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Please enjoy this complimentary excerpt from *Unlocking Learning Intentions and Success Criteria* by Shirley Clarke.

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# Foreword

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By John Hattie

We know the power of high expectations by teachers, we know the power of backward design, we know that sense of achievement when we beat our personal bests, we know that progress through to achievement and not achievement alone matters, we know the high impact of teacher collective efficacy; what unites all these ideas is the clarity, appropriateness, and transparency of the intention and success of any series of lessons. This is provided we tell the students what the intent and success look like and thus make them party to the teaching and learning equations. This is what this book is about.

There have been many meta-analyses asking about learning intentions: having clear goal intentions (7 metas with effect = .51), appropriately challenging goals (6 metas with effect = .59), advance organizers (12 metas with effect = .42); and the impact of success criteria (2 metas with effect = .88), mastery learning (14 metas with effect = .61, and worked examples (2 metas with effect = .37). Collectively, these are among the more powerful positive influences. They are part of the Visible Learning message—teachers working together (with peers and students) evaluating their impact on learning, making clear their expectations of successful learning and investment, particularly by being transparent about their expectations via learning intentions *and* success criteria (LISC), ensuring the LISC are not too hard, not too easy, and not too boring, inviting students to see errors and their lack of success at the outset and during the lessons as opportunities to attain the success criteria, while at all times seeking evidence about the impact we are having on the students' journey to success. Differentiation in this model is having similar LISC for all students (see what Shirley says about this in Chapter 4) but allowing different timings and different progression routes to get there. LISC are anchors to this success—provided we understand how students hear,

understand, and are able to do action learning to close the gap from where they start to success and then stopping and smelling the roses of success. This is why a book dedicated to LISC is so critical.

Developing LISC requires skill and knowledge, and we have learned so much over the past decades about how to write, execute, and evaluate them and how to then implement LISC so they become among the most powerful accelerators of learning. They also can be the essence of motivation and engagement—as students can then monitor their progress and see that they are having success in learning such that they want to continue their learning journey and not see classwork as something you finish by handing in to the teacher. This is akin to playing many video games—where the game sets a level (success criteria) based on prior achievement (last score or level) and then provides inordinate opportunities for deliberate practice. When you get to the next level, the motivation to continue to play the game of learning is rewarded, and as we know, many students (and me) can devote large amounts of time and cognitive power to enjoying this learning. My learning has a mission, is not haphazard and random, is not a function of just doing a task, and I know and can enjoy the successes of my investment.

I first met Shirley, the Queen of Learning Intentions and Success Criteria, at a workshop in Chester the day after 9/11. Ruth Sutton had convened many who were working in the area of formative evaluation and assessment systems, and one of the participants entered with a box of her books. Oh dear, another thing to add to the baggage, but this book and interaction changed how I think about assessment. I so much liked Shirley's book *Unlocking Formative Assessment* that I asked her to write a New Zealand edition. As all education is local, kiwis wanted to see their kids, their curriculum, their context. "No," she said, "you write it." So Helen Timperley and I translated the book to kiwi-ese, and it remained a best seller for many years. We have discussed, learned, critiqued each other (now that is fun with Shirley), wine, dined, written a book together, and listened to each other in action, and I have been the beneficiary of listening and working with Shirley—in a similar manner reading this book will allow you to see how she thinks, how she critiques, how she continually wants to improve. And you will be the beneficiary—as will your students.

Shirley has never stopped learning, and one foot is firmly in the realities of classrooms and the other foot is anchored in the research literature. She has learned about product to process success criteria as

an important step forward (i.e., “What do I need to do to achieve the learning intention?”), the distinction between rules and tools related success criteria, ensuring skills are linked to precious knowledge, when and how to decontextualize LISC, sharing the development of LISC with students so they not only own them but understand them, the distinction between mastery and performance intentions, and the optimal time for sharing LISC with students.

Take, for example, this big idea—assessment needs to be seen as a feedback mechanism to teachers and students about how much progress they were making toward success. This means being explicit about what it means by success and tying this to the intention of the lessons. Yes, we had known about learning intentions via many names (e.g., behavioral objectives), but these had not been coupled with exemplars of success or with rubrics of steps to this success; we need both learning intentions and success criteria. We know from the behavioral change research the power of intention to implement and by inviting students to see that their investment and learning can lead to even greater intentions to implement. As an ex-music teacher, I could see how using success criteria motivates—by playing the tune, by listening to syncopation, by watching an expert play; it motivated students to want to get to these standards. Surely, we want all students to achieve mastery, so the questions are these: What do you think is mastery? When is good good enough? Have you translated your expectations so that students know only what success in the series of lessons means but can share and enjoy the struggles of the journey toward success?

Oh, say some, I do not know what success looks like until I get there. What chance, then, of your students getting to success, as they drift, comply (or not), think learning is merely do and do, and discover that school learning is completing (to any standard), handing in, and then going out to play? Then this book is for you, as there are skills, knowledge, and deep understanding about LISC that can turn around the compliant, disengaged, disruptive students to having them join those who participate, strive, and thrive in school learning.

Of all the big ideas that underly the rankings in Visible Learning, LISC are among the most important, but they are not easy concepts. This important book unravels the optimal ways to make them work in powerful ways in your class.