

# WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF DIFFERENTIATED TASKS ON PUPILS' SELF BELIEF AND MOTIVATION?

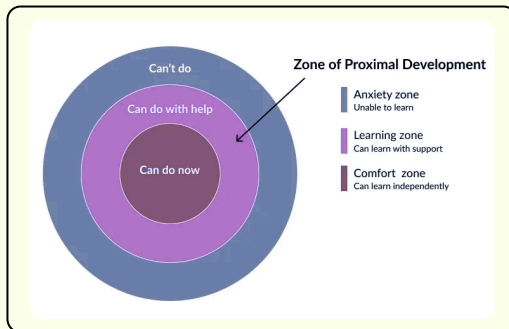
## INTRODUCTION

The Teachers' Standards (DfE, 2011) states we must '**adapt** teaching to **respond** to the strengths and **needs of all pupils.**' In education, there is wide contention regarding the definition of adaptive teaching and how this compares to differentiation.

I am interested in finding out how pupils perceive differentiated tasks, to consider the implications for teaching and learning.



## KEY LITERATURE



The ZPD refers to what pupils achieve independently compared with receiving support (Vygotsky 1978).

### Studies:

- Targeted support is beneficial, differentiated resources are not (EEF, 2021).
- Differentiated tasks can negatively impact student beliefs about themselves and their ability (Francis et al, 2019).
- Scaffolding has a positive impact on motivation and engagement when it is gradually removed (Van de Pol et al, 2010).

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

**RQ1** - How do differentiated tasks impact children's self belief?

**RQ2** - Do differentiated tasks affect student motivation?

**RQ3** - Do pupils enjoy whole class lessons?

## RESEARCH



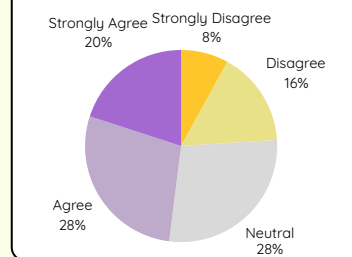
### METHODOLOGY

- Sample: 25 students in Year 6.
- Data collection was a mixture of quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (focus groups).

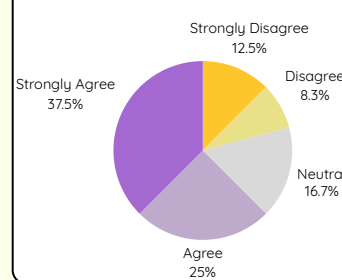


### RESULTS

THE COLOUR OF MY TASK AFFECTS THE WAY I FEEL ABOUT MYSELF.



I PREFER WHOLE CLASS LESSONS.



### Feelings

"I feel **ashamed** when I do red or yellow - it makes me feel **dumb**."

"I feel **left out** if my work is different to my classmates."

### Motivation and Challenge

"I like yellow because it's my **comfort zone**."

"Sometimes I choose an **easier** colour to get through quicker, especially if I don't like the subject."

### Whole Class vs Differentiation

"I like whole-class lessons because everyone can **help each other**."

"In whole class lessons, sometimes I'd rather just get on with it - I feel **held back** sometimes."

## CONCLUSION



### FINDINGS

- Colour-coded tasks can negatively affect self-esteem and confidence, especially for those choosing perceived 'lower' tasks.
- Motivation is shaped by confidence and subject enjoyment, with some pupils avoiding challenge and selecting easier tasks.
- Preferences for whole class versus differentiated learning differ based on pupils' understanding of content.



### IMPLICATIONS

Based on findings, I wish to trial an **adaptive teaching** approach to whole class learning. I will implement the following changes and then monitor their success.

- Shift from colour-coded tasks to using **flexible scaffolding**.
- Use assessment for learning** strategies to identify which pupils require support or further challenge.
- Promote a **growth mindset** and celebrate effort.

## REFERENCES

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Francis, B., Taylor, B., Archer, L., Hodgen, J., Mazenod, A., Pepper, D., & Tereshchenko, A. (2019). *Reassessing 'ability' grouping: Improving practice for equity and attainment*. London: UCL Institute of Education.

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