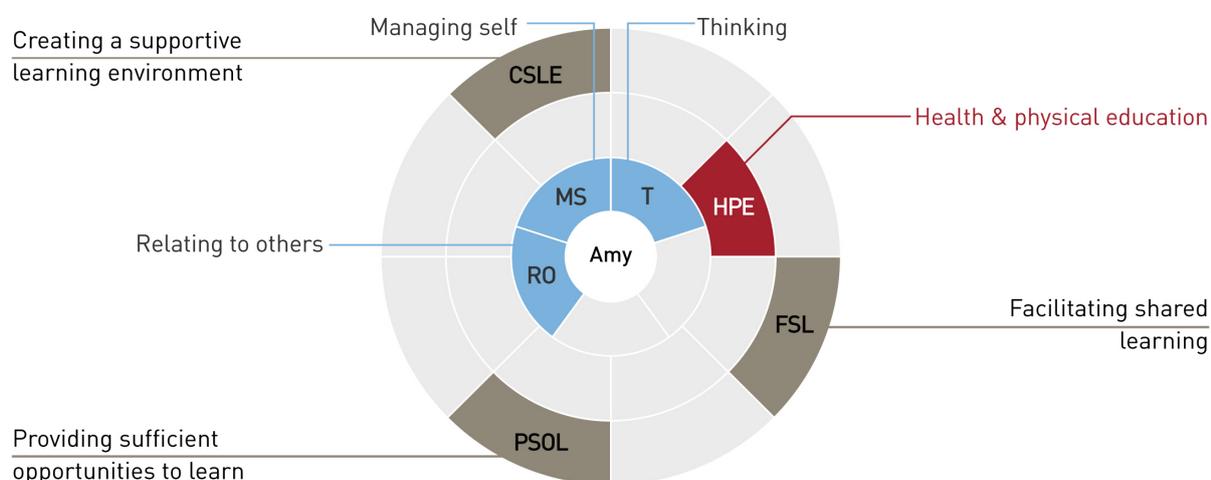


Amy is an active class member

Links to the curriculum



Student background

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|--|
| Name | Amy | Amy has a love of all things musical. She is a very sociable student, but has been quite dependent on adults to initiate and sustain these interactions. She uses a manual wheelchair around school and is beginning to use a power wheelchair for longer distances. |
| Age | 17 | |
| Year | 12 | |
| School | Secondary | |

Amy has cerebral palsy, epilepsy, and autism. She is based in the Mainstream support unit, which includes up to 11 other students. The school receives ongoing and reviewable resourcing schemes (ORRS) funding to support Amy and most of the other students in the department. All of Amy's programmes are planned by the classroom teacher, in consultation with Amy's parents, teacher aides and Amy herself, and are, at times, delivered by the teacher aides. The "Where to next?" section is also planned by the teacher, in consultation with all involved.

Seven learning stories

- 1. Amy and Petra colour sorting in mathematics** 18 October 2007
- 2. Amy and Petra reading** 3 March 2008
- 3. Amy helps staff** 19 March 2008
- 4. Lunchtime initiative** 22 March 2008
- 5. Amy sees the funny side** 6 May 2008
- 6. Amy encourages Petra at music therapy** 11 August 2008
- 7. What's for lunch?** 21 August 2008

This string of learning stories shows Amy relating to others over a 10-month period in a variety of contexts. She is able to think things through and take the initiative with her learning, managing a variety of social situations with increasing confidence and independence.

Amy and Petra colour sorting in mathematics

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Students | Amy, Petra | Date | 18 October 2007 |
| Topic | Sort shapes by colour | Observer | Keryn (teacher aide) |



Today, during mathematics, Amy was sorting coloured bears into dishes. Petra indicated that she wanted to do the same.

When it was set up and they were both sorting the bears, Amy kept encouraging Petra by saying "That's it Petra, you can do it".

When they had finished, Amy said to Petra, "You did it!"

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Participating and contributing, Relating to others

Amy was able to incorporate Petra into the activity she was engaged in.

Thinking, Managing self

Amy was able to continue sorting objects by colour while Petra was doing the same activity.

Learning areas

Level 1 mathematics and statistics: Number and Algebra: number strategies

Amy was able to group objects by colour.

