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The Student Teacher Perspectives journal offer five excellent papers this year on a range of topics and from a range of universities. All these papers have a lot to offer student teachers and it is hoped that good use will be made of them in the UK and indeed beyond.

This issue begins with a paper from **Joshua Culleton, University of Cambridge,** who investigated children's learning behaviour when grouped by attainment. Joshua undertook his investigation with a Year 4 mathematics class and used a planned behaviour framework as a guide to monitor the influence of homogeneous grouping on the pupils' self-perceived behaviour. He discovered differences between lower-attaining groups and higher-attaining groups. The lower-attaining groups exhibited such things as a lack of confidence in their ability, fear of showing incompetence in the classroom and problems when faced with a challenge. His conclusions suggest when homogeneous grouping can be effective and when not.

Laura Dunkling from the University of Cumbria invites us to go for a ride in a time machine, again with Year 4 pupils. Her study explore the impact of increased reading interventions on Year 4 pupils' reading comprehension skills. The comprehension strategies involved in the programme of interventions covered such things as inference, prediction and summarization. All the pupils in her small group made progress and she concludes that there is evidence to support the notion that increased reading interventions of this sort have a noticeable impact on the reading comprehension ages and skills of Year 4 children. She strongly recommends that readers who struggle need to be identified early so that interventions can be put in place before it is too late.

We now move to **Matthew Maslin from Kingston University** who addresses the essential skill of reflection. He recommends choosing a model to guide self-improvement and help break down the various stage of reflective practice. He explains why he chose Brookfield's "Four Lenses of Critical Reflection". Through critical incidents encountered in his own practice in school, he guides us through the benefits he drew from this model. The summary he gives at the end of this article sums up well what he gained from this study: 'Reflection has helped me to develop myself, overcoming the chaos of the classroom to expand my strengths yet more importantly, to address my misconceptions and build on weaknesses I initially did not even know I had'.

Shelby Mercer from the University of Cumbria tells us about school-based dogs and gives a compelling account of their use and effectiveness. She explains that she became interested in this topic after witnessing a number of local schools who had introduced full-time dogs, and so she decided to research further. She wanted to discover the motives for and benefits of introducing dogs into a school setting. Her conclusions showed clearly the positive impact of a school-based canine to improve social and emotional development, behaviour and enthusiasm towards learning amongst children. School dogs can console upset pupils through physical comfort, dogs can comforted physically hurt children, grieving children and those who have fallen out with friends. There was also evidence to suggest that and dogs contribute to promoting a positive school climate.

Laura Bratley from the University of the West of England investigates school readiness from a year one perspective. She focuses on the definition of school readiness and the various strategies used to

support children when beginning school. Her research looked at a small year 1 class and used a variety of observations, interviews and questionnaires to arrive at her conclusions. Her findings suggest no apparent evidence to link lower attainment with the age of starting school. However lack of communication between school and parents and a lack of clarity over exactly what readiness for school is could negatively impact on the child's experience of beginning school.

Philip Last from Canterbury Christ Church University presents here research which investigated how he could make talk related activities more inclusive using the Thinking Together approach. His study was a piece of Action Research which he undertook because he saw that language difficulties were preventing progression, even though children had ability. Philip groups his findings under themes of Disputational talk, Cumulative Talk and Exploratory Talk. He found that by using the Thinking Together research and adapting it to fit in with the normal lesson structure he came to appreciate that, with time and consistent input, it is possible to encourage a class wide style of conversation so that everyone in the class is included and discussions can be carried out more effectively.

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June 2019