw key words for each other to guess, or describe a key word, process or concept for another student to try to draw.</p>
<p>Nine-box squares Your teacher will share nine key words used in the previous lesson in boxes on the board. Can you make a sentence using at least three words, or a short paragraph using them all?</p> 	<p>Flexible flashcards You will see a flashcard on your chair at the start of the lesson. Using the front and reverse of the card, can you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • write a student-friendly definition of a key word • put the word in an example sentence • identify synonyms for the word <p>draw an illustration or diagram to represent it?</p>	<p>Graffiti wall Using a large piece of paper, write your questions, thoughts, comments or an image to show your learning from last lesson.</p> <p>Look at other students' questions or comments and respond to one with an answer or your advice.</p>
<p>Word tennis Working in two groups standing or sitting in a line facing each other, take it in turns to say a word related to your current topic. No words can be repeated. Scoring should be based on tennis rules.</p> 	<p>Stream of consciousness Choose a topic, key term or idea you are studying. In silence, you have two minutes to write down <i>everything</i> you can remember or associate with this topic, however random, in whatever way you choose to write it. Share your thoughts in pairs.</p>	<p>If this is the answer, what is the question? Write the answer to a question from a previous lesson on your topic.</p> <p>In pairs or small groups, try to work out the questions for each other's answers.</p> 

Retrieval practice fish bone

Bringing information to mind from memory, known as retrieval practice, is an effective way to help you learn. Use this template to recall everything you can about the topic you are studying:



Thinking strategies activity

To change your thinking from a fixed mindset to a growth mindset, try rephrasing the negative self-talk below with a positive alternative.

	Instead of saying ...	You could say ...
1	I can't do this.	
2	I'm rubbish at this topic.	
3	He/she is the best at this. I'll never be that good.	
4	I'm really good at this.	
5	I give up! This is too hard.	
6	I made another mistake.	
7	I've had enough of this.	
8	This is too easy. What's the point?	
9	It's good enough.	
10	This test is going to be impossible.	

9

Time management

– teaching notes and templates

To-do lists are all very well but when they have so much on them that you can't possibly tick everything off, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. Everyone works differently, but it's worth experimenting with some proven time-management techniques to see what suits you best.

The Eisenhower Matrix is one tried and tested tool to help you prioritise your to-do list. You'll find plenty of examples online that can help you decide what to do first, what to schedule for another time, what to delegate and what to leave undone. Another popular technique is to categorise each item on your list with a letter A–C (representing its relative importance) and a number 1–3 (indicating the level of urgency). Whatever you've labelled as A1 would be a task that is both important and urgent and should therefore be tackled first, and so on.

However, sometimes getting the easy tasks out of the way first can be the mental equivalent of having a tidy desk, allowing you to really concentrate on the bigger jobs. Thinking about the time of day that best suits you for different kinds of work can also be helpful. Cracking on with the hardest thing on your to-do list when you're fresh in the morning can be far more effective than putting it off until you're too tired to do it justice.

Setting time limits can also help. Decide what your cut-off point is for the day and stop working when you reach it. Nobody can keep working more than 10 hours a day without burning out eventually. You might like to try Cirillo's popular 'Pomodoro Technique', using a timer to work in short bursts – 25-minute sessions of quality concentration followed by five-minute brain breaks to stretch or get a drink can work well. If you're creating a resource, decide how long you want to spend on it and stick to it. No activity should take longer for you to prepare than it takes your students to do!

You'll find two different time-management templates below to help you take a fresh look at your never-ending list of things to do:

- **Boundaries to-do list.** This template encourages you to take stock of how you are feeling, what time you have available that day and what is realistically achievable. If you have a full day teaching five or six lessons, don't set the bar too high. Reflecting on how things went can also make you more aware of how to manage your time and energy more mindfully in future.
- **Must do, may do.** This template is one of the simplest ways to prioritise but can prove surprisingly liberating as you give yourself permission to let some things remain undone if it's simply not possible. To avoid mental overload, you could also try limiting your to-do list to no more than five items in each of the 'must do' or 'may do' categories.

Boundaries to-do list

What is my energetic capacity today?

Scale of 1–10

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

← Low energy High energy →

What I have the capacity to take on today:

.....

.....

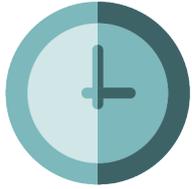
.....

.....

.....

My boundary for work today:

Based on my capacity I can work on my list for hours or
..... minutes.



How did it go? Reflect on your experience.

.....

.....

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