

## Connecting Research and Practice in Curriculum Development: A discussion activity for practitioners

This activity will take approximately one hour to complete.

### Purpose

This discussion activity is designed to engage practitioners with stimulating ideas and evidence about curriculum innovation and to help them spot the connections with their own context and learning needs.



The activity stimulates lively and structured dialogue about how pupils experience the curriculum and how schools can build such experiences into a cumulative whole. Exploring the evidence in depth and in the context of their own and others' practice will provide a stepping-stone to enable them to use theory and research to help them think more broadly and deeply about the curriculum and to plan further development.

### Resources

- Summary of research evidence
  - o a short, accessible summary of an important piece of research relating to the curriculum
- Nuggets
  - o the summary, 'chunked' into up to 10 vignettes or nuggets of evidence and printed onto business cards
- Examples of practice
  - o that illustrate some of the concepts and issues raised in the research printed onto A5 coloured card



You should plan your resources on the basis of a group size of 5-10. This ensures that each person is working with a maximum of 2 nuggets.



Responsibility for learning from the research is distributed around the group. Hand out the nuggets and ask the group to divide them up as evenly as possible. Each person should have 1 or 2 nuggets each. Ask them to share their nuggets with the group, either by reading them out or by summarising the document.



Ask the group to discuss the idea or the evidence that each nugget contains. You might like to offer some questions to help structure the dialogue. Some examples might be:

- What are your reactions and responses?
- What challenge and/or opportunity does the evidence offer?
- If the researcher were here now, what would you like to say to or ask them?
- What are the implications for you and your school?



You will need to judge carefully the amount of time needed for the discussion of the nuggets. Between 20 and 30 minutes should be enough time for all the evidence to be shared and explored.

Next hand out one or two examples from practice and invite each group to make concrete connections between the research and practice. What do they notice about the examples? Which of the nuggets might they illustrate? Indicate that you are going to ask the group to share 3 connections in plenary at the end of the session. You should allow 15 minutes for this part of the discussion.



Finally in a plenary session, ask each table to offer 3 practical connections between what they learned from the nuggets and what they notice about the example from practice.



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