

# *English Is It!*

(ELT Training Series)

Grup de treball ICE-UB: *From English  
Acquisition to English Learning and Teaching*

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Volum 10: 10 articles

edició / edición



Primera edició: Abril 2018

Edició: Institut de Ciències de l'Educació. Universitat de Barcelona

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Correcció de text: Mercè Gracenea

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Gina Aguirre, Rosamaria Fàbrega, Ana María Fuentes, Teresa García, Ana Nadal, Lourdes Montoro (coord.), Silvia Riba. *English Is It! (ELT Training Series)*. Vol.10: 10 articles. Barcelona, Universitat de Barcelona (Institut de Ciències de l'Educació), 2018. Document electrònic. [Disponible a: <http://hdl.handle.net/2445/123347>]

URI: <http://hdl.handle.net/2445/123347>

ISBN: 978-84-09-01941-0

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*"Teachers are those who show you where to look but don't tell you what to see" (A K. Trenfor)*

# Introduction

**Lourdes Montoro**  
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The Research group *From English Acquisition to English Learning and Teaching* is registered at the Institute of Professional Development Teaching (ICE), at the University of Barcelona. It started in 2013, and, at present, it is composed of **Rosamaria Fàbrega**, **Ana Maria Fuentes**, and **Lourdes Montoro** (coordinator).

All members are teachers of English: Ana María Fuentes and Rosamaria Fàbrega (secondary education and vocational training) and Lourdes Montoro (adult English teaching). R. Fàbrega and L. Montoro are also teacher trainers. R. Fàbrega is teaching *Foreign Language Learning* at the Teacher Training School at the International University of Catalonia (UIC Barcelona); L. Montoro has taught at the Open University of Catalonia (UOC) and at the Teacher Training School at the University of Barcelona.

The group shares work ethics, vocation, and senior professional careers. Their human and academic background enhances the team with specialties such as art, films, group dynamics, computer science, interpretation, literature, mass media, music, philosophy, sports, theatre and translation. The group analyses the work of those teachers who we all know, and who, day after day, do admirable teaching works of art, making a difference in their students' lives and in theirs, and from which schools and educational system very much benefit.

We have all met excellent teachers who are so submerged in their daily lessons, administrative chores and the constant updating of professional life, that they are not given the chance to consider research or publications. *English Is It!* (ELT Training Series) was created with a view to providing opportunities which can make up, somehow, for this gap. The aforementioned members are the permanent teaching staff in the group; they investigate their different areas of expertise in their classes, expose them to the group and make proposals, which are later turned into articles.

To do that, all members have extensively trained to spend the most time in the writing process in order to give the least work to the reader. They have both been succinct and explicit, and tried to say what they meant while meaning what they said. They bear in mind that, unlike training sessions, there is no audience in front, who can ask for clarification; therefore, all the planning, the sequencing, the explanations and details have been considered under this premise.

With articles meant for immediate implementation, all members have aimed at clear, yet thorough texts, which include images, charts, lists, questionnaires, tables, photos... to facilitate the reading. They also include references. In general, the articles summarize what regular classes stand for each member and all: they show the picture of a human teaching forest, where we can observe distinct areas in its vegetation, with individual human plant life and a didactic ground which is covered by them all.

Long-time quantitative and qualitative work has taken their classes to the documents in writing into which they have turned, like flowing creeks in the above-referred forest. And this has all been part of the learning processes which all members have undergone, and a consequence of them too.

From original theses, which were presented individually and welcomed by all members, they proceeded to the defense of their general didactic framework, basically the inclusiveness of the basic pillars in teaching English as a foreign language, and also the sequencing of the contents, with cohesiveness lighting all the way through.

Without leaving aside the authors' teaching style, this group has pretended to blend everybody's work in and ensure that balancing the articles out in the group teaching environment was possible: that their work could leave their classrooms for a while, and reach out for other colleagues in the field.

As pointed out earlier, all articles in this volume have stemmed from the basics in lesson planning, whether, depending on their nature, they are fully or partially pointed out and/or described: topics, levels, organization, timing, objectives, contents - procedures and concepts (communicative structures, vocabulary, pronunciation, culture) and attitudes-. Materials are also referred, as well the general development of activities along with references, evaluation and comments.

This publication counts on an **ADDENDA** section, which welcomes other teaching professionals, as well as allows the permanent staff members of the research group to present other academic works. It is also open to alumni among the members of the group, so that further pedagogical interventions from them can be considered in the future.

In the *Addenda* section included in this volume, the group presents the work of four guest EFL teachers: **Gina Aguirre**, **Teresa García**, **Ana Nadal**, and **Sílvia Riba**. Their abstracts and their bios, as well as the group permanent members' are presented next.

