

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

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Abstract

This research project aims to explore the usefulness of the GROW coaching model on the professional development of classteachers in the Every Child a Writer programme. In my planned change activity, I felt it was necessary to provide the Leading teachers with a more structured approach to working with the supported classteachers.

"The strength of the GROW Model lies in its simplicity. An easy-to-remember framework, it acts as a valuable guide for asking the most effective questions in any circumstance to help an individual or a team to identify their goal and the actions they will take in order to achieve their goal."

Performance consultants international

I also hope to explore with classteachers involved in the programme what they require from effective professional development. The DfE published a white paper in November 2010 entitled 'The Importance of teaching' in which they state;

'... we do not have a strong enough focus on what is proven to be the most effective practice in teacher education and development. We know that teachers learn best from other professionals and that an 'open classroom' culture is vital: observing teaching and being observed, having the opportunity to plan, prepare, reflect and teach with other teachers. Too little teacher training takes place on the job, and too much professional development involves compliance with bureaucratic initiatives rather than working with other teachers to develop effective practice. Only 25 per cent of teachers report that they are regularly observed in classroom practice and two-thirds of all professional development is 'passive learning' – sitting and listening to a presentation.'

The Importance of teaching the Schools White Paper 2010

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Education

November 2010 p19

So, I hope to discover whether, through the ECaW programme, we have moved towards an 'open classroom' culture where teachers are engaged in reflection with other professionals and, if they value this above the 'passive learning' referred to in the white paper.

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

Contextual statement

The Every Child a Writer programme was designed specifically to raise attainment in writing in Years 3 and 4 – and in particular to increase the numbers of pupils achieving a Secure Level 3 or above by the end of Year 4.

It is a Professional development approach for Year 3 and Year 4 teachers who, with the support of a Leading teacher, develop more effective skills teaching writing

I began work on the ECaW programme in September 2008 when it was piloted in 9 Local Authorities across the country. I worked as a Regional Adviser for a year and then became the Programme Lead from September 2009.

I am responsible for monitoring and evaluating the programme and report termly to the DfE (formally DCSF) on progress and issues arising. I, along with 2 additional ECaW specific advisers and a team of Literacy Regional advisers, support Local Authorities involved in the programme to make best use of the funding, share good practice and monitor effectiveness. By September 2010, there were 137 Local Authorities involved in the programme, over 1200 Leading teachers and almost 4000 schools.

Prior to my work with the National strategies, I was the Assistant Headteacher of a large primary school in North East Lincolnshire and I have also worked as a Teaching and Learning consultant for Lincolnshire School Improvement Service.

In all of my roles since 2002, I have focussed on the professional learning of teachers. I have recognised that, for change to take place and to be sustained, the teacher involved must play the central role. In other words, Professional development is not 'done to' teachers, but by them.

Where teachers are involved in the process and see themselves as learners, then the initiatives and strategies are more likely to be implemented and sustained.

When the ECaW programme first began, there were new materials to share with the Leading teachers who in turn shared these with the classteachers. The focus then was to develop a team of highly skilled teachers of writing who were able to draw upon Primary Framework materials such as the Support for Writing and Assessing Pupil Progress. They became, through the national CPD events, confident users of the Primary Framework website and acted as a mentor to the teachers they worked alongside to enable them to access materials to support assessment, progression and planning. This had a significant impact on the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms. In the 270 classes involved in the 2008-9 pilot, headteachers judged that the quality of teaching had increased; with good or better teaching and learning in Year 3 improving from 59% to 73%, and in year 4 quality of teaching judgements

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

improved from 60% good or better to 80% in the year of Leading teacher support.

However, since 2008, there have been fewer materials produced by National strategies. As new Leading teachers joined with high levels of skill and confidence in using APP and SfW it was a good opportunity to shift the focus of the CPD events to be able to focus more closely on, not what to teach the teachers, but how to work alongside the teachers in a coaching situation to develop and embed effective practice. With support through CPD sessions, I hoped the Leading teachers would develop their skills in working alongside others, enabling all involved to play an active part in the professional development opportunity the programme provides.

Engage with a knowledge base

During 2000 and 2001, Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) visited a sample of schools to evaluate the management and effect of teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) activities. They found that;

"Course attendance was the main vehicle for professional development in most of the schools...

More often, teachers worked on a range of loosely related activities that did not always provide good value for money or achieve the intended outcome.

Schools on the whole failed to allow enough time to support effective professional development and to ensure that newly acquired knowledge and skills were consolidated, implemented and shared with other teachers."

Continuing Professional Development for Teachers in Schools

HMI 410

A report from the Office of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools (2002)

Their findings mirror my own experiences; that CPD, in many teachers' minds, meant attending courses. The impact of these is limited in as much as the course presenter can only ever present a general view of teaching and it is up to the CPD 'receiver', that is the teacher attending the course, to engage with the key messages and translate these into effective practice in their classrooms with their class of children. The courses attended can never truly reflect the classroom context the teacher is working in nor the personal and professional experiences and competencies they hold.

