

# 50 MORE ACTIVE LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGIES!







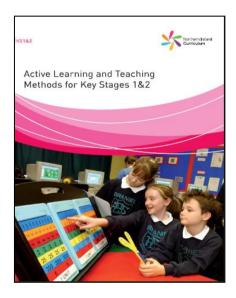


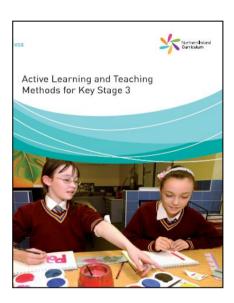


### **FOREWORD**

This collection of active learning and teaching strategies is designed for supplemental use with those already contained within the Northern Ireland Curriculum publications:

- 'Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stage 2' at <a href="http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/docs/key stages 1">http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/docs/key stages 1</a> and 2/altm-ks12.pdf and
- 'Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stage 3' at: http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk/docs/key stage 3/ALTM-KS3.pdf





These books give practical step-by-step instructions on how to implement a varied range of activities aimed at creating a stimulating, enriching, challenging and focused classroom environment for both learner and teacher. Activities include: 'Carousel, Diamond Ranking, Fist-to-Five, Graffiti Board, Hot Seating, Jeopardy, Jigsaw, Memory Game, Snowballing, Think, Pair and Share, Traffic Lights' and 'Two Stars and a Wish' etc.



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Pretend, during a practical demonstration (Art, HE, T&D, Science etc), not to know how to do it. Ask the pupils for ideas and to guide you through the demonstration

### **'3B4ME'** 2.

Pupils must ask 3 peers about something they do not understand. If they still do not understand, they then have permission to ask the teacher.







- Brain Do I remember anything relevant?
- Book Does the book have the answer?
- Board Does the board have the answer?
- Buddy Can my buddy help me?
- Boss If not, can I ask the boss?

### 4. 2 Minute Challenge

Give pupils a topic and put a countdown timer on the board (e.g. a virtual ticking bomb!). They have 2 minutes to write down as many words as possible that relate to the topic. These can represent feelings, problems, actions, causes, consequences, limitations etc. Prizes can be allocated to agreed winner(s).



- **Rally Coach** (See also 'Each One Teach One' in NI Curriculum Publication)
  - Pupils work in pairs, one piece of paper and 1 pen between them
  - Questions/problems are written on the interactive whiteboard
  - Pupils are given time to work in pairs on the question/problem, prompting and coaching each other to an agreed answer
  - Correct answer is given on the interactive whiteboard
  - Pupils give each other a 'High five'/clap on the back/round of applause for correct
    - A variation on the activity is as follows:
  - Partner A works on the first question/problem while Partner B watches, listens, coaches and praises
  - Partner B solves the next problem while Partner A watches, listens, coaches and praises
  - Partners take turns until the task is complete

### **Popcorn Share**

- Teacher poses a question or problem with multiple answers and gives 'think time'
- When the teacher calls 'Popcorn', pupils quickly and voluntarily pop up from their chairs one at a time to share their answers.
- Pupils who are seated write responses and mark incorrect answers
- Inaccurate information is discussed at the conclusion of the activity







- Teacher asks a question or sets a problem and gives think time
- Next, teacher calls 'Stand up, hand up, pair up'
- Pupils stand, put their hand up and pair up with a pupil from a different table
- Pupils engage in pair discussion, talking over the question/problem with their new partner

### **Paired Heads Together**

- Teacher poses a question and gives 'think time'
- Pupils record their answer
- Pupils pair up with their shoulder partner and share their answers
- Each pupil records his/her partner's answers
- Pupils then pair up with their 'face partner' and exchange answers



- 'Think, Pair, Write' (See also 'Think, Pair, Share' Strategy in NI Curriculum Publication: 'Active Learning and Teaching Methods')
  - Pupils discuss responses to a question with their partner
  - Instead of verbally sharing answers in teams or with the class, pupils are invited to write down their ideas

### 10. 'Think, Write, Draw, Pair, Share



Pupils write or draw their own ideas before they pair up to discuss them with a partner. This allows pupils to more fully develop their own ideas before sharing

