

Why is it so important to build curious professional learning communities?

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This session

- 🌰 Focusing our curiosity for today
- 🌰 Understanding the research evidence re effectiveness about professional learning and collaboration
- 🌰 Some intriguing questions
- 🌰 A metaphor



Contextualising this session

- Think of 2 different pupils whose learning you would like to push forward this year (think about teacher learners if you are a leader?)
- Identify:
 - A skilled disappearer; and
 - A cautious sceptic
- We'll use these colleagues as a litmus test for the ideas and evidence we are exploring in this session



Evidence about effective professional learning and collaboration

- A systematic review of reviews of evidence about Continuing Professional Development and Learning (CPDL) <http://bit.ly/23WTvw2>
- Shows significant benefits for pupils, as well as teachers, from CPDL linked with:
 - Recognising and building on your starting points and your **aspirations for pupils** (& colleagues, for leaders)
 - Organising support for professional learning around that via:
 - a carefully **aligned** combination of...
 - ... structured, **evidence-rich, iterative activities**
 - ... **sustained through a rhythm over at least two terms**



Effective CPDL involves:

- **Curiosity** - Exploring / reviewing/ challenging existing beliefs and practices *supportively* via:
 - Enquiry oriented learning - *Iterative* cycles of trying new approaches
 - Systematically weighing up what is *likely to work best* for pupils...
 - Working with specialists who help secure depth via:
 - **challenging orthodoxies**
 - **illustrating ever greater depth** e.g. via research and *practices* from other settings
 - **evaluating and designing** CPDL activities *with sensitivity!*



Effective CPDL involves:

- More curiosity -Developing practice and theory side by side:
 - Understanding *why* things do and don't work *and* what's involved...
 - So you can interpret and adapt for your context, your starting points, your pupils
- Collaboration? Professional learning conversations? Opportunities
 - for *structured* peer support – shared risk taking in trying out new approaches
 - to collaboratively *review pupils' responses* to changes you make so you can refine practices in the light of evidence about their learning
 - to develop a *shared sense of purpose around aspirations for pupils*



Formative assessment is key

- Effective CPDL means:
 - Using evidence about how pupils are responding to new approaches to refine both your practice and the support you ask for from specialists
 - Designing AFL tools for different subject contexts and sub-groups of pupils to explore your understanding and expand perspectives
 - So that AFL for CPDL is
 - an input - a form of teaching *and* a learning process;
 - an output; and
 - an evaluation tool for exploring outcomes



Applying the evidence

- Think about your focus learners and a priority for the coming year
- What might their learning look like if your learning from this session is successful?
- Look at the chart – which elements of CPDL would; most help you help them?



Key components of effective CPDL	RAG	Implications for focus Pupils
Recognising/ building on starting points including aspirations for pupils		
Iterative cycles of experimenting & refining		
Exploring / reviewing/ challenging existing beliefs and practices <i>supportively</i>		
Collaboration with peers to explore learners' responses		
Collaboration with specialists		
Understanding <i>why</i> things do and don't work		
Formative assessment		

Merlin, Arthur and professional learning





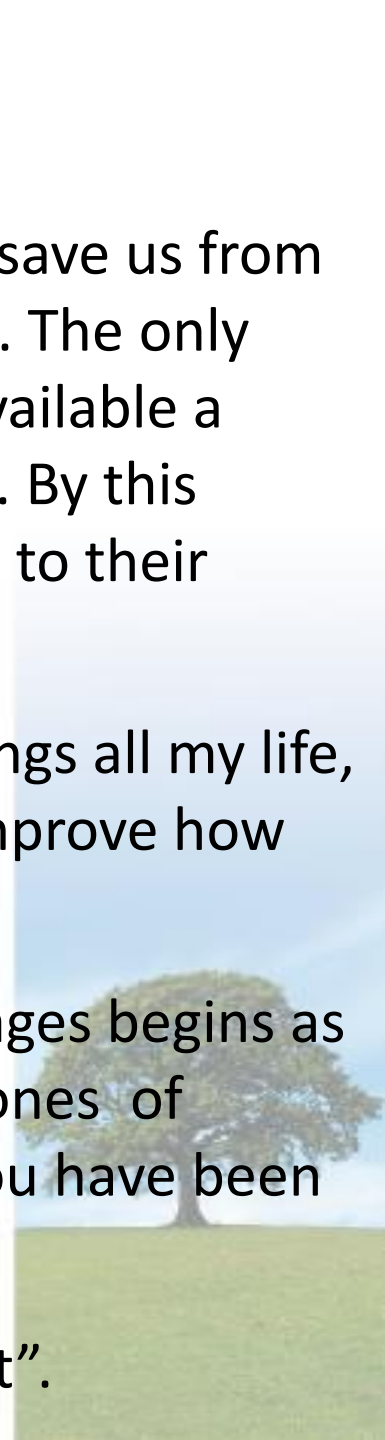
The Book of Merlin T H White

Merlin” said the King, “tell me the reason for your visit. Talk. Say you have come to save us from this war.” “No” replied his former tutor “it is hopeless doing things for other people. The only thing worth doing for the race is to increase the stock of ideas. Then, if you make available a larger and deeper stock, the people are at liberty to help themselves from out of it . By this process the means of improvement is offered, to be accepted or rejected according to their need. Such is our business, to open up new ideas (and practices).”

“You did not tell me this before.” Replied Arthur “You have egged me into *doing* things all my life, the chivalry, the Round Table. What were these but efforts to save people and to improve how things are done?

“They were ideas” said Merlin firmly, “rudimentary ideas. All thought in its early stages begins as action. The actions which you have been wading through have been ideas, clumsy ones of course, but they had to be established before we could begin to think in earnest. You have been teaching man to think.”

“So my round table was not a failure Merlin?” - “Certainly not, It was an experiment”.



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