Critically reflect upon

Critically reflect upon, analyse and synthesise your developing understanding of inclusive learning in relation to the chosen diversity focus. What are the implications of this understanding for your own professional development? Your synthesis must draw on your work with the chosen class, your assignment activities and your wider reading. For my inclusive assignment I looked at a top set year 9, within this class I observed that I had a group of 6 pupils who would engage in the given task but they tended to stay quiet and avoid class discussions. This group of student are called the silent middle. Collins (1996) suggested that the emphasis on physical truancy masks an even greater problem in terms of those children who attend school but who 'play truant in mind'. These children elsewhere have been called 'quiet, tend to have good attendance records and are physically present in the classroom'. However, their inability or unwillingness to participate in the learning activities which are planned and presented prevents them from learning. Observing this group of pupils in other subjects gave me both reassurance and concerns that they presented the same behaviour of being the silent middle. This meant that these pupils did not suffer just in the Mathematics lesson. I observe this group of student in three lessons, Humanities, French and Science. In all three lessons I was able to come across techniques that would help in creating an inclusive environment for the pupils. What I took from the Humanities lesson when looking at inclusive learning (silent middle) I need strategies which will enable me to work more with those who need the help including those within the silent middle. The use of sub-groups meant that pupils would be able to work together in order to achieve the objective. They would be able to rely on each other rather than relying on me (the teacher) for extra guidance'In a

learning community, students learn through carefully structured collaboration as they participate in a shared practice or a group project in a setting that resembles a real-life situation' Weinstein (1991)p. g. 6In the humanities lesson this was achieved by structuring the lesson to allow group work, in the Mathematic classroom I structured the classroom so that the pupil are working in groups of up to 4. This allowed the pupils to interact with each other at an academic level. In the French lesson I saw an excellent resource that I could incorporate within my classroom to allow more inclusive learning. The use of whiteboards mean that I was able to obtain instant feedback of the pupils, the silent middle pupils did not feel insecure about giving answers to question and they felt included. As Collins (1996) says we need to take steps to make these pupils 'active learner' and I feel this was a resource that made these pupils more of active leaner. Within the Science Lesson I saw some skills that where useful for inclusive learning, I found that the use of questioning effectively meant that I was able to assess the pupil's progress and understanding of a concept.'... teacher has an opportunity to learn about the progress of each group'Weinstein (1991), p. g. 4Also by being able to circulate the classroom to each group this allowed me to improve my relationship with those who tend to be quiet and not speak out. Approaching the pupils rather than the pupils having to come to the teacher means that the silent middle that tend not to speak out even when struggling will be able to air their concerns. I was able to talk to them on a one-to-one level. During observations I found that these group of silent middle pupils were able, they were of high ability, but what they tended to do is get on with the given work, even if they were struggling they would battle through it themselves, rather than ask for help. When being asked a

question directly about the Mathematics they would not answer or just nervously give one worded answers. This was what my situation was with this group of pupils, using the strategies that I have observed and reading I was able to develop a series of lessons with the focus on inclusive learning for silent middle. In the first lesson I looked at taking the first steps to making the silent middle active learners, I looked at the use of whiteboards and the traffic light system. The traffic light system allows the pupils to assess their own learning of enlargement of shapes and the scale factor , showing a red card mean that they did not understand enlargements, amber card means they need more practice and green mean that they understand and able to complete the task independently(Hodgson ; Pyle(2010), p. g. 6). The visual representation offered immediate feedback and allowed me to determine their level of success, and a non-verbalised manner. I noticed that those silent middle pupils where quiet happy to use this resource and it was non-intrusive to them and it was a signal for me approach them if they were on amber or red to give them guidance to them through the task. Also the use of the whiteboard was effective as again I was given immediate feedback and able to mentally note down if a pupils was struggling with the work. Making more use of these two resources means that I would slowly gain the confidence of the pupils (silent middle) and move them to become more active learners. Learning does not only take place when involved with whole class discussion. What I needed to do is move on to more collaborative learning strategies such as group work.