None of these articles would have been possible without the group supervisors at ICE: **Francesc Amorós**, Continuing Primary and Secondary Teacher Training Coordinator; **Mercè Martínez**, Director of Continuing Teacher Education, and **Mercè Gracenea**, Director of Publications, who supported the group research work from the start, and turned it into what it is: *English Is It! (ELT Training Series)*.

## Abstracts

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**ROSAMARIA FÀBREGA**

**EFL *BookTubers'* Reading Passion Is Contagious: Watch out!**

Worldwide a lot of young eager readers specifically choose *BookTubes* as their reading video-sharing website. *BookTubes* are definitely a new phenomenon used by young adults (YA) to express their opinion. Their passion for books is obviously conveyed differently at present. There has certainly been an evolution from essay days to exams to blogs, or, in other words, from EFL teaching and learning throughout the time: from Baby Boomers learners, we have gone to learners who belong to Generation X, Generation Y or Millennials, until we have even reached Generation Z, where *BookTubers* belong. Nowadays late teenagers or young adults have developed very different abilities. This teacher takes this fact as an advantage to enhance these truly bookworms, who want to advance while reading books to their liking. Guidelines and samples are provided.

**ANA MARÍA FUENTES**

**Confidence Building Activities for Low-performing 7th and 8th Grade. Part I: Theoretical Frame and Class-friendly Webtools**

This article is the first part of a collection of four articles on confidence building activities which this teacher has implemented in junior high school (7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade). They are a reflection of her personal perspective and teaching practice. This article is the first part of the first block (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade). Redirecting the present teaching methods to adapt the presentation of materials and redefining the students' learning objectives is a challenge nowadays. Diverse psychological and social profiles of theirs must be also taken into account along with learning difficulties and pedagogical reports. Additionally, the possible lacks in linguistic and mathematical areas stand on the way and do not let students move ahead in EFL. This teacher points to the main problems in low performing junior high school English, provides tips for the English class, and describes practical class-friendly web tools to help students go beyond themselves both as individuals and learners.

**ANA MARÍA FUENTES**

**Confidence Building Activities for Low-performing 7th and 8th Grade. Part II: Visual Activities and References**

This article is the second part of a collection of four articles on confidence building activities which this teacher has implemented in junior high school (7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade). They are reflection of her personal perspective and teaching practice. This article is the second part of the first block (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade). Redirecting the present teaching methods to adapt the presentation of materials and redefining the students' learning objectives is a challenge nowadays. Diverse psychological and social profiles of theirs must be also taken into account along with learning difficulties and pedagogical reports. Additionally, the possible lacks in linguistic and mathematical areas stand on the way and not do let students move ahead in EFL. This teacher shares her bank of visual activities, which have worked successfully to involve the so-called "diversitat" students to their learning again. Varying from cutting-out activities to video editing, this has become a turning point in her daily practice, achieving more respectful classrooms, a higher achievement results and a closer involvement in the English class.

**LOURDES MONTORO**

**Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 1: From Comprehension to Production**

This is the first part of a collection of three articles related to how we help our students succeed in EFL learning. It includes theory and practice which help promote competences, learning and teaching strategies, assessment, tutoring sessions, and feedback. It was part of a professorship teaching project, called “Research-Action from comprehension to production: developing students’ intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences, and personal learning pathways”. Based on practice, it contains guidelines to create tailor-made teachers’ notebooks, and includes samples. The notebooks are ready to store individual students’ and groups’ data based on feedback from interviews, compositions, readers, mock exam, final exam, final results, and last interviews. Emphasis is made on individual cases, the role of attendance, the whole class, remedial work, advanced work, EFL pathways, and follow-ups.

**LOURDES MONTORO**

**Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 2: Group work**

This is the second part of a collection of three articles related to how we help our students succeed in EFL learning. It focuses on teacher and student communication, from which successful joint work follows. When that happens, learning is experienced, and English learning is lived. This article enhances the relevance of mastering learning styles and teaching and curricular styles, finding perfect learning environments, and working naturally through diversity. Diversity is viewed as interference in the English language learning process, and the teacher’s intervention, and exemplified through practical cases. These cases show impediments for EFL learning success: students are dependable on their conscious or unconscious attitude at times. Through different approaches, they are helped to realize that, and invited to act accordingly, as they take charge of their own responsibility to learn English and succeed.

**LOURDES MONTORO**

**Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 3: Individual work. A sample**

This is the third part of a collection of three articles which deal with how we help our students succeed in EFL learning. Individual tutoring is presented as part of an *English Language Clinic* both in EFL classes and in EFL teacher training. It is a permanent corner in this teacher’s in-session EFL classes and teacher training workshops, as well as a component in the first 30-hour virtual EFL teacher training courses at the University of Barcelona (ICE). This article describes an individual tutoring case, which was unusually presented to her after the final exam had taken place. The student had been doing well all year, results were being good; yet the student complained that her train of thought was eminently concrete but not abstract, what stressed her because from her view that affected her oral and written expression. Details on how the case got solved is presented through joint work, emails, procedure and references.