### 11. Mix, Freeze, Pair

- Pupils walk quietly around the room while music is playing
- Teacher stops the music after 10 seconds and announces 'Freeze'. Pupils have to stop and stand still on this command
- When everyone is still, give the instruction 'Pair.' Pupils pair with the person closest to them and link arms to show they are partners



- Teacher poses a question or a discussion theme and gives 'think
- Pupils discuss the question or theme in their pairs and then face the teacher when they have finished
- Teacher then announces 'Mix'. The activity is repeated with additional questions/discussion themes

### 12. Random Reporter



After a 'think, pair, share' activity, the teacher picks a team by its name. Each team member has a number, e.g. 'Bumble Bees, Number 4.' This individual reports the answer to the teacher on behalf of the group





## 13. 'Who Am I' game

### Version 1

All pupils get a card which has an answer first and then a question. The answer on each pupil's card will be to a question on the card of another pupil. The game flows like a chain requiring each pupil to listen carefully for the question as he/she may have the answer. For example:



- 'I am Vitamin C. What is the mineral that I help to absorb?'
- Next: 'I am iron. What is the recommended daily allowance for me as a teenage girl?'
- Next: 'I am 14.8 mg/day. Who/what is...'

### Version 2

- One pupil leaves the classroom and the class chooses a personality from the area of current study (historical, literary character, inventor etc.) or geographical feature etc.
- The pupil is invited back in and has to ask questions of the class to discover his/her identity

### 14. Ten (Twenty) Questions

 Select a pupil and put a post-it note with a key word, phrase, name, definition or theory etc (linked to a unit of work/area of study) on their forehead.



 Challenge the pupil to find out what the word/phrase etc is by asking the class up to ten (twenty) questions. The class can only respond with 'Yes' or 'No' Pupils could, alternatively, work in pairs/groups to carry out this activity.

### 15. Question Catch

• Throw a bean bag/soft ball to a pupil when asking a question. The catcher answers the question and throws it to another pupil with a new question (relating to the unit of work/topic). If the catcher doesn't know the answer, then can pass the question on by throwing the bean bag/soft ball to someone else.



The game can also be played as a team game. The beanbag/soft ball is thrown by a
member of a team to another team. If the pupil who catches can answer the question,
he/she scores 3 points for their team. If they can't, they throw it to another team to
score 2 points. If they can't, it is thrown again for 1 point

### 16. Heads Together

- Pupils are placed in groups of 4-6 and each is given a number
- Teacher poses a question and gives pupils individual thinking time within their groups
- On the command 'heads together' the pupils stand up, lean to the centre of the table (as in a rugby scrum), exchange their thoughts and agree an answer for their group



- Once they have decided, they sit down. Once all groups are seated, the teacher knows the whole class is ready.
- Teacher shakes a dice or simply calls a number 1-6. The numbered pupil responds as spokesperson for the group by writing the answer on a sheet of paper or whiteboard and standing up



- On signal, each spokesperson shows their answer at the same time
- Alternatively, instead of each spokesperson writing the answer and simultaneously sharing it on command each can simply verbalise it.
- Award points for the correct/best/most humorous answer

### 17. Speed Dating



This is a fun and informal Assessment for Learning activity which works particularly well at the end of a unit of work as well as for GCSE, AS, or Alevel revision (e.g. it can help pupils practise their oral exam questions for Modern Languages).

- Pupils sit in rows, facing each other. The questioners on one side of the row and the responders on the other.
- The questioners have a time limit (e.g. 3 minutes) to question the pupils facing them. A countdown clock could be displayed on screen to add an element of time pressure.
- After three minutes, the questioners must then score the answers given by the person they were questioning, based on success criteria agreed beforehand in class.
- After this, the pupils who were answering the questions move up one place so that the questioners always have someone different to ask questions to.
- Halfway through, swap the original questioners and responders round so that they also get the chance to answer and pose questions.
- At the end of the activity, hold a class debrief and invite pupils to give feedback on the answers of their peers.

### 18. Send a Problem

- Each pupil at a table group writes a revision question on one side of a card/A4 sheet of paper about something relating to a unit of work/aspect of study they are not sure about
- The home group reaches a consensus on each member's question and writes an answer on the reverse side of the card/A4 sheet of paper
- Each group's stack of questions is passed to another group which attempts to answer the questions while checking to see if they agree or not with the answers of the sending group. If not, they write their alternative answers.
- Stacks of cards may be sent to a third and fourth group before they are returned to the sending group which will discuss the alternative answers

### 19. Question Envelopes (variation on 24 above)

 Invite pupils in groups to write 1-3 questions on envelopes about things they are unsure of/want to know more about linked to the unit of work/the learning outcomes/exam module etc.