Level 1 health and physical education: Relationships with Other People

Amy and Petra were able to share in the same activity, demonstrating respect through co-operation.

Where to next?

Key competencies

We will explore other parallel activities that Amy and Petra can work on with minimal guidance where they can both learn by each other's modelling; for example, seriation activities.

Learning areas

We will increase the number of colours to be sorted; increase the variety of objects to be sorted; mix the type of objects to be sorted, and introduce sorting by another variable, such as size.

Amy and Petra reading

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Students | Amy, Petra | Date | 3 March 2008 |
| Topic | Shared reading | Observer | Katrina (teacher aide) |



At the beginning of reading time, Petra was sitting at the table with her favourite book, "I'm the King of the Mountain". She was waiting for me to finish what I was doing so that I could read it to her.

Amy came across and said, "I'll do it" and proceeded to read the book to Petra, much to Petra's delight.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Using language, symbols, and texts

Petra communicated the fact that she was ready for reading and Amy interpreted the message and read the book to her.

Participating and contributing

Both students were actively involved in shared reading time.

Relating to others

They both shared a common activity thus consolidating their friendship.

Learning areas

Level 1 English: Listening, Reading, and Viewing: purposes and audiences

Amy showed an understanding that texts can be shared with Petra, the audience.

Level 1 English: Listening, Reading, and Viewing: language features

Amy was able to recognise a number of the high frequency words and, with picture clues, was able to identify the interest words.

Level 1 English: Speaking, Writing, and Presenting: purposes and audiences

Amy read the book with a great degree of finesse and expression and Petra just loved it. Amy is beginning to convey personal voice when presenting.

Where to next?

Key competencies

We will set aside shared reading time for Petra and Amy to work together.

Learning areas

We will source a wide variety of texts that capture the interests and abilities of both students so they can continue to work together in shared reading time.

Amy helps staff

| | | | |
|----------------|----------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Student | Amy | Date | 19 March 2008 |
| Topic | Language | Observer | Anne (teacher aide) |

Intended learning

- To develop a memory and movement skills.



Amy has become very proficient at matching six pairs of a memory game, as this was the number of pieces that fitted onto the tray of her wheelchair.

Amy and I were working with seven matching pairs on the table. Amy had matched some pairs and became very excited as she pointed to the card I needed to turn over to complete my pair.

"Mrs Pearce, Mrs Pearce, this one!" she said excitedly.

"Great memory, Amy, thanks for helping me out!" I replied.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Relating to others, Using language, symbols, and texts

Amy was working at a pair-matching activity and helped the teacher aide to find her matching pair.

Thinking

Amy used her memory to recall where the matching pairs were.

Learning areas

Level 1 English: Listening, Reading, and Viewing: processes and strategies

Amy was able to name the matching pairs of pictures.

Level 1 health and physical education: Movement Concepts and Motor Skills: movement skills; science and technology

- Develop a wide range of movement skills, using a variety of equipment and play environments.

Amy has to turn the card pieces over by turning her wrist over – a supine movement (bend backwards) in physiotherapy.

Where to next?

Key competencies

Next steps will include widening the number of participants in the group. We will also increase the number of matching pairs to challenge Amy's thinking.

Learning areas

We will continue memory games for wrist strengthening and extend the number of matching pairs beyond seven.

Lunchtime initiative

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| Students | Amy, Petra | Date | 22 March 2008 |
| Topic | Lunchtime | Observer | Katrina (teacher aide) |

Intended learning

- We caught this one by chance!



Amy and Petra have a supervised lunchtime where they have time to choose their own activities.

Today, Amy was listening to her tape music while Petra was just sitting at a table. Amy came across to where we were sitting and asked if she could take the balls, an activity that Petra is particularly fond of, through to Petra.

I gave them to Amy, who went across to Petra and gave them to her. Petra smiled and Amy then went back to continue listening to her music.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Relating to others

Amy showed support for her classmate.

Thinking

She also identified a need, thought about what to do, and then sought help to meet the need.

Using language, symbols, and texts

She asked a staff member for help.

Learning areas

Level 3 health and physical education: Relationships with Other People: identity, sensitivity, and respect

Amy was aware that Petra did not have an activity and asked staff to get one of her favourites out.

