Using student produced notes to foster independent learning

Rationale

• Students have developed a “grind school” mentally making them increasingly dependent on teacher prepared notes
• Students being “spoon fed” by teachers
• Education theories tell us that people retain up to 70% more by doing
• Students requested more notes
• Develop independent learning

Methods

• Students produced their own notes on various topics over a set period
• Guidance on good note making and copies of the syllabus were provided
• Notes were corrected by the teacher
• Students repeated the same exam as previously sat prior to research and results were assessed

Results

82% of students improved their grades
One student remained at the same grade
3 students lowered their grades but had reasons when questioned
The average grade increase was 4%
Adjusted average is 7% when decreases and no change are removed

Conclusions

• Students grades improved
• Students felt more confident
• Students became more independent and were better able to take control of their own learning
• Students were more focused
• Improved grades showed students that their efforts had produced actual concrete results

Student comments

• “I’m finding this year much more productive; making notes is really helping me with my revision”
• “It is useful to get the syllabus requirements so that we know important info to take from our books when note taking”
• “Correcting the study notes is very helpful”

“The book gives a lot of info that we don’t need to know and leaves out a lot of info that we do need to know so notes would help”

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