Level 6 History - A Test of History

PEEL in Practice: 1300 ideas for quality teaching
Trish Melgaard, Eumemmerring Secondary College

Year 10 History, World War 1 Document Test

The purpose of this test was to get the students to interpret and analyse information from documents published during World War 1. As this was the first time they had done this type of task in History this year, I decided to give the students a practice test.

We went through guidelines on how to approach the task and talked about ways the test should be approached. For example, reading the questions carefully, reading and looking at the document carefully, etc. The students were told that what they did on this test was for their own benefit, to help them with the real test coming up. They took it seriously and I feel, appreciated the chance to practise.

I marked this test hard, picking as many faults as I could. The tests were handed back and I went over the test and the answers thoroughly with the students. I made a list of problems on the board based on all the students’ tests. Students had the opportunity to add to this list.

I then had students write out "What I didn't do", based on problems they had with their own tests, and make lists of things they felt they needed to improve for the final test.

When I marked the final test every student had improved or maintained a good mark. I put the percentage achieved on the first test next to the percentage achieved in the final test. This proved to be a very positive step. Students were thrilled to see the improvement and could see a worthwhile outcome of reviewing and evaluating work they had done. They also felt a real sense of class progress.

A comment from Ian Mitchell: "I thought Trish's document test strategy linked with the "Where I went wrong" procedure, but gave Trish the opportunity to focus on positives faster. It also helped students realise that other students shared their problems".

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