- Distribute so that each group has an envelope
- Give 3 5 minutes per envelope. Pupils in each group discuss and write answers to the questions on a post-it note and put in envelope
- Pupils pass envelopes on after the allocated time until all questions are answered and a variety of possibilities/solutions offered
- When all envelopes have circulated, invite each group to read out the questions and responses in their envelope





Upon completion of a team/group activity, a member from each team/group is invited to stand. This pupil will 'stray' to another group in order to share information



- Those pupils standing are invited to move to a team with an empty seat
- These pupils compare their team's answer(s) with those of the new team
- On teacher's cue, the roving pupils return to their original teams and relay the answer(s) from the other teams which the home team discusses.
- If there is a discrepancy, the teams may rework the problems, change the answers or decide to stick with their original answer

### 21. Circle the Sage

 Teacher polls the class to find out which pupils have a special knowledge to share, e.g. who was able to solve a challenging Maths homework question, who knows the chemical reactions involved in salt breaking down snow and ice etc



- These pupils (the sages) stand and spread out in the classroom. The rest of the class surrounds the sages with no two members of each team/table group going to the same sage
- The sage shares what they know while the classmates listen, ask questions and take notes
- All pupils return to their teams/table groups. In turn, each explains what they have learned. As each pupil has gone to a different sage, they compare notes
- If there is disagreement, pupils stand up as a team/table group
- The disagreements are discussed as a class and resolved
- 22. **In the Hot Seat** (Similar to 'Hot Seating' Strategy in NI Curriculum Publication: 'Active Learning and Teaching Methods)
  - Either, choose one pupil to take the 'hot seat.' The rest of the class volunteers questions which the pupil in the 'hot seat' must aim to answer correctly. If the pupil in the 'hot seat' gets an answer wrong, then he/she is 'out.'
  - Or, choose a character/person/geographical feature etc for the pupil the pupil to become based on a topic based on what they have been learning. The rest of the class comes up with relevant questions to ask that character etc. Pupil in the hot seat must answer as many of the questions as possible as that character/person/geographical feature etc in front of the class.
- 23. 'Say What You See' Carousel Learning Intention Activity (similar to the 'Visual Learning Journey' idea demonstrated during the KS3 Active Learning course. See also NI Curriculum Publications: 'Active Learning and Teaching Methods for KS2 & 3)

### Version 1

- Display pictures/props which are associated with a text/topic on tables around the room
- Pupils move around the tables, write down what the props mean to them
- Pupils contribute ideas on what they think they are going to be learning/studying about in the lesson, series of lesson, unit of work





### 'Version 2

- Pupils work in pairs, one facing the interactive whiteboard and the other with his/her back to it.
- Put up several images in relation to the lesson.
- Pupil facing the IWB has to describe to the other what the lesson is going to be about based on what he/can see

A variation on this activity is as follows: Pupil facing the IWB has to describe to the other what the image(s) is(are) without saying the word(s). If the partner gets it(them) right, then he/she gets £1. If pupil earns £5, give an incentive prize.

### 24. Pictionary

- Divide the IWB/blackboard in two
- Give a pupil from 2 opposing teams 10 seconds to look at a concept/idea/something to draw (linked to the current area of study)
- When the time is up, each pupil should start drawing on their side of the board until a member of their team correctly guesses and shouts out the item. The artists can only use images, and no letters or words.
- As moderator, the teacher needs to listen carefully to the suggestions being shouted out by the teams
- The team with the correct guess wins a point
- Each team nominates their next artist and the process is repeated
- The team with the most points at the end of the game is the winner

### 25. Bags of Character

- Gather an assortment of bags/boxes/containers old toolbox, small handbag, suitcase, gym bag, first aid box, shopping bag, saddlebag, computer bag etc.
- Put a series of items in each bag/box/container the items could link to a unit of work/area of study and suggest a character from a story, an historical personality, an inventor, scientist, explorer etc.
- Working in groups, the pupils should look at the items in their bag and build a character around these
- Each group should then present its character in turn to the rest of the class using the items in their bags to justify their choice of character

### 26. Dustbins of the Famous



A slight variation on 'Bags of Character' is to give a list of famous names and a list of items found in their dustbins. In groups pupils are invited to match up the rubbish with the people giving reasons for their choice. They then speculate on what they might find in the dustbins of other celebrities or of fellow pupils.