Where teachers received more specific in-class professional development, this tended to be through Local Authority employed consultants working as an intervention strategy for teachers and/or schools in particularly difficult

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

circumstances. Teachers' professional development was perceived as intervention, rather than as an expectation for all professionals to reflect on and improve their practice. I believe there is a need to encourage teachers to recognise their own responsibility as learners and teachers and widen the perception of teacher professional development.

Moore (2007), investigating the role of middle leaders in leading and implementing change, discovered;

“Faculties which had extensive one-to-one work with consultants, team-teaching with joint reviews and provided regular coaching opportunities for colleagues, made the most significant progress in embedding both practice and belief shifts. This is because it facilitated reflection as well as refinements of practice and beliefs through discussion with other colleagues... However the in-classroom CPD was not widespread across all faculties. There is still significant work to be done to establish a culture in which individual teachers learn through on-going inquiry into their own practice and that of their colleagues.”

Ringling the changes: the middle leaders' role in leading change 2007
National College for Leadership of schools and Children's services

Coaching has long been recognized as an effective strategy for teacher professional development;

“Good coaching encourages teachers to become more reflective, articulate, exploratory and metacognitive in relation to their work and its impact on learners. As such they are more aware of themselves and their capacities as teachers, more knowledgeable about the activity of teaching and the processes of learning, and more confident to deploy a wide pedagogic repertoire suited to the job. They also develop heightened metacognitive skills of planning, monitoring and refining, all of which ensure that teaching quality keeps improving.”

Coaching for teaching and learning: a guide for school leaders
Lofthouse, Rachel et al (2010)

So why, when the impact of coaching, on-going classroom based enquiry and reflection are clearly evidenced, are they still underdeveloped and not yet established in the culture of schools' professional development? Rachel Lofthouse (2010) offers an answer;

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

“Teachers and coaches need appropriate tools to help them to develop coaching practice. These include ...a language to describe dimensions of coaching, an opportunity to recognise these and a framework and means by which coaching quality can be developed over time .”

So, without the appropriate tools, language and framework, coaching is unlikely to be effective. Lofthouse also raises the issue of the 'quick fix' nature of professional development. ECaW has clear outcomes in terms of pupil attainment and progress. In the 2 years from 2008 – 2010, the LAs were given Impact measures against which to evaluate the success of the programme in their LAs and schools. It is common practice to identify measures of success based on pupil outcomes when planning professional development . However, do the impact measures and termly tracking of pupil progress lead teachers and Leading teachers to look for a 'quick fix' strategy rather than significant changes to belief? If we consider Guskey's (2000) suggestion that significant change in teachers' beliefs and attitudes is likely to take place only after a teacher has experimented and evidenced changes in student learning outcomes we could consider the 'quick fix' solutions being all important in securing a change in teacher beliefs and outcomes. Once a teacher has tried out a new strategy or technique and been given time to reflect on the impact on pupils' writing through the use of focused goals and targets this will lead to a significant change in attitude and it is this change in attitude which will ultimately lead to the '*heightened metacognitive skills*' Lofthouse (2010) refers to.

In Horizons and Whirlpools (2009), John Hattie cites Michael Fullan who uses the notions of the Near and Far Horizon. Fullan argued that;

“the Near Horizon refers to the policy imperatives and the Far Horizon to transformational effects where we see collective informed professional judgment flourishing. If we aim for the Near Horizon (changing our teaching and learning to successfully implement national standards), then my prediction is that the “path well trodden” will be followed with minor deviations. If, however, we aim for the Far Horizon (using national standards to enhance the quality of teaching and learning across the curriculum) then it is likely that we may reduce some of the variance in our system and may even enhance our teaching and learning.”

The ECaW programme is funded by the National strategies and, as such, will always be closely related to national standards. But, how can we focus the work of the Leading teachers (LTs) so that classteachers can aim for the Far Horizon?

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

Planning of a change activity

Why the GROW model?

In 'Ringing the Changes' (2007), Lofthouse cites the work of Swaffield and MacBeath, who suggest that embedding change (transforming beliefs and practice to a new 'system' of doing things) can be secured in part through 'structures'. Structures ensure closer monitoring and support for colleagues in shifting their practice and beliefs. In some instances, these structures can shape a change of culture. However, this can also lead to a mechanical application of the change rather than securing a change of beliefs. In her project, she found when introducing changes or concepts to colleagues, middle leaders;

“used a combination of two different leadership approaches, adoptive (top-down) or adaptive (bottom-up). In most instances, middle leaders introduced the initiative using an adaptive approach with a democratic and collaborative leadership style. Initial resistance of colleagues led middle leaders to switch quite quickly to an adoptive approach with a more coercive or authoritative style of leadership, insisting that colleagues adopted the AfL practices. Later on, when staff had a greater understanding of the initiative and when there was less resistance, middle leaders once again used an adaptive approach with a more democratic leadership style.”

