# Transcript

**For Teachers by Teachers: Unpacking Student Point of Need – Part B**

Duration 17:28

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**BEN HAWTHORN:**

Hi and welcome to this recording on unpacking our students' point of need. My name is Ben Hawthorn and I'm a grade 1/2 classroom teacher at Lockington Consolidated School. In today's recording we'll look at practical ways of unpacking our students' point of need and creating differentiated learning goals for our students in a remote learning climate.

Being a teacher, I've focused on what is working for me and I hope you'll find the information useful on your own remote learning journey. It is important to note that this recording is the second in a series of three recordings dedicated to unpacking our students' point of need. If you are yet to view recording 2a, it would be beneficial to do so before beginning this one.

While in the beginning remote teaching and learning may have felt like a fight for survival, it is amazing how quickly we adapt. The way we teach reading has definitely changed from face-to-face to remote learning but best practices remain the same. Specifically focused on reading and viewing in the foundation to level 2 space, this particular recording will focus on the following key questions for remote learning - who's below, at and above level? How do we establish reading goals? And where to next for their instruction?

Let's start by taking a quick look at the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes. The FISO, as you may know it as, is structured around four statewide priorities that are proven to have a strong bearing on the effectiveness of a school, those being excellence in teaching and learning, professional leadership, positive climate for learning, and community engagement in learning. Today's recording fits into excellence in teaching and learning. The HITS are nothing new to us and have become engrained in our everyday teaching practices, but how can we apply them in the remote learning space?

In a moment we're going to be demonstrating which tools you can use to determine students' points of need and next steps for learning. As we do that, you will notice that what we're focusing on here is differentiating, setting goals, and being able to explicitly teach through assessment for learning. Hopefully by now most teachers are familiar with the Literacy Teaching Toolkit. More information on much of what is covered in the Unpacking Students' Needs series can be found in the reading and viewing section. This information is evidence-based best practice and can easily be put into place in the classroom.

As you know, teaching children to read is an extremely complex process and should in no way be a guessing game. In order to teach students at their point of need and provide differentiated instruction, it is vital that we have a clear understanding of what is expected at each level. When thinking about our students' point of need, it is important we continue to refer to the Victorian curriculum with the achievement standards being our first port of call. The achievement standards provide us with exactly what it is our students should be doing at each level. Comparing each standard with standards above and below will give you an even better insight into where your students sit.

While circumstances and the way we teach have most definitely changed, we know our students and have a term's worth of valuable data available. Recording 2a has already looked at a variety of the data we have at hand. Some of the assessments we'll be looking at in this recording include reading benchmarking and analysis of the reader's notebook. While I acknowledge it's not ideal to be using benchmark assessment data so long after administration, by combining it with the analysis of recent reader's notebook entries we should get the information we need to create groups, set goals and in turn develop explicit and differentiated instruction for our students. Let's take a closer look at the reader's notebook.

The reader's notebook really is a window into our students' thinking. Their responses to what they have read provide us with evidence of their thoughts and can be analysed to make judgments on their understandings. These judgments can then play a major role in setting reading goals and deciding on future instruction. The nature of the reader's notebook make them an ideal tool for remote learning as entries can easily be photographed and shared with teachers remotely. But we'll go into more detail about how we can use the reader's notebook to set and monitor reading goals in the coming slides. If you're looking for more information on the reader's notebook, Aimee Buckner's book "Notebook Connections" is a great place to start. The use of the reader's notebook for assessment is also covered in Bastow's LDAP and Local Literacy Leaders courses, both of which I highly recommend.

Knowing our students now is as important as ever before in a remote learning climate. Looking back to the HITS, if we're going to continue to provide differentiated learning experiences for our students, and we should be, we need a clear understanding of where each of our students are at. Looking at data we already have such as reading levels is an easy way to get started when thinking about who is below, at and above in reading. Tools such as data displays and school data walls are a quick and visual way to organise this information. The two data walls pictured in the slide show different ways of organising students into below, at and above reading levels. As stated in professional practice note 5, data walls such as these are powerful ways for teachers to focus on the growth of every student.

While using reading levels when thinking who is below, at or above definitely has its place, particularly in a foundation setting at this time of year, being F to 2 teachers, we know there is much more to our students than just a reading level. Having an understanding of each of our students as a complete reader, particularly in regards to their comprehension, is critical. In this example I've been able to use analysis from past benchmarking assessments to group my students on a needs basis. If we zoom in, we can see that I've identified Sophie, Mel, Lily, Cooper and Billy as needing work on their summarising. While this is a good start, to effectively differentiate my instruction for these five students I'm going to need to know even more.

Let's start by identifying exactly what it is I want to see from readers in regards to summarising. Using Fountas & Pinnell's Literacy Continuum, the Understanding Text Learning Progressions, along with the Victorian curriculum and my own professional knowledge, I've created a continuum of reading behaviours I would expect to see from readers at different levels. These are draw a picture about the story, recall and talk about something that happened in the story, include characters by name when telling what happens in a story, identify the problem in a story and discuss the solution, summarise the story by selecting and discussing the information that is important, summarise important parts of a story such as chapters or sections.

Going even further, I can then group these behaviours into what I would expect to see below, at and above level. This kind of activity would work even better when done part of a PRC across the F to 2 levels and would ensure all teachers had common expectations from their students. Now that I've identified exactly what it is I want from my students, I'm in a much better place to provide explicit and differentiated instruction.