Gather together some clothes props. <u>Either</u> invite a pupil to dress up as a character related to the area of study while the rest of the class has to guess who it is and what the link is <u>or</u> get the pupils to take one prop out at a time and challenge them to try and guess who it is and what the link is. (Props could also relate to a country, concept, text etc.)



28. Photo Sequencing

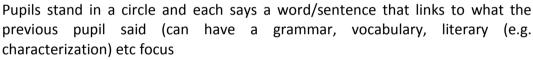
Take photos of stages of a method in making/doing something e.g. a recipe in HE, an experiment in Science, an equation in Mathematics, a design in T&D, daily routine in Modern Languages. Pupils could also be given cards with words or pictures to represent a story. Pupils have to put the photos/cards in the right order.



29. **One Word/Phrase After Another** (this works with pairs, groups and whole classes).

One pupil says a word or statement, another gives a further word or statement which is in some way connected with the first. Encourage the pupils to challenge each other if they feel there is no direct link between the words.

30. **Jigsaw Story** (See also NI Curriculum Publication: 'Active Learning and Teaching Methods for KS3, p 41)



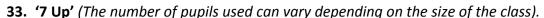


- 31. **Different 'Snowball Activity'** (See also NI Curriculum Publication: 'Active Learning and Teaching Methods for KS3, p 63)
  - Set timer for 2 minutes and give a topic to the class
  - Give a ball to a pupil he/she has to say one thing about the topic and then pass it to the person next to them and he/she does the same
  - Pupils cannot repeat something that has already been said. They have to
    develop it, be more specific or say something new. They need to listen carefully and if
    they repeat something they have to do a bit of extra work (e.g. English one PEE (Point,
    Explore, Explain) paragraph on the topic/character)

### 32. Chain Races

This game is a variation on the theme of 'Chinese Whispers'. The teacher or a pupil decides on a question, preferably relating to the current topic/unit of work (or vocabulary area in Modern Languages), which is then passed down lines of pupils in a question and answer sequence as quickly as possible. The first member of each team asks the question of the second pupil who in turn has to answer correctly and pose the same question to the third pupil etc. The first team to accurately complete the question and answer sequence is the winner.





- Seven pupils come to the front of the class and decide on what message they want to pass on
- The other pupils put their heads down, close their eyes and put their thumbs up
- Each of the seven pupils moves round the room, selects a pupil whose thumb they press down, and passes on their message in a disguised voice.
- The pupils have to repeat the message correctly and guess who it was passed it on to them

### 34. Catchphrase

- Download a Catchphrase PowerPoint template from the Teaching Resources section of the TES website: <a href="https://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/catchphrases-6337018">https://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/catchphrases-6337018</a>
- PHRISE

  Name the angle?

- Choose an image (e.g. Stevie G)
- Put shapes in front of the image with questions regarding the topic
- Invite pupils to offer answers and if correct, remove a tile
- Give the pupils an opportunity to guess the image behind

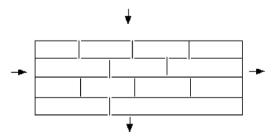
### 35. Blockbusters



Based on the popular television game, the aim is to join hexagons, either on a blockbuster board or on the Interactive Whiteboard from left to right or from top to bottom - (see <a href="http://www.teachers-direct.co.uk/resources/quiz-busters/">http://www.teachers-direct.co.uk/resources/quiz-busters/</a>). Two pupils play against one, the pair moving from left to right while the single pupil moves from top to bottom. The letter initials on the hexagons can represent any topic

being taught. The players have to name a hexagon correctly in order to win it. If they cannot identify it correctly then the opponent has a chance to have a go

### 36. The Wall



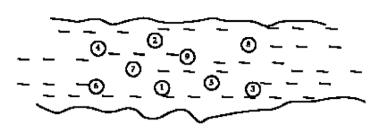
Draw a brick wall, 5 bricks high by 5 bricks wide, on a flipchart, piece of paper or on the IWB. Put numbers, pictures, symbols etc. relating to a topic already familiar to the class on each brick. Divide the class into two opposing teams. One team tries to crack through the bricks from top to bottom while the other has to move from side to side. Each

team takes it in turn to name a brick. Successfully named bricks are then covered with coloured paper or card to map the progress of each team. The first team to connect a line of touching bricks wins.



