

How do you teach? Capturing your method

Your honest answers will help us build lesson packs for teachers who are struggling, new or just exhausted, and for the children in their classes. In short: helping other teachers do what you do.

It's 50 questions and takes about 15 to 20 minutes. Answer however suits you: tick, type or send a voice note.

There are no right answers. We just want to bottle whatever it is you do. Honesty beats polish: the real answer, even if it's "I just wing it", is the useful one.

No pupil names or school details, please.

Afterwards we'll turn it into a style profile and show it to you first. Nothing is shared with your name on it unless you say so.

How to answer: tick the boxes (round boxes mean pick one, square boxes mean tick all that apply), circle a number on the scales (1 = not like me at all, 5 = very like me), or write a few words. You can also reply by email using the letters.

1. You and your classes

1. Which stage do you usually teach? (pick one)

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|---|--|
| ☐ Early level (nursery to P1) | ☐ Secondary (S1 to S3, BGE) |
| ☐ First level (P2 to P4) | ☐ Secondary (S4 to S6, Senior Phase) |
| ☐ Second level (P5 to P7) | ☐ A mix, or I move around |

2. How do you usually plan a lesson? (pick one)

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| ☐ It's mostly in my head, with a few notes | ☐ A written plan I mostly stick to |
| ☐ A quick outline, then I adapt as I go | ☐ A detailed plan, every time |

2. Reading the room and adapting

3. What tells you a lesson is or isn't landing? Tick all that apply.

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|---|--|
| ☐ Faces and eye contact | ☐ Quality of answers |
| ☐ The noise level and the type of talk | ☐ Who stops asking questions |
| ☐ Fidgeting or slumping | ☐ What I see in jotters as I walk round |

4. How soon do you usually change course when something isn't working? (pick one)

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| ☐ Within a minute or two | ☐ I finish the section, then change |
| ☐ After 5 minutes or so | ☐ I tend to push through and fix it next lesson |

5. When you adapt mid-lesson, what do you usually do? Tick all that apply.

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| ☐ Stop everyone and re-explain a different way | ☐ Add movement or a quick game |
| ☐ Pull a small group to me | ☐ Make it harder for those flying |
| ☐ Change the task on the spot | ☐ Skip ahead to the practical bit |

6. Where are you during the lesson, most of the time? (pick one)

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|--|--|
| ☐ Moving among the desks the whole time | ☐ Mostly at the front |
| ☐ Mostly circulating, with spells at the front | ☐ Mostly at a desk or teaching table |
| ☐ About half and half | |

3. Openers and hooks

7. What are your go-to ways to open a lesson? Tick all that apply.

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| ☐ A puzzling question or problem | ☐ A quick recap quiz |
| ☐ A mystery object or picture | ☐ Straight in, no hook |
| ☐ A story from my own life | ☐ Getting pupils up and moving |
| ☐ Something funny | |

8. "I make up hooks on the spot from what's happening that day (the weather, the news, something a pupil said)." (1 = not like me at all, 5 = very like me)

1	2	3	4	5
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9. Tell us one opener that always works for you, in a sentence or two.

4. Explaining a hard idea on the spot

10. When a pupil doesn't get it, how do you explain it differently? Tick all that apply.

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| ☐ An everyday comparison ("it's like...") | ☐ Ask another pupil to explain it |
| ☐ Draw it quickly | ☐ Break it into tiny steps |
| ☐ Act it out or use bodies | ☐ A story |
| ☐ Use objects in the room | |

11. How do you usually model something new? (pick one)

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|---|--|
| ☐ Think aloud while I do it | ☐ Do it together, step by step |
| ☐ Show a finished example first | ☐ Let them try first, then show them |

12. "I use lots of everyday comparisons and analogies." (1 = not like me at all, 5 = very like me)

1	2	3	4	5
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13. Pick a tricky idea you teach (for example fractions, the water cycle or a tricky spelling rule). How do you explain it when someone's stuck? (write below, or send a voice note or short video)

5. Questioning and talk

14. Which questioning habits are second nature to you? Tick all that apply.

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|---|---|
| ☐ No hands up, I choose | ☐ Bouncing an answer to someone else |
| ☐ Everyone answers on whiteboards | ☐ Wait time before taking answers |
| ☐ Talk partners first | ☐ Hinge questions before moving on |
| ☐ "Say more" or "Why do you think that?" | |

15. "In my lessons, pupils talk more than I do." (1 = not like me at all, 5 = very like me)