**ADDENDA**

**GINA AGUIRRE / ANA NADAL**

**EFL Visible Learning and Thinking Routines Applied to Four-to-six-year-olds**

To enhance the pupils’ critical thinking skills, these teachers created opportunities to develop them in the classroom. Focused on the first school years, the first objective was to use visible thinking routines and metacognition to help pupils reflect on their own learning processes. Visible thinking routines were used to introduce vocabulary, motivate pupils during the initial stages of a project, and to acquire scientific, artistic, and language

knowledge. This article starts with an initial theoretical view of the concept, which is followed by the implementation of the metacognition scale: learning objectives with the pupils before starting the activities are established. Next, it presents a thorough practical section including the activities and projects which made their pupils more reflective. Detailed guidelines on procedure and timing are provided.

**TERESA GARCÍA /SÍLVIA RIBA**

**An EFL Gardening Experience: Growing Competences at a Growing Orchard**

This project fosters the pupils' communicative oral skills through an all-manipulative, interactive and cross-curricular gardening experience. Along seven units, they get to know the life cycle of a plant, do research on different plants, play games related to that, and, finally, plant a vegetable. Pupils are also expected to produce, from scratch, some of the scientific concepts. With a twelve-pupil grouping, who work in groups in practically every lesson plan, collaborative skills are required, and pupils are guided, reinforced, assessed, and monitored by the teachers. At the end of the project, these children embark on the next experience, on which, at present, they are working: "The Orchard", the ultimate objective and stage in a whole school project. Although this EFL gardening experience was originally devised for 4<sup>th</sup> grade, the activities can be easily implemented in almost any age group at elementary school. The vocabulary and online research can be either reduced or increased.

**LOURDES MONTORO**

**The Effect of Language Exposure and Classroom English. Three Worksheets**

It is important to insist on the need to master the language which we teach. When we encourage our students to do that or train EFL teachers to ensure that, we are prepared to help students see that they can do what we know that they are able to. It is then when they have the chance to make changes and act upon. This article includes three worksheets which were created for teaching methods courses aimed at EFL trainee teachers at the Teacher Training School at the University of Barcelona. They are described in detail, and cover a series of hands-on aspects which were later used in refresher courses for both new and veteran teachers as well. They deal with the relevance of language exposure and classroom language. The former is presented along with the roles of awareness and responsibility which can lead into action; the latter is divided into two parts and it is aimed at its mastery.

**LOURDES MONTORO**

**Taking the English World to Class: Prompts and Visual Aids. Two Worksheets**

When we teach EFL in a way which is as close as possible to how a mother tongue is acquired, we encourage our students to use English while they accomplish goals. We can recreate an EFL atmosphere through prompts and visual aids. Two worksheets on them were created for undergraduate EFL teaching methods courses at the Teacher Training School at the University of Barcelona, and were later used in refresher courses for both new and veteran teachers as well. The worksheet on prompts is divided into three sections: miscellaneous items in a prompt box; door, walls, corners, windows, ceiling and windows décor; and catalogs on educational materials, and lists with U.S. and carnival party decoration references. The worksheet on visual aids covers seven areas: classroom language, corners, culture, festivals, project work, acting out, miscellaneous, and publishing houses and visual materials which they can provide us with.



## Professional bios

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### RESEARCH GROUP



**Rosamaria Fàbrega** has been a secondary school English teacher since 1985. She comes from a family devoted to teaching, and has exchanged teaching experiences in England, Ireland and the US. She is currently teaching “Aprenentatge de les Llengües Estrangeres” at UIC Barcelona in the Faculty of Education and English in a Secondary Public School. She loves New Technologies and has a blog (<https://rosafabrega.wordpress.com/>) to help her students work in an autonomous way.



**Ana María Fuentes** holds a BA in English Philology and a postgraduate course in Textual Translation Analysis from the University of Barcelona. She has also specialized in Text management for professionals at the University Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. She has taught English in Catalonia for fourteen years. She enjoys exploiting drama and audiovisual projects in class as well as new technologies to support students’ learning process and group dynamics.



**Lourdes Montoro** is a professor of English at Escola Oficial d’Idiomes in Barcelona. She initially taught all levels, from elementary school to high school and vocational school. She has also taught at the Open University of Catalonia (UOC), the University of Barcelona (UB), and the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse (UW-L), in the United States. She is also a teacher trainer, a translator and a critic reader. She has specialized in American culture, English-speaking countries, paremiology and project work.