Using the continuum, we now need to know where our students sit. To do this, I've requested each of my five students complete a summary of a book they've read in their reader's notebook. I then have their parent email or text them through to me. By analysing the three examples in this slide, we can see that the students sit in various places across the continuum from high down to low. This means that while each of our students will be working on summarising, their reading goals and future instruction are going to slightly differ in order for them to reach the next step on the continuum.

Let's take a closer look at Billy's summary of "Splat the cat goes to school". "Today Splat goes to school. He was tricking his mum. When he arrived Splat said am I amazing? Yes. There was a mouse. The cats chased it. Stop! said Splat. The milk door didn't open. Next second it opened. Cats don't chase mice.

"From reading it, I've noticed that Billy can recall and share events in a story, and use character names when summarising. Using the continuum we created, I've decided that I'd like Billy to identify problems and discuss their solution, and summarise a story by selecting and discussing the information that is important. Now that I have this information, I can use it to create a possible reading goal for Billy.

Billy's reading goal could look something like this - I am learning to summarise a story by discussing the characters, setting, problem and solution. You'll notice that it's written in language that Billy can clearly articulate and understand. To complement this goal, I'm going to write three "I can" statements so Billy knows exactly what it is he needs to do to be successful. I can identify the text type before beginning to read. I can use my inner voice to identify the characters, setting, problem and solution when reading. I can summarise a story in my reader's notebook by sharing the characters, setting, problem and solution. Not only are these "I can" statements going to help Billy understand what it is he needs to do, but give his parents a clearer idea, which means they can help with instruction at home.

Now let's take a closer look at Lily's summary of "Busting!" By Aaron Blabey. "Lou was busting for the loo but he couldn't find a toilet. When he did find a toilet the line was too long. He tried to go behind bamboo but sadly Lou was in plain view. Luckily he found a brand new toilet and did a great big wee ". Automatically we can see that this summary is going to be sitting further along the continuum than the last. This is what I noticed Lily could do. Unlike Billy, Lily is able to summarise a story by selecting and discussing the information that is important. The next step on the continuum is to summarise important parts of a story such as chapters or sections. Combining this with the knowledge that Lily is reading instructionally at a level M and is beginning to read short chapter books, I think this is a goal that is definitely achievable.

Lily's reading goal could look like this - I am learning to summarise important information in each chapter before reading the next. Here are some "I can" statements. I can use my inner voice to identify important parts in a chapter. I can use sticky notes to track my thinking as I read. I can write a short summary in my reader's notebook after completing each chapter. Now that we know exactly what it is we want from Lily and Billy and any other students that may have similar goals, we're able to plan differentiated and explicit instruction to help them meet these goals.

As you know, reading goals should in no way be set and forget. Our students are going to need explicit instruction in order to achieve their goals. In this slide are several sample activities that may help them do that. You'll see that the reader's notebook is once again coming into play. On the left is an activity where the student will identify the problem in the story. In the middle is a story mountain. It includes characters, settings, problem and the events that led to the solution. And on the right is a story map that could be used lower on the continuum. Monitoring entries like this will help us keep an eye on students and give them feedback along the way. Webex or over-the-phone reading conferences could also play a key role in their instruction and feedback.

As the student's parents also have a clear understanding of their goals and what they need to do in order to achieve them, I'll be encouraging them to provide them with feedback along the way. Monitoring and giving feedback in a remote learning climate will be covered in more detail in recording 2c of this series. Looking back to my groupings, I could now use the same process to set goals for students in other areas, such as making connections, inferring, and even analysing. The process would also work well when setting goals for all students at the beginning of a unit. While the example we've been through was to set an individual reading goal, the process could be replicated to suit any area of reading and done with all students as a class or even a level. Working together within a PLC would be the perfect vehicle for this and it would fit neatly into the improvement cycle. By identifying who is below, at and above as a team, you ensure that everyone within the team has a common understanding of what you expect. It would also allow you to plan and deliver instruction together and as PLC, principal 4 quite simply states teachers make better instructional decisions together.

While I'd like to say that all of the notebook examples shown in this recording are my own creative ideas, most have been adapted from resources such as Jennifer Serravallo's "Reading Strategies Book". I found resources such as these extremely useful for remote learning as I can easily share information on instruction with parents. Feedback from parents is that they find information on strategies, lesson language and possible prompts helpful and it makes things a little easier when working with their child at home. I think the more information we can communicate with parents around their child's instruction the better. We really are all in this together and it needs to be a partnership between parents and teachers.

Before we finish the presentation, I'd like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Amy Duckworth, Carol Hodgson, Cathy Buchanan-Hagen, Nieta Manser, and Cathie Sutton for the collaboration and time they've put into not only this presentation, but the other two in the series. I thank you very much.

So thanks for taking the time to view this recording. Remember it's the second in a three-part series on unpacking students point of need. The final recording, 2c, is now available. This recording will go into more detail on monitoring students' progress as well as looking at some resources we have available as teachers and how to find them. The series will also be complemented with a webinar. Within the webinar we will look at more practical examples, touch on what some other schools are doing, as well as answer any of your questions. Thanks again and I wish you and your students the very best on your remote learning journey.