This is reflected in the findings of the external evaluation of the ECaW programme from 2008-2010, undertaken by NFER and University of Exeter. For example, when responding to questionnaires, the evaluators found;

“Whilst some teachers welcomed the opportunity within ECaW to become familiar with APP, there was some evidence that a minority of Supported Teachers were concerned about the emphasis on APP in ECaW.”

This infers that in a minority of cases, Leading teachers had relied upon an adoptive approach rather than an adaptive approach where certain materials and practices were concerned.

Day (1999) cites Nelson's 7 themes which teachers associate with their professional selves;

‘Teacher development, then, must take account of these and the psychological and social settings which can encourage or discourage learning – for example, the teachers' own personal life histories, their professional learning experiences, expertise and school professional learning cultures

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

which provide the day-to-day contexts for their work. If we are truly to engage in the learning project for teachers ..., then interventions into their working lives over a career must be based on an understanding of them.'

I realised that the materials associated with ECaW tended to focus on the content of the Leading teacher support, rather than the context in which they would be working. Whilst we had always expected a level of bespoke support for each teacher involved, we had never explicitly provided models or support for Leading teachers and classteachers to use. We had not provided a framework by which the Leading teacher and classteacher can work together to identify the focus of the visits.

I decided that we needed a greater emphasis on coaching and to support the Leading teachers in developing their skills in working with peers. This has always been a part of the National CPD agenda, but we had not used a specific coaching model or framework. Whichever framework was chosen, it should be one which supports the identification of personal goals related to individual teacher professional development, bearing in mind the context in which the teachers are working.

Guskey (2000), identifies three defining Characteristics of Professional development

1. It is an *intentional* process
2. It is an *ongoing* process
3. It is a *systemic* process

"True professional development is a deliberate process, guided by a clear vision of purposes and planned goals ...Of all the variables related to the effectiveness of professional development, goal clarity is perhaps the most important."

Guskey (2000)

During 2009/10 a small number of Leading teachers in Worcestershire began using the GROW model (Adapted from *Coaching for performance* , Sir John Whitmore 2002) using the acronym;

G – What is the Goal?

R – What is the current reality?

O – What opportunities are available to you?

W – Have you the Will to overcome any potential barriers?

as a strategy to focus the time they spent with the teachers and develop a problem-solving ethos.

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

I asked one of the Leading teachers from Worcestershire to share his experiences of using the model with the West Midlands group at a CPD event in January 2010 (see Appendix 1). Evaluations from the event demonstrated that the model was well received and LTs were quick to recognise how this framework may support their future work with teachers;

“Rob’s case study was the most useful and exciting part of the day. He gave me plenty of inspiring tips and ideas”.

“The exemplification of GROW was most useful.”

So I decided to share the model with the new cohort of Leading teachers to see if this would be a useful strategy for all teachers when developing the teaching of writing.

The advantages seemed to be;

- A strong emphasis on working together on a shared goal – therefore a more adaptive approach;
- A chance for classteachers to reflect on current practices and situations in school – therefore a starting point based on their context, experience and pupils;
- A collaborative approach to deciding on opportunities and then planning actions – therefore greater ‘ownership’ on behalf of the classteacher and an opportunity, where appropriate, to choose the ‘road less travelled’ Hattie (2009).

I was interested to see whether the LTs would adopt the model and, if so, whether they could recognise its usefulness in supporting the coaching process.

The overall aim of this project is to investigate whether the GROW model is an effective tool to support the professional development of the supported teachers in the ECaW programme. As a way of assessing how useful the model is, I assigned myself 3 success questions to investigate;

1. Do Leading teachers adopt GROW as a model?

The use of the model will be entirely voluntary so, once the Leading teachers have been introduced to the model through National CPD event they can then decide whether it is going to be useful to them or not. By finding out how many choose to use the model, I will gain an indication of how useful they perceive it to be.

2. Where the GROW model is used, how useful would LTs perceive it to be?

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

It is likely that, when the model is first introduced, a number of LTs will begin to use it. They are a dedicated group and so a majority of them would follow any recommendations and try to put them into practice. So, it would be necessary to revisit the model over time to see if they have continued to use it. If they begin using it and then discontinue it will be an indication that it was not useful to them.

I was also interested to see how the class teachers respond to the model. Bearing in mind Day's (1999) theory, does the usefulness of the model depend upon the teachers' own learning experiences, expertise and the professional learning culture in which they work? So, I identified a further success question;

3. Do class teachers recognise the GROW model as useful?

It will be interesting to identify where the responses from Leading teachers and classteacher correlate. In other words, is this a collaborative approach through which the classteacher and Leading teacher work together, or does the GROW model become another form of adoptive approach which the LT believes in, but the classteacher does not?

