

# Whole-class marking



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## What's the idea?

Teachers read a whole set of books – without marking each individual student's work – and then share feedback as a whole-class activity in the following lesson.

## What does it mean?

Originally inspired by the Michaela Community School (where the belief is that marking forces an over-reliance on teachers and wastes valuable teacher time), whole-class marking is now widely accepted as an efficient method of feedback.

Instead of writing individual comments in every student's book (which is time-consuming and often ineffective), teachers read a set of books, make strategic notes and then give feedback to the whole class at once. This strategy is all about making students responsible for their own learning.

## What are the implications for teachers?

This can save you a lot of marking time. Plan to read around 30 books in 15 minutes (meaning you should be able to read the writing of every child you teach once or twice a week).

Make strategic notes as you read. Things to note down include recurring spelling and grammar mistakes, names of students who need something following up individually, shared successes and individual triumphs (you can put a tick in the margin next to work you'd like students to read out) and common areas of weakness or misunderstanding.

Try to give feedback as close to the time of writing as you can, ideally the following lesson, so that students can remember the original task. If you see lots of common spelling and grammar mistakes, teach the corrections – you could

then test and encourage students to self-correct in their own work.

Share the positives and celebrate the most successful examples. If you have a visualiser available, use it to talk-through exactly what makes each piece so good. Model the most common weaknesses too. Discuss together how they can be improved and then ask the class to improve their own work in a different colour pen.

This method also works for in-class instant intervention. Circulate with your notepad during silent writing time and then use a mini-plenary to feedback halfway through the task.

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

- » Facer J (2016) Giving feedback the 'Michaela' way. Available at: <https://readingallthebooks.com/2016/03/19/giving-feedback-the-michaela-way/> (accessed 26 October 2018).
- » Kirby J (2015) Marking is a hornet. Available at: <https://pragmaticreform.wordpress.com/2015/10/31/marking-is-a-hornet/> (accessed 26 October 2018).
- » Strachan S (2017) Why I love whole-class feedback. Available at: <https://susansenglish.wordpress.com/2017/10/23/why-i-lovewhole-class-feedback-other-time-saving-feedback-strategies/> (accessed 26 October 2018).
- » Fletcher-Wood H (2017) Guiding student improvement without individual feedback. *Impact* 1: 36–37.