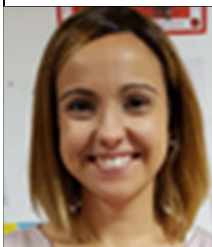
### GUEST TEACHERS



**Gina Aguirre** has been an English teacher for over 15 years, and taught all levels. She has a degree in Early Childhood Teacher and Family Counseling, and also holds a postgraduate degree in Direction of Educational Institutions. She is passionate about innovation and learning through play. Additionally, she is a cofounder of the educational resources webpage: [3ways2teach](http://3ways2teach.com), and a teacher trainer at several universities. At present, she is working as the Head of Academic Development in the early years at a trilingual school in Barcelona.



**Teresa García** is an English primary school teacher and a teacher trainer, who also holds a BA in Journalism. Her studies in [King's College London](#) helped her gain experience and insight into the British educational system. She has extensively taught at the preschool, primary, secondary and adult levels, both in public and private schools. She is interested in implementing cross-curricular strategies in the public educational system. At present she is working at a municipal school in her city, Cerdanyola del Vallès.



**Ana Nadal** started teaching English ten years ago. Firstly, she taught different age levels from early years to adults in a language school. Nowadays, she is working as a Preschool English class teacher in a trilingual school in Barcelona. She loves her profession and she considers herself as a really motivated and energetic teacher who is constantly innovating in class in order to help her pupils to do their best in their learning processes.



**Sílvia Riba** has been a teacher of English at a municipal school in her city, Cerdanyola del Vallés, since 2001. She has worked with very young learners and primary school pupils. With experience at the Technische Hochschule in Ingolstadt (Germany), she obtained a great knowledge income to be applied in the educational world. By avoiding conventional teacher-centered lessons, she has discovered the real meaning of learning, creating a world where language is communication itself.

# EFL BookTubers' Reading Passion Is Contagious: Watch out!

Rosamaria Fàbrega  
rfabreg9@xtec.cat

During my teaching career I have often asked myself which aim I want to fulfil in EFL teaching and learning, and then, which strategy I need to use in order to achieve that. A large number of Winston Churchill's quotations have often come to my mind too. Once I read from him: "However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results." (<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/108654-however-beautiful-the-strategy-you-should-occasionally-look-at-the>). The *BookTubing* reading experience which is presented here met the two requirements.

As a secondary and vocational school teacher, I happily take on the challenge of having teenagers as students. On the one hand, it is clear that, as teachers, we are engaged in calling their attention and in helping them keep it. However, on the other, I believe that we should be skilful enough to know how to maintain a balance between their non-stop spirited way of being and our role and expertise as professionals in education.

Making my students read has always been a matter of concern for me, because I have sometimes observed that students are not used to reading, and, in addition to this, they are not keen on the pressure of having to hand in evidence of their work to the teacher. In general, students find it hard to write an essay on "the reader", and definitely, dislike sitting for exams on them. What is more, they do not often enjoy the exercises which are presented at the end of their books, and end up not doing them, either.

I have always aimed at devising projects which could both fit the curriculum requirements, and the students' interests and mine. While both my students and I follow the syllabus, I can happily teach, and they can just learn for enjoyment, for pleasure. This led me to a class motto to promote the reading skill, which my students and I follow: "If a book does not fulfil your expectations, let's change it for another one, a more exciting one".

In an earlier article in this collection (Fàbrega i Mestres, 2014), I explained a reading project which I had started in 2011-2012 as an experiment. It was shared in my blog, *The Gadget Method* (<https://rosafabrega.wordpress.com/>). The reading section is called "Enlightened by books" (<https://enlightenedbybooks.wordpress.com/>) I started it to encourage my students to become and remain passionate for books.

*Enlightened by books*

PÀGINA D'INICI  
FINALITAT D'AQUEST BLOC - INSTRUCCIONS PER ALS ALUMNES  
READY? SET? DEVOUR! A CHALLENGING READING PROJECT FOR  
VOCATIONAL TRAINING



I originally implemented it in vocational school, and, as soon as I started it, it turned out to be a fabulous cooperative group reading bank, with over 307 references. From then on, students in vocational school, secondary school, and also undergraduates at UIC Barcelona (<https://www.uic.es/en>), where I teach EFL training methods, have used it and benefitted from it.

Through this section in the blog, reading helps boost the students' creativity, and helps them develop their analytical thinking, and understand human nature. I consider reading as good friends are: they accompany us through thick and thin. Since I never want my students to miss the benefits of reading, I have also worked with different kind of reading frames, such as classroom libraries, or "Reading Circles".

In "Enlightened by books", students find a reading framework where to choose from. It contains a general overview from *Breakthrough* to *Waystage* to *Threshold*; a detailed chart including the CEF levels and a publishers' correlation; a list with themes and genres; a list of publishing houses web resources, with comments on them; and, finally, a list including all the titles of books. They are alphabetically ordered by authors.