### 37. Stepping Stones

The teacher either draws a river with stepping stones on the IWB/blackboard or maps it out with pieces of card and string on the classroom floor (see diagram below). This game can be used to consolidate or revise any topic

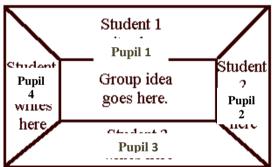


already covered or in the process of being covered with the class. Pupils should, however, be familiar with the symbols on the stones which represent a particular word/phrase/definition/process/experiment etc. The pupils have to name the stepping stones they will use in order to get safely from one side of the river to the other. Pupils can compete against each other in pairs or in teams to see who can get across the river the fastest or without falling in.

### 38. Placemat Activity

This cooperative learning strategy allows students to think about, record, and share their ideas in groups. Each group member writes ideas in a space around the centre of a large piece of paper. Afterwards, the group compares what each member has written, and common items are compiled in the centre of the paper.

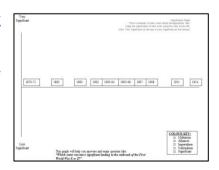
- Assign a topic
- Form groups with up to four pupils in each
- Give each group an A3 page or flipchart page and ask the pupils to divide the paper into 4 parts, leaving a central square or circle. Alternatively, provide the pupils with a readymade template as in the diagram on the right



- Each pupil takes a section or corner of the placemat to jot down their ideas about the assigned topic
- After sharing their ideas, the pupils use the centre of the placemat to write down common thoughts and ideas

### 39. Living Graph

A living graph or fortune line is a graph similar to a <u>chronology</u> timeline which places events along a vertical axis to reflect changes over time. The vertical axis can be used to represent many factors, such as relative importance, degrees of success/failure, danger/safety or happiness/sadness. Pupils work in groups of four and are given an envelope containing a series of statements relating to a topic. They read the statements and consider where to place them on the living graph.



 In History, it can be a good activity to help pupils review chronology and consider the significance of individual events e.g. the origins of WW1 from the TES website (www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/origins-of-wwi-living-graph-6174871) Pupils have to



arrange living graph cards into chronological order and stick these onto the living graph template. The cards are colour coded to reflect acts of militarism, alliance, imperialism, nationalism or people of significance. They then need to create a judgement as to how significant the event was and plot this against the scale (very significant-not significant). This is a good revision activity for the GCSE History and links to the AQA and CEA specifications. The living graph can also be a useful strategy for helping pupils to develop empathy and understanding for the plight of historical characters e.g. the living graph activity on the Suffragettes carried out during the Induction KS3 Active Learning course

- In English and in Modern Languages literature, the strategy can be used to plot emotions of a character in a story
- In Mathematics, there are numerous possible ways that pupils could create a graph from a selection of statements on different themes. For example, pupils could track the number of visitors to a tourist location over a period (beach is declared 'blue flag', leisure centre is built etc.); house prices in a particular area (new road completed, number of houses for rent doubles, local school gets an 'outstanding' ETI inspection report etc.); the record sales of the winner of 'The Voice' (releases first record, completes tour, gets married etc.)
- In Geography, pupils could, for example, complete a living graph of an earthquake, placing statements at the most appropriate places on the earthquake trace (http://www.geoworld.co.uk/livpupil2.htm)
- In PE, pupils could complete a living graph relating to the heart rate of a footballer (etc.)
  during a match (as in the further example given during the Induction Key Stage 3 Active
  Learning course)

### 40. Work Station Active Learning

- Pupils are allocated work stations to prepare recipes in HE/engage in Science or T&D practicals etc
- Pupils are invited to first of all to 'Think, Pair and Share'
- Next they are asked to pool their knowledge in 'group work' to create the recipe, do the practical etc
- At the end, invite them to evaluate at their workstations.
- Select one pupil from each workstation to take on the role of teacher and demonstrate part of the method/process to peers



