Essential reading on mixed attainment teaching and 'ability' grouping

'The 'more able' loved it; they enjoyed being the 'bright' ones and having 'special' challenges set by the teacher. They also saw working with the teacher as a negative. The middle group were annoyed that they didn't get the same work and challenges as the other group; they wanted to try harder work but they had worked out they would never be moved up as there were only six seats on the top table. The 'less able' were affected the most. They felt 'dumb', useless, they thought they would never be allowed challenges as they usually worked with the teaching assistant (some by year 5 were completely dependent on the teaching assistant to help them). This 'less able' group liked the sound of some of the challenges the top group had, but knew they would never get the chance'.

from Peacock (2016) *Assessment for Learning without Limits*; also cited by Myatt, in Rowland (ed) (2017) *Learning without Labels*.

Here's a list of **open access** research articles (with links), books and other online resources all about 'ability' grouping and mixed attainment teaching.

The evidence: research papers, reports and articles

Boaler et al (2000) Students' experiences of ability grouping: disaffection, polarisation and the construction of failure

Francis & Wong (2013) What is preventing social mobility? A review of the evidence

Ireson et al (1999) Ability grouping in the secondary school: the effects on academic achievement and pupils' self-esteem

Kutnick et al (2005) The effects of pupil grouping literature review

Marks (2013) The blue table means you don't have a clue. Mixed-ability teaching

Sukhnandan & Lee (1998) Streaming, setting and grouping by ability: a review of the literature

Taylor et al (2016) Factors deterring schools from mixed attainment teaching practice

Wiliam & Bartholomew (2004) It's not which school but which set you're in that matters: the influence of ability-grouping practices on student progress in mathematics

Wilkinson et al (2000) Influence of peer effects on learning outcomes. Literature review

Books

Hart et al (2004) Learning without Limits   Sample chapter: Ability, educability and the current improvement agenda

Peacock (2016) Assessment for Learning without Limits

Rowland (2017) Learning without Labels: Improving outcomes for vulnerable learners

Swann et al (2012) Creating Learning without Limits

Websites, blogs and online articles

EEF toolkit entry on setting and streaming

Best practice in grouping students

Mixed attainment maths

Budden (2017) How to make mixed ability work: let children take control of the lesson

Curtis (2017) Transforming fixed mindsets towards maths

Mazenod (2017) Attainment grouping as self-fulfilling prophesy?: a new project paper

Ollerton (2010) Ministerial muddling over mixed-ability

Ollerton (2009) Inclusive mathematics classrooms

Webster (2017) The myth of inclusion