The *BookTubing* reading experience has stemmed from this reading section, the cooperative methodology which I follow, and the students' passion. Since I started "Enlightened by books", students have been surprising me with a wide variety of resources which they have willingly contributed with through the years. They have mirrored the numerous web resources that we are all exposed to these days.

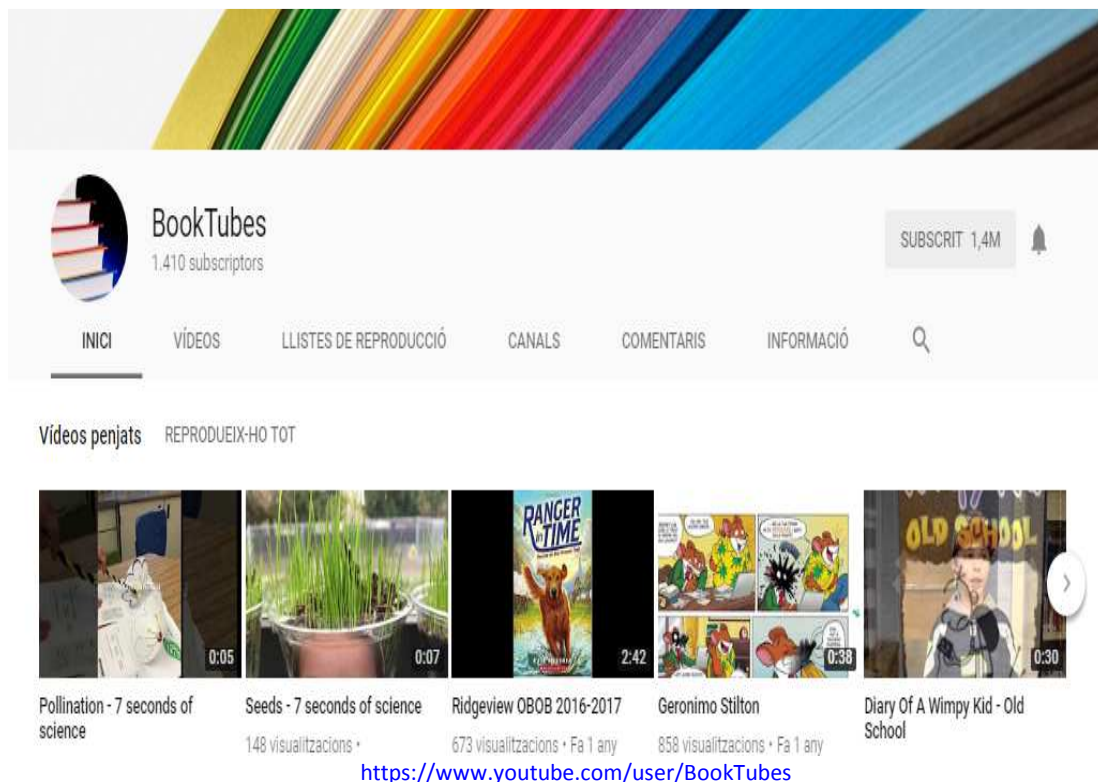
They have uploaded vocabulary lists, web links, virtual samples of reading texts from publishing houses, audio books, e-books, different versions of the same book and films which some books have been turned into. They have also shared complementary exercises from publishing houses, public libraries references where specific books are available on loan, and references on bookstores where they can purchase them. My students have also started including images which depict their passion for reading and invite others into the reading adventure:



(From: *Mulan: the story of a woman warrior* - Student's *BookTube*)

Students also know that I am always looking for new strategies and resources to help them do their best in EFL learning, reading included. And this is exactly how *BookTubes* have come to scene in my EFL classes. Few years ago the phenomenon of *BookTubers* would have been unthinkable in the outside world and in class. At present, teenagers indulge in *BookTubing* naturally.

And here comes the proof of the pudding: as soon as I asked my students to present reading evidence on the books that they had chosen, they suggested to hand them in this format. To my surprise, I was not the one who provided the methodology. I was simply thrilled and excited to see their work and results. After having worked with them and checked the results, the students themselves are definitely entitled to be given the credit.