Where to next?

Key competencies

We will create a visual list of activities for Petra to select at lunchtime that Amy could use in the future.

Learning areas

We will provide opportunities for Amy to support other students in practical ways.

Amy sees the funny side

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Students | Amy, Karl | Date | 6 May 2008 |
| Topic | Reading | Observer | Anne (teacher aide) |

Intended learning

- To explore and enjoy a variety of texts.



While I was reading "Greedy Cat" today with Amy, she started laughing. We both cracked up laughing at the wacky picture. It tickled our senses of humour.

Amy was desperate to show Karl the page with the funny picture in the book.

"Look, Karl, look!" Amy implored. The laughter carried on.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Using language, symbols, and texts, thinking

Amy was able to identify and relate the humour in the illustration to the text.

Relating to others

Amy was keen to share her discovery with a classmate.

Participating and contributing

Amy showed her enjoyment and learning of new things.

Learning areas

Level 1 English: Listening, Reading, and Viewing: ideas

Amy was able to identify the meaning within the text with the support of the illustration.

Level 1 English: Listening, Reading, and Viewing: language features

By laughing at the illustration, Amy recognised that a visual can be used for effect.

Where to next?

Learning areas

We will continue discussing a wide variety of texts during shared reading time to expand and deepen Amy's interest in books.

Amy encourages Petra at music therapy

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Students | Amy and classmates | Date | 11 August 2008 |
| Topic | Music therapy | Observer | Anne (teacher aide) |

Intended learning

- To participate in the rainbow ring activities wearing wrist weights to increase the strength in Amy's wrists.



Amy likes music therapy and likes to see that Petra is joining in too. Today, Amy noticed that Petra was not holding the rainbow ring.

Amy passed the ring to Petra and said "Come on, Petra, you can do it". Petra responded by putting her hands on the rainbow ring.

It was lovely to see Amy trying to include Petra in the activity.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Participating and contributing, Relating to others

Amy joined in the music therapy group with her wrist weights on. By passing Petra the rainbow ring, Amy was making an opportunity to include Petra in the group.

Learning areas

Level 1 the arts: Music – Sound Arts

Level 1 health and physical education: Personal Health and Physical Development: regular physical activity

Level 1 health and physical education: Relationships with Other People: identity, sensitivity, and respect

Not only was Amy able to respond to the rhythm of the rainbow ring activity, she also helped Petra to join in and demonstrated respect through sharing and co-operation in groups.

Where to next?

Key competencies

We will encourage the leadership role that Amy is providing for Petra. We will provide opportunities for Amy and Petra to work alongside each other so that Petra is able to observe Amy and follow her lead.

Learning areas

Both students have a love of music. We will provide opportunities for Petra, Amy, and other class members to respond during music therapy as a group.

What's for lunch?

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Students | Amy, Emma | Date | 21 August 2008 |
| Topic | Self-care | Observer | Anne (teacher aide) |

Intended learning

- To assist with self-care.



When I am helping Amy in the bathroom each morning with her self-care, she often asks me what I am having for lunch. A discussion about what is in my lunch box for the day follows and then we discuss what she is having. This conversation always happens in the bathroom.

Today, as we came back into the classroom, Amy asked Emma what she was having for lunch. Emma told Amy that she had yoghurt and then showed Amy her lunch box. A fantastic, out-of-the-blue, two-way conversation followed with no prompts.

Analysis – what learning is happening here?

Key competencies

Participating and contributing, Relating to others, Using language, symbols, and texts

Amy is able to initiate and hold a similar conversation with different people (adult and peer) and in different contexts.

Learning areas

Level 1 health and physical education: Personal Growth and Physical Development: interpersonal skills

Amy became aware not only of what a staff member has for lunch but, through questioning, became aware of what was in another student's lunch box.