By September 2010 there will be 3 cohorts of Leading teacher; those that joined in the pilot in 2008, those that joined in 2009 and those just beginning. I will use the National Professional development events to introduce the model to cohort 3 Leading teachers. These take place in June (the introduction to the ECaW programme), October and November. Therefore, I will be able to introduce the GROW model in June and then receive feedback on how it is being used through the October and November events.

I will use questionnaires at these events to gather responses from the LT (see Appendix 2). Questionnaires will be a useful way to collect evidence quickly and efficiently from a larger number of teachers. However, there are also a number of disadvantages to questionnaires. In order to create answers which can be compared to one another, I decided that the answers need to be short and, where possible, numerical. I decided to create a number of 'scales' against which the LTs would judge the usefulness of the GROW model;

- *On a scale of 1- 5 , how useful have you found the GROW model to be?*

Whilst this will allow me to gather comparable numerical data, this also limits the amount of detail teachers are able to give and may well limit the range of responses I'm likely to get. So, I decided to add a box for comments. I hope that this will allow for further explanation and detail. I would use interviews and case studies to add

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

supporting detail to the information. When I prepared the questionnaire, I asked for information on just three teachers so that all LTs (regardless of the LA model) would be able to give a response. I was concerned that if I required them to respond with all 6 teacher details it would be too time consuming and limit the detail of the response. I hoped that three would give a large enough range. On reflection, if I were to use the questionnaire again, I would extend the number of responses to at least 4 or 5. In these smaller, informal groups, almost all Leading teachers completed the questionnaires.

I was also interested to see if LTs chose to use the model with all teachers, or whether a pattern emerged as to the link between the GROW model and the teaching experience of the classteachers they were working with.

I also prepared a questionnaire for the Y3 and Y4 classteachers. I wanted to find out if their opinions about the GROW model were similar to the LT opinions. I also planned to ask some more generic questions about professional development. I was interested to see what the classteachers think about Continued Professional development, so I planned two questions, which would be answered by ranking sample answers (see Appendix 3).

I was also interested to see whether there were any patterns in the responses to questions about GROW and professional development and the number of years teachers have been teaching. Day (1999) cites Huberman who identified 5 phases of a teachers' career;

Years of teaching	Phases
1-3	Launching a career: initial commitment
4-6	Stabilization: find commitment
7-18	New challenges, new concerns
19-30	Reaching a professional plateau
31-40	Contraction of professional activity and interest

Developing teachers: The challenges of life long learning C. Day (1999)

Barth (1996; cited in Day (1999)) goes further, to say;

"It appears that life in school is toxic to adult learning. The longer one resides there, the less the learning."

Whilst I was interested to see if there was a clear difference in opinion between teachers in different phases of their career, I was also doubtful of the simplistic view of categorising teacher and agree with Day when he points out that it treats 'teacher

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

as employee' rather than 'teacher as person', and are not enough to alone explain how a teacher will participate in professional development opportunities. In my experience, teachers' attitudes and beliefs are influenced strongly by the context in which they work and peers with whom they work. Obviously, this would be difficult to gauge from a questionnaire. However, I also included a question which asked how long they had been teaching in the year group. This would, at a very basic level, indicate any mobility or change of context against 'stagnation'.

Carrying out a change activity

I introduced the GROW model to Leading teachers at the National CPD events in June 2010. These were the initial events for new Leading teachers who would begin working in supported schools from September. The collection of slides in the powerpoint presentation (see Appendix 4) was entitled 'A suggested way of working'. I felt it was important that the teachers should have a choice about using the model and it should not be compulsory. I had not yet fully decided whether GROW was a useful model and was also well aware that each LA may have different coaching or collaborative models which the Leading teachers were more experienced in. I explained that this model had been used successfully in Worcestershire and shared an example based on Rob's original presentation the previous year. I also produced some supporting questions – see Appendix 5.

I asked for initial responses from the LTs. All responded positively, believing the GROW model to be useful in providing a framework to lead conversations and identify a focus;

"Found the concept interesting and will definitely be trying to engage with it."

"Very useful because it is a model that really keeps a tight agenda."

"It looks useful – will try it in my own school and others."

However, whilst all LTs commented that the model looked useful, a few were concerned about the formality of using a model like this;

"Have been using this model 'informally'. This model hasn't been seen before but the principles have been used/followed."

"Was aware of it from previous training but hasn't seemed appropriate in a formal way."

Some LTs also considered the model useful with some teachers, but perhaps not all;

"The ideas and process definitely useful but probably more so within a school than between 2 schools due to practicalities."