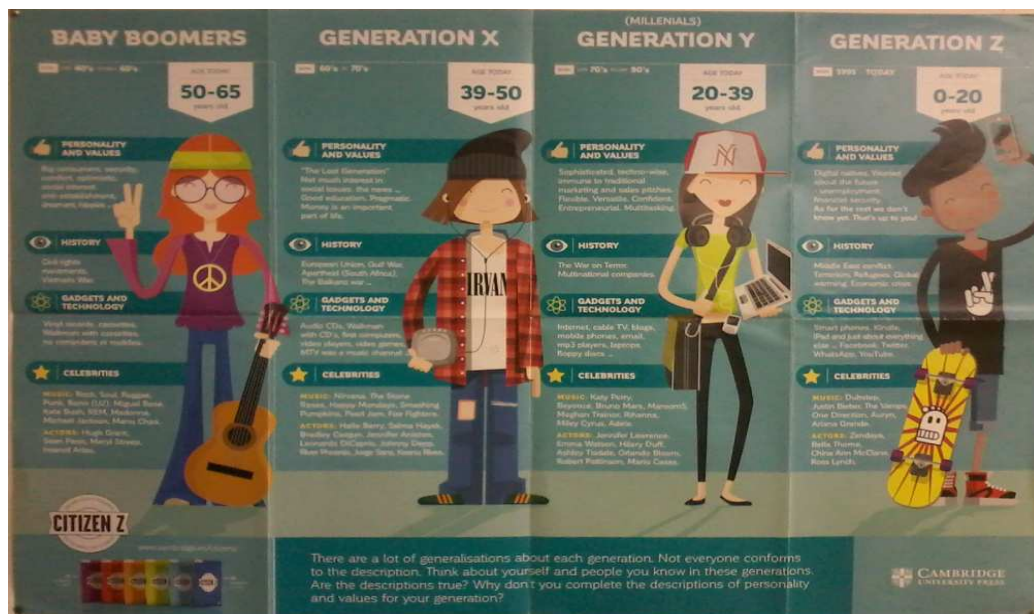
Worldwide a lot of young eager readers specifically choose *BookTubes* as their reading video-sharing website. *BookTubes* definitely a new phenomenon used by young adults (YA) to express their opinion. Their passion for books is obviously expressed differently at present. *BookTubers* usually make so many videos that new terms have been coined around book reviews: book hauls, IMM (in my mailbox), wrap up and unboxing.

Through *BookTubes*, teenagers show their latest books and readings: the books which they get monthly (book hauls); the eBooks that have reached their mailbox (IMM), the comments on the books that they have read (wrap up), and last but not least, the books in packages which they open up and show (unboxing) (<https://viajeraseneltiempo.blogspot.com.es/2016/10/ques-imm-book-haul-unboxing-wrap-up.html>).

From my experience with my students' *BookTubes*, I must say that they come in very handy both when encouraging them to read, and when having them provide their reading reviews and assignment. In fact, students are so interested in the website that there is not much to tell them about.

They seem to know it all since they often use it, know how to upload and download their videos, often comment on them, add to favourites, and so on. So, my conclusion is that our task as their teacher simply consists of ensuring that this world wide web resource becomes our ally too.

There has certainly been an evolution from essay days to exams to blogs, or, in other words, from EFL teaching and learning throughout the time: from Baby Boomers learners, we have gone to learners who belong to Generation X, Generation Y or Millennials, until we have even reached Generation Z, where *BookTubers* belong. Nowadays late teenagers or young adults have developed very different abilities.



(Courtesy from Cambridge University Press)

At present, youngsters record themselves at ease. They chat about the books that they read. They recommend one another books to read, and they directly choose the ones that interest them the most. Needless to say, they are truly bookworms, who want to advance while reading books to their liking. And they express their likes and dislikes by using *BookTubes*. It is precisely the combination of the two elements what my students and I share in class and outside.

*BookTubing* started in the Anglo-Saxon world a few years ago and began here in 2013. The videos which my students create prove that they master multimedia and video editing. Besides that, they know how to explore and enjoy their creativity, and how to add fun components to their videos, and, what is more, they can't wait to talk about their books, and share their EFL *BookTube* work. When my students prepare their *BookTube* videos, they work on a large number of competences, and they are highly emotionally involved.

At times, I can't believe what I am seeing because miracles occur: I notice how eager they are to finish up their books. They can't wait to get started in the technical and creative second part of the reading task. That simply spurs them and drags them along. From my experience observing students design *BookTube* videos and prepare them, I must say that they explicitly prove that reading and *BookTubing* are ranked high in their likes. The combination of the two has proved to be a good input for their learning of English, because they can also work with

their classmates, they focus on the speaking skill, and, last but not least, they have a great time.

The whole process to reach their most wanted final product triggers their creativity the most. Students use theatrical prompts and write their own script. Additionally, students also enjoy themselves when it is time for them to present them to their groups. Also, the fact that the students' work is recorded facilitates my assessment work.

After their presentations, students receive their individual rubrics. They are assessed with regards to three main areas: 1. Reflection of personal learning stretch; 2. Speaking skills and elocution; and 3. General organization. Students usually meet the standard because getting ready for an appropriate and accurate presentation of their *BookTube* videos is the result of long hours of study and practical work.

