

## SATs Week Survival

*\*The following can be applied to any test/exam period*

**So, all the prep's been done ...** the relevant topics/skills have been taught, the booster classes have boosted, and the pupils have been positively encouraged to do their best!

### What's next?

**SATs week tends to run itself these days in terms of having set guidelines to follow** and staff are well aware and very competent to deliver the practicalities of this annual "stress-fest". Nevertheless, teachers I've spoken to recently generally fall into 2 camps:

1.

"SATs week? Oh, we're fine ... can't do any more now, it's down to the children. They know what they need to do."

or

2.

"SATs week!! A week of worry and sleepless nights ... not to mention the concern over what spin Mr Gove will put on the results!"

**I'm sure you'll have your own way of dealing with this 'testing' time (sorry),** but if you fall into the second camp above, a good idea is to focus on the following fact:

**You can't control SATs, but you can control your response to them!**

Here are some thoughts on how you can positively navigate your way through the week:

#### a) Use some stress-management techniques (for yourself or the pupils)

**E.g. The 7-11 rule about breathing** when needing to feel calmer ... breathe in from the diaphragm (stomach should go out, **not** shoulders go up!) for a count of 7, then breathe out for a count of 11.

*If you do this with pupils, you might want to start with - in for 3 and out for 5 - then build it up.*

#### b) Pupils can learn a valuable life skill lesson from the process of doing SATs

**The process assesses performance at a given moment ... there's one chance to deliver.** Discuss other times when this happens: sports matches/events, music exams, school plays, etc.

**How do they mentally plan for such times?** Ask the ones who seem to breeze through the week with ease. What are they thinking about the process? Or ask them what are good/useful things to think, in order to be confident going into this kind of situation.

#### c) Be kinder in what you say to yourself

**If there's one thing you have control over, it's what you say to yourself.** Yet for some reason, when we're feeling under pressure, this 'self-talk' gets more negative and unproductive. **What sort of unhelpful things do you say to yourself?**

If it's something you can work on for next time, then take positive action.

If it's something out of your control, (e.g. assumptions about others' views of you) let it go.