### 41. Theory into Practice (e.g. in PE)

- Transfer theory lessons to practical sessions e.g. use stations and circuits in the sports hall to actively investigate the circulatory and respiratory systems.
- THEORY INTO TO PRACTICE
- Alternatively, you could do the 'Respiratory Challenge' game.
  - Divide the class in teams and invite them to come up with a team name
  - Use a large countdown timer with quiz music, if desired, to make it more interesting
  - > Have three rounds
  - Winning team gets a small prize



- - 42. Play Doh Learning (Although this example is for Model Learning in Geography it could be adapted for other areas of the curriculum)
    - Show contour lines diagrams
    - Invite pupils to create the landscape from play dough (also useful to model stages of coastal erosion.

# 43. 'T Stamp' Target Setting

- When giving feedback on a piece of work, stamp the work in relation to setting an agreed target with the pupil
- If above target on a regular basis, reassess the target to stretch the pupil

T+	Above target	
Т	On target	
T-	Below target	
H2I	How to improve	

- If below target discuss how to improve and ask pupil to actively plan how they will take action to improve grades and effort. The 'T Stamp' target setting tool can also be used for peer evaluation.
- 'MESEN' (used in Music but could be adapted for other areas of learning) 44.

Materials Expression **S**tructure Form

Value

This should be a progressive process. You can use a combination of letters to assess student work with the aim of always bringing a sense of value and meaning to the pupils. Something that is personal and means something to them will be more readily embraced, enjoyed and retained.

45. **Gallery Time** (pupil peer evaluation strategy)



When all work is completed, put it on display. Gather pupils around to discuss and evaluate the work against agreed criteria and protocols in order to learn from each other. Randomly select a pupil to talk about someone's work that has been particularly successful and why. Encourage them not to pick the work of a friend. The pupil then selects another pupil to evaluate another

piece of work. During the process, the pupils should be encouraged to always be positive about each other's work and use strategies such as '2 stars and a wish', 'positive, minus, interesting', 'positive, minus, positive' sandwich etc always taking care to end on a positive comment.

Summary Word Association (See also NI Curriculum Publication: 'Active Learning and Teaching Methods for other Word Games)

At the end of a class/topic, pupils have the opportunity to write as many words as they can relating to the lesson/topic on the board. The aim is to fill as much of the board as possible.





- Take photos of class from SIMS
- At the end of the lesson invite pupils to move their own photo under either 'red, orange or green' to denote how far they believe they have advanced their learning against the learning intentions for the lesson



## 48. What Stuck with Me Today! (Teacher and Pupil Self Evaluation)



Each pupil is given a post-it note and asked to write down something that stuck with him/her from the lesson e.g. a new skill or piece of knowledge. Invite each pupil to stick their post-it note on the board on leaving the class. This will help you to link back to the learning intentions and determine to what extent to which you met your success criteria.

### 49. Catch Up TV!



- Place a TV Catch Up image at the bottom of the board
- Either place, or invite pupils to place, post-it notes on the TV Catch Up area highlighting things they didn't understand. These can be revisited at the start of the next lesson.

### 50. Twitter Feeds



- Print a template of the internet (e.g. Twitter Box)
- Get pupils at the end of a lesson to submit a question and tweet to another pupil to answer.
- Display on a display board for end of topic revision
- Alternatively, invite pupils to contribute comments, ideas and opinions what they have learned

### See also:

- Geoff Petty's Active Teaching and Learning Strategies at: <a href="http://geoffpetty.com/for-teachers/active-learning/">http://geoffpetty.com/for-teachers/active-learning/</a>
- Mike Fleetham's Thinking Classroom Website for 'Thinking Classroom Strategies and Resources' at <a href="http://www.thinkingclassroom.co.uk/">http://www.thinkingclassroom.co.uk/</a>
- **TES** ICT games, interactive whiteboard resources and activities for Primary and Secondary at https://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storyCode=6447702
- Preview of the 'Teacher's Tookit' by Paul Ginnis at https://www.crownhouse.co.uk/assets/look-inside/9781899836765.pdf