What is more, a large majority of them even exceeds the expected standard. On the contrary, only a few nearly meet it, and when this happens their low score only affects one of the above mentioned areas. Below them there may be one or two students per group who do not meet the standard. This is so because of the usage of English as far as structure and pronunciation is concerned.

When this happens students and I agree on specific remedial work which we review in tutoring sessions. It is important to mention that all students are presented the rubric at the start of the project so that all of them are acquainted with it and the different areas at which they need to aim.

Student xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Project Booktuber: xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Deadline 29th December 2017  
 Rubric: Marking criteria of the oral presentation **MARK: 9**

	Exceeds Standard	Meets Standard	Nearly Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard
<b>REFLECT PERSONAL LEARNING STRETCH</b>	Shows great depth of knowledge and learning, reveals feelings and thoughts, abstract ideas reflected through use of specific details. (4 points)	Relates learning with research and project, personal and general reflections included, uses concrete language. (3 points)	Does not go deeply into the reflection of learning, generalizations and limited insight, uses some detail. (2 points)	Little or no explanation or reflection on learning, no or few details to support reflection. Shows no evidence of learning or reflection. (1 point)
<b>SPEAKING SKILLS &amp; ELOCUTION</b>	Uses a clear voice and speaks at a good pace to maintain audience interest. Student uses precise pronunciation of terms. (3 points) *	Presenter's voice is clear. The pace is a little slow or fast at times. Most audience members can hear presentation. Student pronounces most words correctly. (2 points)	Presenter's voice is low. The pace is much too rapid/slow. Audience members have difficulty hearing presentation. Student incorrectly uses or pronounces terms. (1 point)	Presenter mumbles, incorrectly pronounces terms, talks very fast, and speaks too quietly for a majority of students to hear & understand which causes audience to disengage. (0.75 points)
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	Student presents information in logical, interesting, creative, sequence which audience can follow. (1 point)	Student presents information in logical sequence which audience can follow. (2 points)	Audience has difficulty following presentation because student jumps around. (1 point)	Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information. (0.75 points)

\* Pronunciation should be better with the following words--> Talk, written, received, message...

Since I started “Enlightened by books”, books have very much varied, and, as indicated earlier, the number of different titles have kept growing, which has certainly been enhanced by the students' entries of their *BookTubing* videos as well. For *BookTubing* to be successful in EFL teaching and learning, timing is key. My students are expected to read three books per academic year. *BookTubing* cannot be encouraged within a short span of time. Apart from letting the students find their own time for reading and enjoying the book, they need to come up with an outline of their BookTube project, and turned it into a reality.

Now my students are used to reading books for the English class. However, what still blows their mind, and seems to never cease to amaze them, is being able to combine that together with the creation of EFL *BookTube* videos of theirs, which are going to be scored. Depending on the students and the books that they choose, some of them may need longer time than others. But whether this happens or not, from my experience, the truth is that they all submit their work on the arranged dates.

From my view (Fàbrega i Mestres, 2014), reading leads to the following benefits: increasing world knowledge, expanding vocabulary, improving writing and memorization, stimulating the mind, strengthening analytical thinking skills, improving focus and concentration, reducing stress, and providing free entertainment.

And whether reading is linked to a *BookTubing* project like the one presented here, or not, when we encourage it, we must prioritize that our students feel free to choose the books that they like. When books are to their liking, they approve of them, and there is no excuse for them not to start reading them, and to enjoy themselves while doing so. When that happens, students wish to share them with their classmates and friends, and us, and are even willing to be scored on their work. And what is more, their passion for learning and reading naturally increases, which, in turn, increases passion for reading for all involved.

Last but not least, there are six samples of my students' *BookTubes*, which were created last semester. They truly make me believe that “A picture is worth a thousand words”, or, should I say “A *Booktube* 'is worth a thousand words”?. The varied choice also shows their various taste and the multiple reading options which they find through “Enlightened by books” and *The Gadget Method* blog which we share. And the best is yet to come: everybody gets to enjoy the *Booktubes*. They are presented along the next pages.

<p><b><i>PIPPY LONGSTOCKING BY ASTRID LINDGREN</i></b></p>
<p><b><i>WAITING FOR BOJANGLES BY OLIVIER BOURDEAUT</i></b></p>
<p><b><i>THIRTEEN REASONS WHY BY JAY ASHER</i></b></p>
<p><b><i>THE BIG FRIENDLY GIANT BY ROALD DAHL</i></b></p>
<p><b><i>MATILDA BY ROALD DAHL</i></b></p>
<p><b><i>MULAN: THE STORY OF A WOMAN WARRIOR</i></b></p>



## *Pippi Longstocking by Astrid Lindgren*



<https://enlightenedbybooks.wordpress.com/2018/02/28/pippi-longstocking-by-astrid-lindgren/>