1	2	3	4	5
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16. When a pupil gives a wrong answer, what do you usually do? (pick one)

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|--|---|
| ☐ Ask them to talk me through their thinking | ☐ Use it as a teaching point for everyone |
| ☐ Bounce it to another pupil | ☐ Correct it gently and move on |
| ☐ Give a clue and come back to them | |

17. What are the 2 or 3 questions or phrases you find yourself asking in nearly every lesson?

6. Pitching to three levels at once

18. How do you stretch and support without separate worksheets? Tick all that apply.

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|---|--|
| ☐ Same task, different expectations | ☐ A quick extension question in my head |
| ☐ Open-ended questions with no ceiling | ☐ Pairing pupils carefully |
| ☐ Choice of challenge ("mild, spicy, hot") | ☐ Pulling a group to me while others work |
| ☐ Extra prompts or scaffolds for some | |

19. "I can usually differentiate on the fly without any prepared resources." (1 = not like me at all, 5 = very like me)

1	2	3	4	5
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20. How do you decide who needs what in a lesson? (pick one)

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| ☐ What I already know about each pupil | ☐ Pupils choose for themselves |
| ☐ A quick check at the start | ☐ A mix of these |
| ☐ Watching as they work | |

21. Which additional support needs (ASN) do you most often adapt for? Tick all that apply. No names, please.

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|---|--|
| ☐ Reading difficulties or dyslexia | ☐ Speech, language or communication needs |
| ☐ Autism | ☐ English as an additional language (EAL) |
| ☐ ADHD | ☐ Pupils working well beyond their stage |
| ☐ Social, emotional or behavioural needs | |

22. How much adult support do you usually have in the room? (pick one)

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| ☐ None, it's just me | ☐ A pupil support assistant most of the time |
| ☐ A pupil support assistant for some lessons | ☐ More than one other adult |

23. Describe how you'd pitch one task to your top, middle and struggling pupils at the same time.

7. Turning a class around

24. If you took over another teacher's most challenging class, how long would it usually take before it felt like yours? (pick one)

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|---|---|
| ☐ A couple of weeks | ☐ About a term (around 3 months) |
| ☐ About a month | ☐ Longer, it depends on the class |

25. Day 1 with a tough class: what do you do? Tick all that apply.

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| ☐ Meet them at the door, one by one | ☐ Talk about how we'll treat each other |
| ☐ Set the seating plan before they arrive | ☐ Keep it light and warm, firm on the basics |
| ☐ Teach 2 or 3 routines and practise them | ☐ Quietly note who the key characters are |
| ☐ Start with something they'll succeed at | |

26. In week 1, what are your priorities? Tick all that apply.

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| ☐ Practising routines until they're automatic | ☐ Quick wins and visible success |
| ☐ Getting to know every pupil | ☐ Showing I follow through every time |
| ☐ An early phone call or note home with good news | ☐ Agreeing class expectations together |

27. How do you set expectations kindly but firmly? (pick one)

- ☐ A few clear rules, explained with reasons
- ☐ Co-created with the class
- ☐ Modelled and practised, not just said
- ☐ Stated calmly and repeated often
- ☐ A mix of these

28. Which signals and routines do you rely on? Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Countdown
- ☐ A clap or call-and-response
- ☐ Hand up, wait for silence
- ☐ A quiet word, not a whole-class stop
- ☐ Music or a sound
- ☐ Set jobs or monitors
- ☐ A calm or reset space

29. The one pupil who sets the others off: what's your first move? (pick one)

- ☐ Build a relationship with them first, privately
- ☐ Give them a job or responsibility
- ☐ Seat them strategically
- ☐ Find out what's behind it (home, learning, sensory)
- ☐ Be firm and consistent, never public battles
- ☐ A mix, depending on the pupil

30. How do you win over needy, anxious or ASN children? Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Predictable routines and warnings before changes
- ☐ A trusted adult check-in each day
- ☐ A safe space or calm box
- ☐ Small jobs that give them status
- ☐ Finding the thing they love and using it
- ☐ Low-key praise, not public
- ☐ Visual timetables or now-and-next

31. "I give far more praise and recognition than consequences, even with a tough class." (1 = not like me at all, 5 = very like me)

32. How do you work with parents of challenging pupils? (pick one)

- ☐ Good-news call or note early, before any problem
- ☐ Regular short updates
- ☐ Meet them early to agree a plan together
- ☐ Mostly leave it to senior staff
- ☐ Only when there's a problem

