

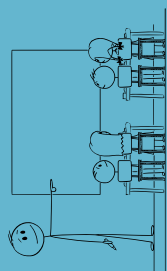
What is teaching to the top?

'Consistently teaching higher-level ideas and knowledge and making this accessible to all students in our classes'

'Teaching to the top is about teachers working to continually develop their subject knowledge, using and developing higher-level concepts in their curriculum plans and the classroom, ensuring that every student is afforded access to the most stimulating, challenging and thought-provoking learning opportunities.'

'...a mindset that should underpin the way we teach...shape the way we conceptualise education...ensuring the most productive educational experience for our students.'

Megan Mansworth



What does the research say?

- Pitching lesson content at the 'top end' is beneficial for every student; international comparisons of student achievement indicate that the highest performing educational systems have high expectations for all (Reynolds and Farrell, 1996).
- When teachers have high or low expectations for students they communicate their expectations both verbally and non-verbally (Babad et al. 1989). Students may interpret and internalise the expectation and achieve in accordance with the teacher's expectations (Weinstein 2002).
- Teacher expectations are important because if teachers have high expectations for all students, then all students are likely to be challenged and extended ultimately, leading to greater learning progress for all (Rubie-Davies 2008a).
- Research findings have indicated that the socio-emotional environment that high-expectation teachers create in their classrooms is likely to be more positive and caring than that of other teacher groups. High expectation teachers appear to give students more feedback about their learning, and as a result the partnership between students and teacher and developing student learning is clearer. (Rubie-Davies and Peterson 2011)



Reframe and re-conceptualise

- Mansworth argues that we need to reframe and re-conceptualise 'teaching to the top' as teaching to the very top?
- She says that this has wonderful consequences for the quality of education in our classrooms, for our enthusiasm and motivation as teachers, and for students' achievement and enjoyment of learning.
- If we are successful in embedding a philosophy of teaching to the top then we will not only continually develop our own practice but also enjoy developing our understanding and knowledge of our subjects.

