

TLC5,
students as resources
for one another.

Some Techniques for Peer Support

- **Carousels:** Students send their piece of work around to others in a group and each of them provide constructive feedback for improving the work.
- **Improvement evaluation:** Students analyse the work of a peer over a period of time to provide feedback on what has improved and what still needs work. The work compared must use the same type of skills so that the student can check for improvement and provide helpful feedback.
- **Two stars and a wish on peers' work:** Students exchange books and give comments to a peer by writing two positive things (stars) about the work and one thing that she 'wishes' the other student would do to make it better. The comments should be specific to the qualities of the work and provide clear guidance on what to do to improve.
- **Homework help board:** Students identify homework questions they could not do, put them on the board, and solve them for one another. The teacher only needs to work on those problems that no-one else can solve.
- **Identifying group weaknesses:** Groups of students discuss what they have learned and what they still need to learn in a particular topic. Each group then decides which of these needs should be labelled as a 'group weakness.' Students from other groups can then help close some of their peers' gaps in understanding before the teacher is asked for help.
- **Best composite answer:** Students in a small group build a composite answer by taking the best features of each of their individual answers, making them recognise strengths and weaknesses across the original individual answers. Students who did not originally understand some aspects of the question learn a lot from their peers.
- **Students check peer's work against pre-flight checklist:** Students exchange books and check each other's work against a pre-flight checklist (a list of required components eg title page, introduction, 3 paragraph explanation, conclusion). The checklist can be prepared by the teacher or students. Some checklists will be generic whilst others may be specific to a particular assignment.
- **Question strips in groups:** Students talk in small groups to check their understanding and then submit a group question to the teacher if no-one can answer it within the group. The questions address the areas the students do not understand or those where they want to learn more. The teacher notes themes and responds, adapting future teaching where needed.
- **Students check peers' work with mark schemes:** Students exchange books and use a familiar mark scheme that helps them evaluate a peer's work. Students provide feedback, but usually not grades or levels.
- **Traffic lighting peers' work:** After being taught how to provide feedback, students mark a peer's work to identify her level of understanding (green=understand; amber=not sure; red=do not understand). It is important that time is allowed for students to get help with the things they do not understand.

Handout 5-2 contd

- **Some ideas for Early Years:**

1 *Daily sign-in.* Each week, the teacher puts up a chart with the children's names down the side, and the days of the week across the top. Each day, every child signs in. At the end of the week, each child has to review the five sign-ins with a 'buddy' and decide which is the best of the five sign-ins. Once they have agreed, they underline, or draw a ring around the best one.

2 *Swap-compare-discuss.* When children are involved in practising a skill, such as writing the Letter "d" they do it (say) 10 times, and then look back over the 10 letters and put a circle round whichever of the ten letters they think is the best. They then swap their work with a friend, and circle their friend's best letter "d". If they disagree about what makes the best letter "d" they discuss their differences.

3 *I-you-we checklists.* At the end of a group task, each member of the group says something positive about their own contribution, about the contribution of one other member, and about how the group worked as a whole.