

A record of a Peter Liljedahl strategy used in a recent practicum. My reflective notes are shown in orange.

A record of the use of desks as whiteboards during my second practicum experience – year 9 students.

In an effort to trial some of the strategies used in Peter Liljedahl's book, we incorporated the use of student desks as whiteboards.

This allowed students to solve problems using a whiteboard marker on the desk. Students enjoyed writing on the desks. It was novel and a little rebellious. It solved another problem of students not having a pencil with them. It did improve engagement but it was messier than the vertical whiteboards I observed in practice and not as energetic as getting the students to stand up and enabling them to see the work of others around them. It was also more difficult to see what was being done on desks and there was some misuse of the markers.

There was value in this strategy but the vertical boards worked better.

It was helpful to see that some professional development strategies can be a double edged sword. There were positive and negative impacts when we used the desks as whiteboards. I would trial this strategy again but I would instead find a way to use the vertical whiteboards in the room. An idea I had was to run a rotation of different activities in which student groups in one of the activities make use of the vertical whiteboard in the classroom spit into two sections. It has been helpful to reflect on the way professional development relates to professional practice, to see that it may not always be perfect but to appreciate the positives and adapt those in future practice in ways that improve student outcomes. (APST 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4)