



Adolescent learner and effective middle years teacher

The middle years represent an important stage in students' development. These are the years when experiencing positive relationships, being genuinely engaged in learning and developing self-esteem have a major and lasting impact on each young person.

Features of the adolescent learner and the effective middle years teacher are outlined in the following table:

| Some features of adolescent learners | Key features of the effective Middle Years teacher |
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| Increased capacity for abstract thinking, critical thinking, reflective thinking Highly inquisitive, questioning - but short term focus Seek challenge and engagement Seek novelty and excitement Prefer active, hands-on learning Build learning upon their individual experiences and prior knowledge Dominated by their 'emotional brain' | Aware of adolescent development – stages, areas of development, brain theory, learning theory Bases teaching on a good knowledge of each individual student – personal background, success in school to date et cetera Sensitive to social/personal vulnerability of students Establishes strong, supportive relationships between students and teacher Recognises and caters for individual learning needs Models appropriate values, attitudes, behavior Employs a variety of teaching/learning strategies – individual, small group (cooperative/peer-based), large group (peer-based) Provides worthwhile, challenging learning tasks Pushes students into higher order thinking Provides active, hands-on learning Uses research and inquiry over a short-term time frame Focuses on real world application and relevance Focuses on real world issues and concerns – personal relevance, social issues, values, moral dilemmas et cetera |