From Research to a Teaching Decision

Read closely. Judge relevance. Try one change. Look again.

A Champions of Learning adaptation inspired by Jamie Clark and DistillED. This professional-learning activity is not his verified coaching sequence or an endorsed resource.

Learning goal and suggested context

Goal: Connect a research claim to one teaching decision while preserving its conditions and limits. **Suggested audience:** Educator pairs or subject teams, adapting to any age group. Use an existing lesson rather than creating a new unit.

Estimates: 35-minute planning discussion, one normal lesson trial, and 15-minute review; 15-20 minutes preparation. Cost: $0 using existing materials, with optional printing. Materials: one guide, its cited source, a lesson plan, paper and anonymous examples of learner work.

Prepare a question, not a polished poster

Choose one decision you already face, such as when to remove a worked example. Read the guide and a relevant source section in advance. Check access and licensing; some DistillED downloads require a free login. Select an accessible excerpt and record its author, date and URL. Do not treat a summary as the complete evidence.

Five steps from reading to responsible use

1. Name the decision (5 min). Describe the learners, prior knowledge and difficulty you have observed. Decide what you need to understand before changing the lesson.

2. Trace the claim (10 min). Find one claim in the guide and locate its support in the source. Note the participants, setting, method and limits. Mark what is a finding, interpretation or practical suggestion.

3. Decide whether it fits (10 min). Compare the study context with yours. Agree on one condition that matters and one reason to adapt, defer or reject the suggestion. A decision not to use it is valid.

4. Plan and try one change (10 min, then a lesson). Keep other features as steady as practical. Choose one adjustment and a low-burden evidence check, such as explanations or recurring errors. Use normal school assessment and privacy arrangements.

5. Return to the evidence (15 min). Compare what happened with your expectation. Consider other explanations. Record one next step: retain, revise or stop. One lesson is a learning opportunity, not proof of a causal effect.

Access, assessment and reflection

Provide large print, screen-reader-friendly text, a glossary and time to read before discussion. Use paired reading or a spoken response. A printed source and paper decision log provide a low-tech route. Assess the reasoning: source traced, limits retained, context considered and evidence used. Reflect: What did we learn that the summary alone could not tell us?

Variation: Compare two summaries of the same source and explain what each leaves out. Credit original researchers and guide authors. Do not upload identifiable learner work or restricted source material to AI tools.

Three Optional AI Planning Prompts

Use only approved tools and permitted, anonymous excerpts. AI can help organize questions; educators verify the source and decide. These prompts do not imply that Jamie uses AI.

1 Plan a source-to-practice discussion

Using only [permitted source excerpt and guide claim], plan a 35-minute discussion for [educator team] considering [teaching decision]. Separate findings, interpretations and suggestions. Ask about study context, limits and fit with [learners/resources]. Identify missing information rather than filling it in. Include reasons to defer or reject the suggestion.

Educator check: Open the original source. Verify every claim and preserve important qualifications.

2 Create a decision log

Create a one-page, plain-text decision log for [teaching question]. Include source and date, claim, evidence, limits, context differences, one proposed adjustment, what we will observe and a review date. Add a worked example only from [supplied facts], clearly labeled as illustrative. Provide a printable version and accessible headings.

Educator check: Check that examples are accurate, feasible and clearly distinguished from research findings.

3 Reflect without overstating results

Review [anonymous lesson observations and work samples] against [our initial expectation]. Separate observations from interpretations. Suggest alternative explanations, questions for a colleague and one manageable next step. Do not infer diagnoses, invent learner responses or claim that one trial proves a strategy works.

Educator check: Compare all suggestions with the actual evidence. Retain, revise or stop using professional judgment.

Credits and resources: Inspired by Jamie Clark; credit the researchers and collaborators named in each guide. Guide collection | DistillED cognitive load edition. Connected research: Sims et al., Educational Researcher, October 15, 2026. Tested summary components did not change stated intentions; this was not an evaluation of Jamie or classroom outcomes. Offline alternative: use these prompts as colleague-discussion questions.