After this initial introduction to the model I would meet with LTs a further 2 occasions. I intended to use the LT questionnaires at these events to discover whether they

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

have gone on to use the GROW model or not. However, following the first event I realised that this would not happen. I was disappointed to find that not one LT completed the questionnaire. One of the difficulties was because a large number of the LTs took the questionnaires away to complete. In addition, some LTs felt that they did not have sufficient time to complete the questionnaires. I realised that LTs would be more likely to invest the time necessary for a full completion where I met with them personally and already had an established relationship. So, instead of using the National events, I used them when I met with groups of Leading teachers at smaller, more local events. I therefore received responses from three Local Authorities who had been working on the ECaW programme for at least a term. I also presented the model to Y3 and Y4 classteachers at CPD events, both national and local, giving an example based on examples of good practice (see Appendix 6). I also amended the key questions handout and gave time for the classteachers to begin to record responses to the questions (see Appendix 7). I suggested that they might then share these responses next time they met with the LT. I also gave them time to identify a possible goal, with some suggestions (see Appendix 8). Each teacher considered the possible targets and graded them according to the impact they thought the goal might have on their class. They then graded each suggested goal according to their own interest. By doing this, I hoped that it would support them in identifying a goal that would both have high impact on their pupils writing attainment, but also considering their own needs and motivation.

Evaluating the impact on own learning

I have chosen to evaluate the usefulness of the GROW model against 3 success questions;

1. Do Leading teachers adopt GROW as a model?
2. Where the GROW model is used, how useful would LTs perceive it to be?
3. Do class teachers recognise the GROW model as useful?

Using results from the questionnaires and case study visits, I have drawn conclusions against each success question.

1. Do Leading teachers adopt GROW as a model?

On analysing the responses, I discovered that the Leading teachers are using the GROW model with 23 teachers against 15 teachers with whom they are not using it. This equates to approximately 61% of teachers.

However, it is interesting to look at the detail behind their responses. In one LA, for example, I received responses from eight Leading teachers. Four of these LTs account for 11 of those teachers with whom they are not using the model. The

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

responses from these four LTs indicated that they had not remembered the GROW model at all. In contrast, four of their colleagues, who attended the same CPD sessions, had remembered the model and were using it. This raises an interesting question – what made the model memorable for 50% of the teachers, yet forgettable for the remaining 50% hearing the same key messages? It would indicate that, for this group of LTs, the GROW model was not perceived as significantly useful when first introduced to it at the CPD session. It also points to the fact that, although chosen as a group of expert teachers, I should consider each Leading teacher as a 'teacher as person' rather than 'teacher as employee' (Day, 1999). It would be interesting to discover, in further studies, the contexts and experiences of those teachers choosing or rejecting the model.

12 LTs (from 3 different Local Authorities) had used the GROW model with 23 teachers. However, not all LTs were using the model with all teachers. In four cases, the LTs had chosen not to use the model with individual teachers.

Grouping responses into years of experience did not indicate a pattern between years of teaching and likelihood of using the model (see Fig 1).

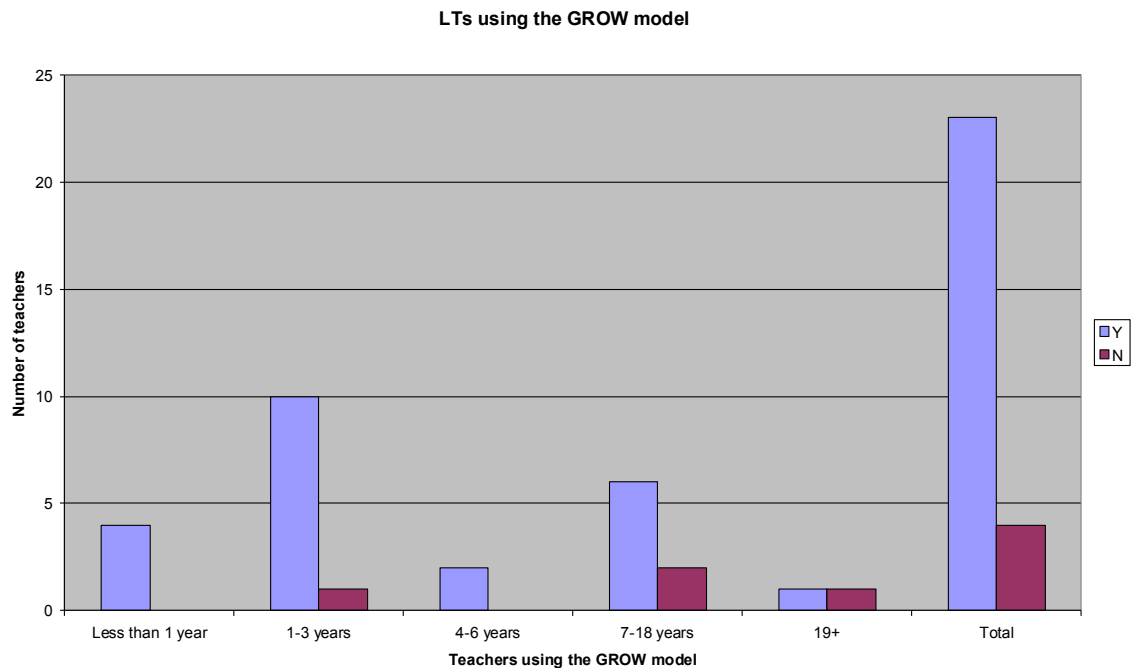


Figure 1 – Leading teachers using the GROW model

In fact, quite opposing examples were given of teachers with whom the model is being used;

“She’s very experienced and wants to do everything as it should be.”

