

# SMART PRACTICE

## Reflective Questions for Teachers

# I've got one lesson!

Being **PREDICTABLE**... would your students be able to answer these questions?

- How you greet them each lesson?
- Do they know what's coming up in the lesson?
- Do they know the general routine of the lesson?
- Do they know where they will sit?
- Do they know how you will give them their instructions, tasks, work, feedback..?
- Do they know where to find what they need?
- Do they know what to do if they are struggling with a task? Do they know how you will react?



# I've got one lesson!

Being **RESPONSIVE** to trauma related behaviours and other impacts...

- Do the students impacted by trauma know you get them, what they've been through and what they need to support them?
- Can you be open and curious about what their behaviour is telling you?
- Can you see the person behind the behaviour and translate it as a form of communication?
- Can you respond to their behaviour and their cognitive and emotional levels where they are at rather than where, chronologically, they 'should' be?





# I've got one lesson!

Being **ATTUNED** to your students...

- Can you pick up on the students non verbal and body language cues to help you gauge where they are at, what their state of being is?
- Can you be flexible in your approach so that if they're getting agitated or start withdrawing in the lesson you can meet them where they're at and guide them back?
- Can you see when they need your understanding and connection?
- Can you pick the moments when they can be responsive to playfulness, or having their capacity for learning pushed, or when they need more sensitivity from you?



# I've got one lesson!

## CONNECTING with your students...

- Can you help raise their awareness of their feelings, naming them, linking to signals from their movement, facial expression, behaviour or drawing attention to their internal signals?
- How does this sound in your own voice?
  - “You seem agitated, you’re fidgeting heaps and your eyes are darting everywhere. Is your body making it hard to settle?”
  - “I’m thinking, judging from your expression and your slumped shoulders, you’re feeling a bit low right now; have I got that right?”
  - “I’m guessing the task I just handed out has made your brain and body go NO WAY, I’m not ready for that! It looks like they are freaking out a bit but I’ve got you, we can work this out”





# I've got one lesson!

Helping students to **TRANSLATE** their responses and interactions to bring about understanding and growth.

- It can be tricky helping to bring students awareness to their responses and ways of interacting with their environment in a safe respectful way in the classroom environment so that they may begin to make meaning of these responses and ways of being. Doing this though, can help students to heal, to challenge unhelpful internal working models and create space for personal growth and encourage experiences of success.
- What does this sound/ look like in our interactions with them? How do we bring their awareness to their ways of being such as their reactions, how they interpret events/ conversations, what they struggle with, what they seem most comfortable with....?



Continued over page....

# I've got one lesson!

Helping students to **TRANSLATE** their responses and interactions to bring about understanding and growth.

- How can we bring genuine curiosity to how we translate this with them? Having experienced adults letting them down, breaking their trust, violating their safety, how can we translate and acknowledge why they may interact, respond, feel / don't feel the way they do? How do we work with them to help them continue to grow?





# I've got one lesson!

**INVOLVING** your students in healthy safe positive peer connections...

- Do you know how safe and positive each of your students feel in peer relationships? How connected they feel? How competent and respected they feel in those relationships?
- Consider the kinds of engagement and relational tasks that are common in your lessons/ interactions with students? Are your students working in pairs, groups, with equipment, moving around, in close proximity? How well do they know each other? How are their social and academic skills matched to enhance the experience? How do we take these factors into consideration to promote safety and positive experiences? How can you scaffold students to be able to engage safely with their peers in your classroom?





# I've got one lesson!

Helping students feel safe in **CALM** peaceful environments and relationships

- Building trust and a felt sense of safety is sometimes done by testing limits for understanding and reassurance. How do we stay calm and grounded ourselves in order to hold a student who is learning to adapt to and trust calm peaceful environments? How do we help them to adapt and learn to trust and thrive in these environments of calm and peace, including the engaged hum of a focused classroom? How can we promote their sense of being an integral part of that, so they don't feel like an outsider, alien to that kind of environment?
- How do you check in on your inner state of calm? How do you check that you are well grounded yourself; particularly when students might be testing the limits?



# I've got one lesson!

Supporting students to actively **ENGAGE** in relationships and their learning with hope and success...

Remember we largely come to understand ourselves through how others experience us and reflect that back to us. This is why, how we engage with students, has the potential to influence their life journey. How does your compassion, respect, enjoyment, playfulness, and investment in a student shine through in the way you engage with them? How do you reflect these genuine experiences of their strengths, their uniqueness, their potential back to them so that they might come to see and truly believe themselves to be, or capable of being, the amazing human beings you are experiencing them as?

