



Evidence-Based Intervention: Mediated Learning Principles

1. Introduction

Mediated learning is a teaching and assessment approach focusing on how adults (mediators) support learners to develop cognitive and emotional skills. It emphasises the quality of interaction between adult and child, aiming to enhance learning through intentional, reflective, and supportive dialogue.

2. Purpose of Intervention

- To improve learning outcomes by focusing on how a child learns, not just what they know.
- To identify and develop cognitive functions, executive skills, and affective factors.
- To support children in becoming independent, reflective learners through guided mediation.

3. Target Audience

Mediated learning will support all children and young people.

4. Who Can Deliver the Intervention

Mediated learning principles can be used by a variety of professionals including teachers, learning support assistants, and specialist teachers.

5. Session Structure

Mediated learning principles are not typically delivered in distinct sessions, but incorporated into existing teaching and learning practices, for example when an adult is supporting a child to complete a learning task. Mediated learning principles are delivered flexibly, based on the needs of the learner and the context of the task.

6. Frequency and Duration

As above, mediated learning principles are generally used flexibly within existing teaching and learning practices.

7. Key Principles

Mediated learning principles include:

- **Implicit Help:** Using subtle hints or prompts to guide the learner without giving direct answers.
- **Explicit Help:** Providing detailed feedback or discussing strategies to improve performance.
- **Engaging:** Creating a reciprocal, interactive relationship with the learner.
- **Making Sense:** Promoting meaningfulness and relevance in the task.
- **Sharing:** Communicating a sense of partnership and teamwork with the learner.
- **Independence:** Stepping back appropriately to allow the learner to take control.
- **Scaffolding:** Gradually reducing support as the learner gains independence.
- **Planning:** Helping the learner set goals and plan strategies.
- **Monitoring:** Encouraging self-checking and reflection.
- **Verbalising:** Supporting the learner to articulate their thinking.
- **Bridging:** Linking learning to past and future experiences.



- **Encouraging:** Providing positive, specific feedback.
- **Challenging:** Ensuring tasks are appropriately demanding.
- **Self-regulation:** Promoting thoughtful, deliberate responses.
- **Explaining:** Asking learners to justify their answers.
- **Change:** Highlighting progress and new skills learned.
- **Positive Outlook:** Maintaining optimism and encouragement, even when difficulties arise.

8. Training and Implementation

Mediated learning principles can be applied once staff have an understanding of what they are. More structured training can also be delivered by professionals such as Educational Psychologists.

9. Evidence and Outcomes

Mediated learning principles are underpinned by the following psychological principles:

- **Sociocultural theory (Vygotsky).** This includes the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which is what a learner can do with support, and emphasises the importance of context and collaboration in learning.
- **Mediated Learning Experience (Feurstein).** This is where a mediator 'stands between' the task and the learning, to support the learner to complete tasks within their ZPD.

10. Feedback

The Dynamic Assessment UK website reports that teachers have shared:

- Increased confidence in assessing and supporting learners.
- Greater insight into children's learning processes.
- Positive impact on classroom practice and relationships.

11. Further Information and Resources

- Checklist: [Mediated Learning Principles](#)
- Video: [An Introduction to Dynamic Assessment and Mediated Learning Experiences](#)
- Video: [Mediating Learning in Dynamic Assessment with Rachael Green](#)
- Book: [Applying Dynamic Assessment in Schools: A Practical Approach to Improving Learning by Fraser Lauchlan and Clare Daly](#)