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

"First year as full time year 4 teacher very worried about everything – so GROW helpful"

Instead, the Leading teacher responses indicated that the use of the GROW model was more likely to be linked with the relationship they had established with the teacher;

"Didn't know him. There were many areas we touched on and I needed more time to get to know him/his learners." Teacher teaching 1-3 years or the teachers willingness to develop their practice;

"Teacher not willing to make meaningful changes – very set in her ways."

Teacher teaching 19+ years

"Feels her approach 'works'." Teacher teaching 7-18 years

This final example offers an insight into the difficulty when establishing the form of in-class collaborative CPD that ECaW offers. If *"Good coaching encourages teachers to become more reflective, articulate, exploratory and metacognitive in relation to their work and its impact on learners"* (Lofthouse 2010), then it should be a useful strategy to use with teachers who are not yet reflective and exploratory. However, Leading teachers were choosing not to use GROW with teachers who are not reflective.

However, the case study teachers I met with seemed to offer an alternative view.

One teacher, during the interview, explained;

"One of the most challenging and confrontational parties I have worked with, have recently purchased me a tie and sent me a really nice letter thanking me for the support during my time as their lead teacher. It was only after using the GROW model and establishing a friendly and supportive relationship that they would allow me to suggest literacy materials and other ideas to enhance and develop their teaching and the resources within their school."

So, in this circumstance, the GROW model was an effective tool in establishing the relationship necessary for the exploratory and reflective dialogue to take place.

2. Where the GROW model is used, how useful would LTs perceive it to be?

On the scale of 1-5, Leading Teachers graded the model on average 1.8, where 1 is Very useful and 2 useful. All Leading teachers who were using the model, graded it between 1 and 3, with majority grading 2 (12 responses). This indicates that, where it has been used, the LTs have found it useful.

The reasons given on questionnaires tended to refer to the usefulness of the structure;

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

"This has really helped us to make the most of the time – particularly useful to structure dialogue and planning sessions."

"A clear structure and a good starting point"

In the case study examples, there was also a clear recognition of the usefulness of the GROW model in identifying targets;

"I ... have found this model the simplest for both parties. It helps share the emphasis and encourages the 'other' party to identify the areas they want to improve/change/develop and assists in setting specific, recordable, measurable and specific goals... However, more importantly, I feel it allows for a non-threatening conversational based approach which hopefully and if done correctly, I feel leads to trust and a stronger lasting relationship."

"I have found the GROW model as a very useful tool in helping to give structure to a discussion with teachers. As I said before, I have found it to work well in all circumstances and it is easy to use. It can also be used to set large and small targets - great when teachers are able to work in smaller or bigger steps."

3. Do class teachers recognise the GROW model as useful?

I asked two groups of Y3 and Y4 class teachers to complete the questionnaire. In one group, of those 17 who responded, nine said they intended to use it, and six were undecided until they had talked it through with their LT. Four said they would not. Reasons given for using the model recognised the framework as useful;

"It gives goals for myself to work on and helps to identify strengths and weaknesses".

"To help me focus on the best ways of helping me and the children to improve."

Those who chose not to use GROW felt it was not focussed enough;

"Too vague. It's not a structured enough framework for me to base my objectives on."

or were uncomfortable in the model, or had not experienced anything like this before;

"This is too 'new' for me."

In the second group, none of the classteachers opted to use the GROW model. Both groups had been working with their Leading teacher for over a term, and both sets of LTs had been introduced to the GROW model at the same time with the same CPD materials. The only difference was that the GROW model had also been introduced to the classteachers in the first group. In the second group, it had been up to the LTs alone to share the model. Therefore, where classteachers heard about the model

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

directly, the majority decided it was useful and planned to use it. It seems ironic that, in order to establish a coaching model, it is necessary to invite teachers to an out-of-school training session.

When grouping the teachers according to the years they had been teaching, there were no clear patterns between those who chose to use the GROW model and those that didn't (see Figure 3). However, when grouping the teachers into the years in which they had been teaching in Y3 or Y4, it was clear to see the 'new challenges, new concerns' (Day 1999) in those teachers who had been teaching for 7-18 years. They had all moved to a new year group, and all had chosen to use the GROW model. In the years of 'initial commitment' an equal number of teachers said they would use the model as those who wouldn't. However, more teachers chose to use the model when they moved to a new year group within 1-3 years. So it appears that there is a connection between the number of years teaching in a year group and the uptake of the GROW model.