33. By week 4, what tells you it's starting to work? Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Routines happen without reminders
- ☐ Fewer incidents
- ☐ The difficult pupils seek me out
- ☐ Pupils correct each other
- ☐ Calmer transitions
- ☐ Visitors comment on it

34. By week 12, what tells you it's turned around? Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Other staff notice the change
- ☐ Pupils are proud of the class
- ☐ Learning time is protected
- ☐ Pupils handle cover or supply teachers well
- ☐ Parents notice
- ☐ Hardly any time spent on behaviour

35. What would you stop other teachers doing with a challenging class?

36. Talk us through how you'd turn a class around, from day 1 to the end of the first term. No names or details, please. A voice note or short video is often easiest. (write below, or send a voice note or short video)

8. When a lesson is dying

37. When energy drops and you're losing them, what do you do? Tick all that apply.

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| ☐ Get everyone up and moving | ☐ Go outside or change the space |
| ☐ Switch to a quick game or quiz | ☐ Stop and ask them what's wrong |
| ☐ Change the activity completely | ☐ Push on, then a reward at the end |
| ☐ Tell a story | |

38. When do lessons usually start to drag for your class? (pick one)

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|---|--|
| ☐ Straight after break or lunch | ☐ During written tasks |
| ☐ Last thing in the day | ☐ It varies |
| ☐ In long input sections | |

39. Tell us about a lesson that was dying and how you rescued it.

9. Checking learning on the fly

40. How do you check understanding without formal tests? Tick all that apply.

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|--|---|
| ☐ Mini whiteboards | ☐ Looking over shoulders as I walk round |
| ☐ Thumbs, fingers or traffic lights | ☐ A quick exit question |
| ☐ Listening in to talk | ☐ Pupils explain to a partner |

41. "I'd like each pack to show clearly which Es and Os and Benchmarks it covers." (1 = not like me at all, 5 = very like me)

1	2	3	4	5
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10. Teach us one lesson off the cuff

42. Pick any topic and stage you could teach tomorrow with no preparation. What is it?

43. Talk us through it, from the moment they walk in to the end: what you'd say, what they'd do, what you'd ask and where you'd be in the room. Typing is fine, but a voice note or a short phone video is often easier. Just reply to our email with it. (write below, or send a voice note or short video)

44. For that lesson, what would you actually need? (pick one)

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|--|--|
| ☐ Nothing, just me and a board | ☐ Slides |
| ☐ A few objects or props | ☐ Proper kit (for example for science or PE) |
| ☐ One sheet or a jotter task | |

11. Admin you'd happily hand over

45. Which admin would you hand over to us tomorrow? Tick all that apply.

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|--|---|
| ☐ Report comments | ☐ Forward plans or medium-term plans |
| ☐ Parent letters and newsletters | ☐ Writing up assessments or tracking notes |
| ☐ Risk assessments for trips | ☐ Emails to parents |
| ☐ Planning paperwork for management | ☐ Display labels and classroom signs |

46. Which of those takes you the most time in a typical term? (pick one)

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|---|---|
| ☐ Reports | ☐ Parent communication |
| ☐ Planning paperwork for management | ☐ Tracking and assessment write-ups |
| ☐ Risk assessments and trip admin | |

47. Which parts of preparing lessons do you dislike most? Tick all that apply.

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|---|---|
| ☐ Writing plans in the school format | ☐ Making slides |
| ☐ Making differentiated resources | ☐ Writing success criteria |
| ☐ Finding good links and videos | ☐ Planning for ASN and EAL |

12. What makes you different

48. When you've been observed, what do observers usually praise? Tick all that apply.

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|---|---|
| ☐ Relationships and climate | ☐ Differentiation |
| ☐ Pace and engagement | ☐ Pupils' independence |
| ☐ Questioning | ☐ Adapting the lesson as it goes |
| ☐ Clear learning intentions and success criteria | ☐ Something else (please say) |

49. What would you tell a newly qualified teacher in their first term?

50. What do you do that other teachers don't?

Extra. Optional: Is there a charity you care about? We're thinking of giving part of what teachers pay to a teachers' choice of charity. (optional, outside the 50)

Thank you. Reply to our email with your answers (and any voice notes or videos), or send back the form. We'll turn it into a style profile and show it to you before we use it.

Just Email It · hello@justemailit.co.uk · justemailit.co.uk/teachers