Level 1 English: Speaking, Writing, and Presenting: processes and strategies

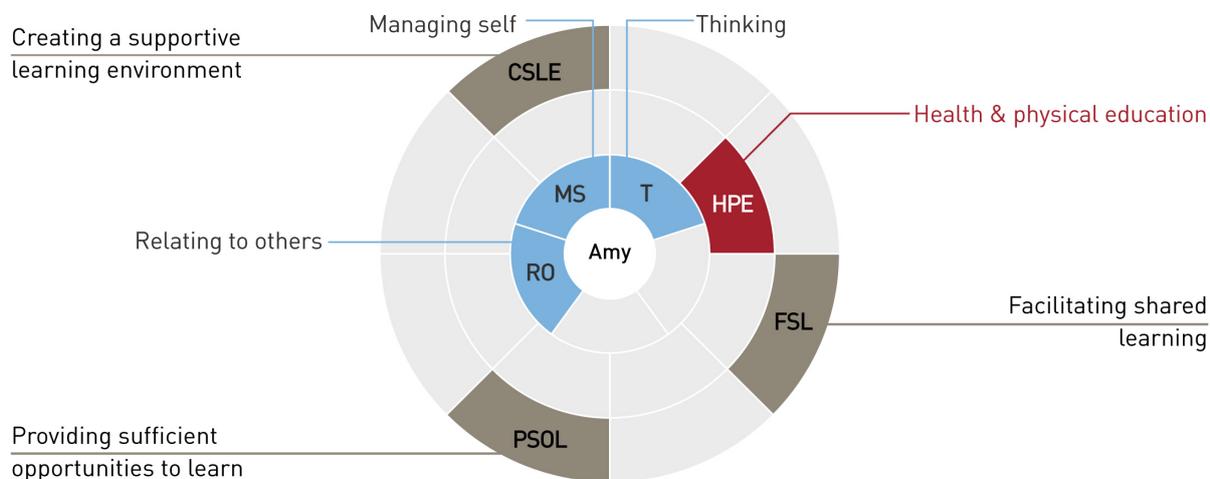
Amy asked staff and a student a very relevant question.

Where to next?

Key competencies

As staff we need to stand back, give students a lot of space and time, and allow these student-to-student conversations to develop.

Reflection – what these stories exemplify



Key competencies

Amy is showing increased confidence interacting with her peers (relating to others) across all aspects of her programme. Meaningful interactions are visible with a wider peer group. Amy is able to identify the needs of others – getting the balls for Petra at lunchtime, reading a story to Petra, and finding the matching pair for the staff. She can share in a two-way conversation with others – the shared humour with Karl over the book and talking about the contents of Emma’s lunch box.

In all of the stories, Amy had to recognise what was needed, whether it was sharing humour, encouraging Petra, passing the rainbow ring to Petra, or reading to Petra. Amy had to think about the context of the need and meet the need by managing herself.

How might these stories strengthen Amy’s identity as a learner?

It is evident from Amy’s learning stories that she is a sociable student who enjoys interacting with her peers. Through this interest (agency), Amy is able to practise and develop her social skills and continue to build positive relationships with others. Amy is able to interact meaningfully in a variety of situations (breadth) with a number of people (depth) and maintain it over time (continuity).

For more information on the four dimensions of agency, breadth, continuity, and depth (ABCDs), refer to *Narrative assessment: a guide for teachers*.

Learning areas

Level 1 health and physical education

In all of these learning stories, Amy is initiating the interaction with her peers. The learning is mainly in health education, within the health and physical education learning area but is being applied within the context of mathematics, language, and the arts.

Effective pedagogy

What does this tell us about teaching and learning in this setting?

The classroom programme provides Amy with plenty of opportunities to relate to and learn with her peers in meaningful contexts (facilitating shared learning). Even with one-on-one teacher aide support it is very important that peer relationships are meaningful. Allowing time within the programme for learning and practising Amy's peer interactions is very important (providing sufficient opportunities to learn). The nature of the classroom environment facilitates peer interaction. All students are encouraged, through modelling, to be active classroom members, to think for themselves, to take the initiative with their own learning, and to help others with their learning too.

Reflective questions for the reader

"When a student has one-on-one support how do you facilitate peer interactions?"

"How do you decide when to 'back away'?"

Useful resources

Ministry of Education. (2002). *Kia tūtangata ai: supporting learning: an introductory resource for teacher-aides/kaiāwhina supporting teachers of students with special education needs*.

Ministry of Education. (2008). *Working with English Language Learners: A Handbook for Teacher Aides and Bilingual Tutors*. Wellington: Ministry of Education.