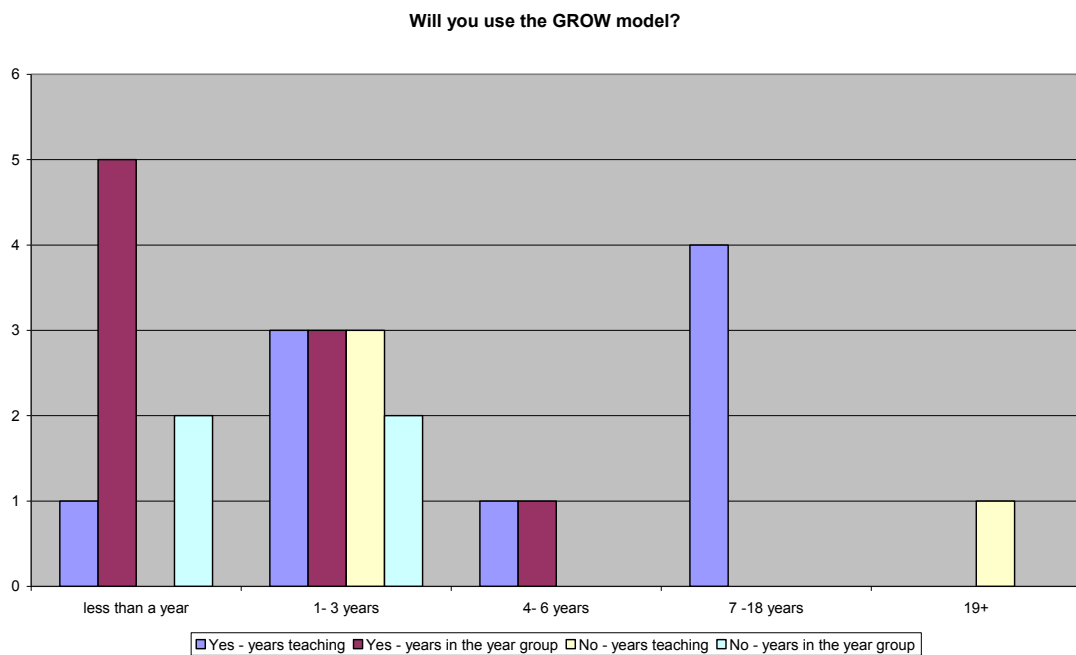
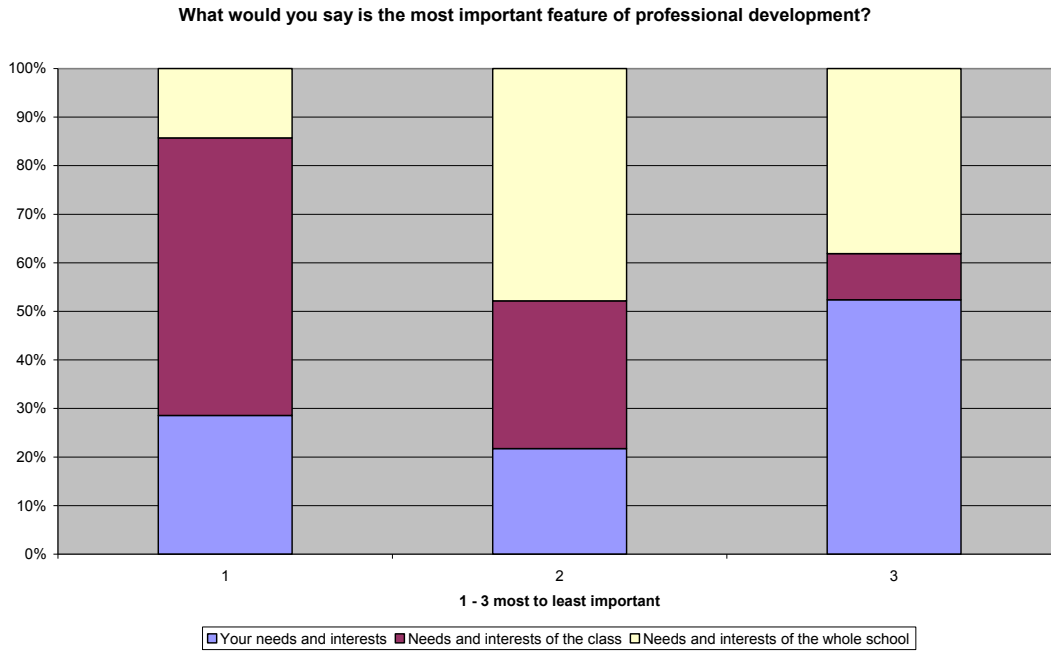


Figure 3 – Teachers using the GROW model

I was also interested to find out whether a classteacher's opinions about professional development were linked to their opinions of the GROW model.

