

Part 3

Read the following newspaper article and then answer questions 25–31 on page 127. Indicate the letter A, B, C or D against the number of each question 25–31. Give only one answer to each question.

No driving instructor would tell a learner: jump in, drive away and I'll tell you later how you've done. Yet every year trainee teachers are propelled into classrooms with only the promise of an assessment *after* the lesson they are giving, rather than guidance before or during it.

Dr Peter Tomlinson, a psychologist in Leeds University's school of education, believes the idea of the post-lesson debriefing is flawed. His new method, which bears a closer resemblance to that of the driving instructor, is radio-controlled teacher training: a system of monitoring using microphones, earpieces and transmitters which he calls RAP – radio-assisted practice.

To RAP, tutor and student each wear an earpiece, a four-inch two-way radio which can be hidden under a jacket, and a tiny microphone. The student wears the microphone on his or her clothes, so the tutor can hear what both student and nearby children are saying. The tutor straps his microphone on to a finger, so that he can unobtrusively speak into it directions, reminders, hints, criticisms and encouragement – all heard only through the student's earpiece.

It sounds complicated and distracting. Dr Tomlinson agrees, and most tutors who have tried it find they have to think harder about what they should be advising students to do, because they must be concise and clear. All but a handful of students quickly adjust to the tutor's interventions, on average every two to four minutes.

Sue Brown (not her real name) is in her second teaching practice of a Postgraduate Certificate of Education. She explained Dr Tomlinson's presence and wiring to her class of inner-city

High-tech practice as the tutor preaches

*Novice teachers can now
get on-the-job coaching
via an invisible earpiece.*

Karen Gold investigates

10-year-olds by saying he was studying how teachers teach. It was her sixth day in school: long enough for her to discover that her charges were accustomed to control by criticism and shouting. Her aim for herself as a teacher was to resort to neither.

For art-and-craft she had brought in magazines, food packets and dried pulses for the children to make pictures on the theme of food. Before the lesson, she and Dr Tomlinson discussed how she would introduce the activity and agreed on their focus for RAPPING: her positioning in the classroom, vital when children are spread around tables rather than lined behind desks: "scanning", or actively looking everywhere to see what children are doing; keeping the initiative, and not just reacting to attention-seeking or disruption.

At 11 am the children start on their pictures. Within minutes, half a dozen are wandering around. "If you want them at the tables, get them there and reiterate the rules," Dr Tomlinson says. Sue does. They settle. She moves around the classroom, squeezing between tables, stopping frequently. "Positioning," warns her tutor. She shifts to the wall side of the table, so she can see every child.

At 11.25, after a few interruptions, all is reasonably quiet. Even two notorious problem boys are absorbed. "Catch them being good," Dr Tomlinson says. Sue moves towards their table to reward their good behaviour with praise.

Before she gets there, a fight breaks out between two girls at another table. Sue defuses it but the calm is broken. Children start wandering around or squabbling. "Get them back on task," Dr Tomlinson says. "Will you all just sit down," Sue shouts, breaking a resolution. Then she hesitates. "Keep going," the voice urges in her earpiece. "Next time you won't be able to do this," she threatens. The children sit down sullenly. "Next time, nip it in the bud a bit earlier and tell them what *to do*, not what *not to*," Dr Tomlinson advises.

Sue, who is cutting more paper and trying to interest a boy who has done nothing so far, moves to stop the kicking and misses the dried-pea battle under way nearby. A boy ignores her order to move to another table. "Make sure he does it," Dr Tomlinson says. Sue does. "What should they be doing?" he prompts. Sue, sounding desperate, continues: "Will everybody just listen ... Calm down ..."

The lesson continues chaotically until the end when, at Dr Tomlinson's suggestion, Sue manages to get the children sitting down and dismisses them table by table.

- 25 The new system of radio-assisted practice (RAP) is designed to
- A speed up teacher training.
 - B make teacher training more effective.
 - C cut the cost of teaching practice.
 - D make teaching practice less frightening.
- 26 What problem have tutors found with the system?
- A They aren't used to giving advice briefly.
 - B They have to speak quite loudly.
 - C They can't hear what the children are saying.
 - D They find it hard to think of any advice to give.
- 27 What was Sue Brown's aim for the lesson?
- A To control the children without raising her voice.
 - B To be concise and clear in her instructions.
 - C To avoid being criticised by her tutor.
 - D To keep the pupils entertained during the lesson.
- 28 It was agreed that one focus of the RAP communication was to be
- A positioning the pupils round tables.
 - B dealing with bad behaviour.
 - C getting the pupils' attention.
 - D being aware of everyone in the class.
- 29 During the first part of the lesson, Sue follows her tutor's advice by
- A moving the tables.
 - B finding a different place to stand.
 - C going to answer pupils' questions.
 - D continuing to move round the classroom.
- 30 When the class is quiet, Sue's tutor suggests she goes to two boys to
- A check that they are really working.
 - B give them prizes for behaving so well.
 - C tell them how well they're working.
 - D move them to different tables.
- 31 What is Sue too busy to notice later on?
- A a pupil who needs help
 - B a boy who doesn't obey her
 - C children starting to fight
 - D children doing nothing