



# Pick and mix

## Method & Rationale

This method is an individualized method which allows students to reach a goal taking different paths (methods or resources).

## Description

- The students will work on a common goal, using different paths towards the goal.
- The teacher provides multiple activities or resources and students can choose which one they would like to do.
- The teacher can use an application like symbaloo or google classroom, to provide the materials if they are online.
- The activities should appeal to different learning styles and be creative.

## Students Outcomes

- Improve their knowledge on a particular topic
- Work as an individual on problem solving
- Use their creative skills to create a solution

## Key Skills

- Problem solving
- Creativity
- Working alone



## Tips

- If possible, use several rooms/areas close to each other.
- Materials can be looked up by students too.
- Method should not be used too often.

## Example:

### Pick and Mix - Example

 <p>Write a twitter conversation between Martin Luther and the Pope after he received the papal bull. It must include 3 tweets from each person</p>	 <p>Design a magazine cover highlighting the main point using images, colours, headlines and slogans</p>	 <p>Create a mind map on the main events in Martin Luther's reformation – it must use key words and images (no paragraphs)</p>
 <p>Record an audio clip making a speech about the events of Martin Luther's reformation you could give to younger students.</p>	 <p>Use your exam papers to answer Q6b on the Reformation. Use the marking scheme for success criteria.</p>	 <p>Write an essay on the life of Martin Luther. It must be 1 a4 page long.</p>



## Evaluation

### Used in following lessons:

Country	Number of teachers	Number of pupils	Aged	Topic
Austria	4	80	14-17	Excel, Excel-Advanced, Java-UML, business
Belgium	2	22	17 - 19	Programming
Ireland				
Spain	3	20	15-17	Spanish, Biology, Ethics
Sweden	2	109	14-16	Electromagnetism, nuclear physics/chemical bonds

### Results of evaluation of students:

Most of the students really like to work with Pick&Mix. We used it to elaborate new but easy to understand topics, e.g. Excel-functions. Students especially liked to watch you-tube-videos to prepare the topic.

One of the most mentioned advantages was, that every person can work in his own speed and can repeat everything as long as necessary. Students also felt more entertained than informed, "it was fun" was the most given answer. They often changed the materials meanwhile they worked out the topics, so they did not get bored by listening to one person for hours.

Part of the students (the weaker once) would have liked to get explained the more difficult details by the teacher. But they also conceded, that they where allowed to ask questions to the teacher meanwhile working in school, so they had any possibility to get additional information from them.

They also liked to do a Pick&Mix on their own, to prepare it for their classmates. The better students feedbacked, that they had learned most by looking for good materials. But also the weaker once had no problems to find good material.

One of the problems student mentioned, where the length of a Pick&Mix assignment. One of the given assignment lasted all over 3 weeks. Some of the students did not like to work on their own over such a long time, because they hardly can do the time management. If the assignments have been shorter or structured enough, it was easier for them and feedback was more positive.

#### Pros

- More fun, because of different approaches – not only listening to a teacher
- Everybody could choose more than one approaches, so topic could be understood better
- Everybody can work with his own speed
- Everything can be repeated as often as possible



- Interesting to look for materials

**Cons**

- You can lose the overview, if the assignment lasts too long.
- Difficult details may stay unobserved.
- You can't be sure, that you understood everything correct.
- Classroom can be a bit loud when we are doing so many different things at the same time

**Results of evaluation of teachers:**

We used Pick&Mix in two different ways. Some of the assignments were done totally by the teacher, that meant all the resources had been looked up, examples had been developed and explanation texts had been written by them.

Second kind worked in two phases. First the topic was divided into several parts and students into groups. Each group had to prepare material for one of the parts. The assignment prescribed different forms of materials, otherwise we would have become only a list with YouTube-videos. The teacher controlled and sometimes completed the materials. Afterwards the whole class had to do all parts of the topic, so that every student was able to pass an overall exam at the end.

Certainly, the first kind has a lot of advantages, being sure about the quality of the materials above all. The most important disadvantage of this type is called "time". It lasts quite a long time to prepare 3,4,5 or more different possibilities to study a topic.

This big disadvantage is avoided with the second type. Additionally a lot of students liked the part "looking for materials" more than doing the Pick&Mix. Of course, materials have to be controlled by teachers, but our experiences are very good.

Overall, we could observe, that students worked very concentrated with the materials. And – best thing – every student did some of the work, no one was refusing work entirely. Having different possibilities to work with a topic, students even lost their panic when facing long texts.

We allowed them to find their own time for breaks, so every student really worked in his speed. We also could see, that students were willing to help the others more than normal, because they have been proud of "their" materials.

Most of the time the results of the tests, concerning the Pick&Mix topics, ended above average, especially nearly without negative marks.

**Pros**

- Very student-centered approach where each student can work to their strengths and hopefully help them enjoy their learning.



- Students are able to focus for a longer period, because they can change the approach.
- Students have more fun and therefore more motivation to work on the topics.
- Students love this method, because they feel more in control of their learning.
- Every student can work in his own speed and can use materials as often as necessary
- With method two student also learn to find information in the internet, to choose good materials, e.g. to evaluate internet-videos
- Students often choose other materials than we did, but their classmates can work better with this, as with ours.
- Stronger pupils can work through an assignment entirely on their own.
- Different approaches lead to work on assignments that feel “naturally” for more students

**Cons**

- Weaker pupils sometimes don't know how to start. Choosing the approach is already an issue.
- Gifted students perform not so brilliant, as expected.
- Students might lose focus after a while, the feeling of being "in charge" of the content might lead to less work (especially for less motivated students)
- Pupils underestimate certain approaches and can't finish their assignment in time.
- First method lasts a lot of time, but it just helps you ensure you are organised and prepared.
- You cannot be sure, that students really understand every detail.
- If possible, students avoid choosing difficult contents or questions.
- Correcting requires you to go around everyone.

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