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011



The majority of teachers identified the needs and interests of the class as being the most important feature of professional development, followed by those of the school. Fewer than 30% of the teachers questioned thought their own needs and interest were most important, and more than half ranked this as third on the list. This indicates that the majority of teachers do not associate their own interests as being important part of CPD, and this may explain why some teachers felt that they didn't 'need' ECaW. Rather than professional development being an entitlement for all teachers to develop their own practice and skills, it is seen predominantly as a method of pupil or school development. This indicates that, for those teachers questioned, professional development is closely linked to pupil outcomes and, therefore, intervention.

Out of school events e.g. training courses were ranked as the most useful by 26% of respondents and over 50% ranked it as either 1 or 2. This indicates that, although the Secretary of State may recognise this as 'passive learning' (2010), most teachers would say it was the most useful form of professional development. In-class activities, feedback from lesson observations and joint work with colleagues; what the Secretary of state would refer to as '*open classroom*' culture' (2010) were each chosen by 19% of teachers respectively.

Reading publications and journals was ranked lowest by most teachers, with two-thirds of teachers ranking as either 5 or 6 on the scale.

Although a very small sample, it does give an impression of the type of professional development these teachers recognised as useful. However, it is also essential to

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

recognise that the questionnaires were completed at an out-of-school CPD training session. So, it is possible that this group of teachers are not representative of all teachers, and perhaps those who value other forms of CPD had chosen not to attend the session.

When comparing the responses of those who said they would use the GROW model with those who wouldn't, there is a slightly different distribution of responses. Those using the GROW model were more likely to grade lesson observation and feedback as 1 for most useful, and only two responders chose Out-of school events as the most useful, compared with six who were not using the GROW model. It is not clear, due to the timing of the questionnaires and LT support, whether this has been due to the ECaW work undertaken so far – which has led to a change in belief; or an existing belief. It would be useful, in further studies, to give a series of questionnaires to see if there are changes over time.

Conclusions and further learning

- For the model to be adopted in most cases, both LTs and classteachers need be introduced to the model. Where LTs are responsible for sharing the model, they will do so when the relationship is established or when they are experienced in their role as development leaders.
- Where it is being used, LTs and classteachers are finding it a useful way of focussing the discussions and identifying next steps. Classteachers have found it useful to reflect on the 'reality' of the context in which they work, rather than trying to achieve something unrealistic.
- Goals chosen have focussed on three specific areas; developing the use of Guided writing, establishing Talk for writing strategies, or planning a unit following the teaching sequence for writing. These are in line with the purposes and aims of ECaW.

As a result of this project, further questions have been raised;

- To what extent do those LTs, who chose not to use the 'formal' GROW model, apply the model informally to their work with classteachers?
- To what extent does the use of the GROW model alter teachers beliefs of professional development?
- What experience is gained by the LTs through the use of the GROW model with colleagues and how does this enhance their own professional development?

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

Dissemination of what has been learnt

I have had the opportunity to disseminate the findings of this project in a range of forms and methods.

As the research was ongoing, I have had the advice of colleagues; particularly the Regional adviser working on the ECaW programme. I have been able to share my findings with her informally through team meetings where findings were used to inform the content of support for Leading teachers over the last two terms.

I have also had the opportunity to share the findings with the Primary Literacy Senior Adviser team at the termly meeting. This involved explaining the overall aims and methodology of the project, opening up a useful discussion about engagement with professional development and the future of professional development in education over the coming years.

The ECaW team uses a web-based forum to communicate with ECaW Leading teachers around the country. There are currently over 1400 members of the closed forum which is widely used to share ideas, resources and opinions. This will be the ideal forum through which to share the findings of the project and I intend to attach a full copy of the report to the forum.

Accessing peer support, coaching and/or mentoring

Sue Reid, ECaW Lead consultant and LT colleagues from Worcestershire	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• initial inspiration through their presentation of GROW model• support via their enthusiasm and experience in using the GROW model and provision of contacts to Leading teachers.
Barbara Derbyshire National Strategies ECaW Regional advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• supported the planning of the CPD sessions• provided additional experience and contacts
Julia Myers – Subject leader for English, Sheffield Hallam University	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support to develop the focus necessary to plan this project.• effective use of open, impartial questions and dialogue strategies were a useful model when carrying out interviews with case study subjects• a useful source of research evidence to develop my

'How useful is the GROW model as a professional development tool for teachers?

Emma Rogers February 2011

	understanding of continuing professional development for teachers.
Primary Literacy Senior team	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• discussion helped to formulate the conclusions and their opinions were a valuable source of additional consideration.