## *Waiting for Bojangles by Olivier Bourdeaut*



<https://enlightenedbybooks.wordpress.com/2018/02/28/waiting-for-bojangles-by-olivier-bourdeaut/>

## *Thirteen Reasons Why by Jay Asher*



<https://enlightenedbybooks.wordpress.com/2018/02/28/thirteen-reasons-why-jay-asher/>

## *The Big Friendly Giant by Roald Dahl*



<https://enlightenedbybooks.wordpress.com/2018/02/28/the-big-friendly-giant-bfgby-roald-dahl/>

## *Matilda by Roald Dahl*



<https://enlightenedbybooks.wordpress.com/2018/03/01/matilda-by-roald-dahl/>

## *Mulan: The Story of a Woman Warrior*



<https://enlightenedbybooks.wordpress.com/2018/03/01/mulan/>

You are welcome to dive into *BookTubing* and to visit the blog where the result of this *BookTubing* project is: <http://enlightenedbybooks.wordpress.com>. If you wish, please feel free to contribute with more information about interesting books. This way, we all take the responsibility to ensure that we can always count on a large selection of books to choose from.

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<https://viajeraseneltiempo.blogspot.com.es/2016/10/que-es-imm-book-haul-unboxing-wrap-up.html>

Mexican BookTubers talk about books (example)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yqtt83nLQM>

Reading Circles (Example)

<https://www.thecurriculumcorner.com/thecurriculumcorner456/literature-circles/>

# Confidence Building Activities for Low-performing 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. Part I: Theoretical Frame and Class-friendly Webtools

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Teachers devote many “hidden hours” to planning sessions, getting on with work, searching for activities and new resources, and thinking how to enhance the learning experience of the classroom. When preparing a lesson plan, we frequently envision our students as ideal and homogeneous, but, in fact, in high school there is a varied typology of them, each with specific capabilities and psychological and socio-cultural traits.

Because in a group every student deserves our sincere interest, attention should be driven to the individuals that make up the class, and, in particular, to those students that do not easily follow the activities: the “Diversitat” students (Diversity students) as they are labelled in Catalanian state schools. The Department of Education refers to diversity under and diversity above the average, according to the learners’ intellectual, psychological and social capabilities and their level of accomplishment of the curriculum.

Some state high schools in Catalonia organize junior high school classes in heterogeneous groups and some in homogeneous groups. Frequently, the students who deserve special attention go to flexible groups, especially for languages, maths and English lessons. In some cases the pedagogical department in the schools reports on the students’ curricular accomplishment, and provides some indications. There is a lot of reference material for low students on maths, Spanish and Catalan, but there is very little or none on English. It is true that the EFL publishers try to offer materials for fast finishers and slow ones, but it is difficult to find strategies and support material for a varied class reality.

I have researched, created and worked on EFL confidence building activities for low-performing students in both junior high school and high school. I have implemented them in the treatment of the English subject for low-performing high school students who are in the same class, i. e. in homogeneous grouping. Teaching English to students with learning disabilities, ADHD, autistic or disruptive behaviour among others is the evidence to the following account of observations and teaching material.

This article is part of **a collection of four articles on confidence** building activities which I have extensively implemented in **junior high schools (7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade)**. They are reflection of my personal perspective and teaching practice about building confidence in low profile students and its class implementation. I approach 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades separately from 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades because each block focuses on the corresponding age groups and considers their inherent characteristics and problematic areas, and secondly, because they share proven strategies and activities that have successfully applied to them.

The **first block** which presents work around **7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade** is divided into **two articles**:

- **“Confidence Building Activities for Low-performing 7th and 8th Grade. Part I: Theoretical Frame and Class-friendly Webtools”**
- **“Confidence Building Activities for Low-performing 7th and 8th Grade. Part II: Visual Activities and References”**

All my work on confidence building activities for low-performing students in junior high school share the same focus: an empirical analysis of my teaching practice with this type of groups. In this article a list of situations is described to spot the most common difficulties in “Diversitat” groups, and to provide solutions for them. Then, considering every factor and every variable that, as teachers, we have to deal with, some **strategies and practical class-friendly tools** are provided to improve motivation and to straighten class dynamics without threats, telling-offs or angry faces.

My perspective and practical work on EFL confidence building activities which can be implemented in the last junior high school years (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade) are presented through three sections:

- I. MAIN PROBLEMS IN LOW PERFORMING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH**
- II. TIPS FOR THE ENGLISH CLASS IN JUNIOR HIGH LOW GROUPS**
- III. CLASS-FRIENDLY WEB TOOLS FOR JUNIOR HIGH LOW GROUPS**

**I. MAIN PROBLEMS IN LOW PERFORMING JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH**

After several years teaching low-profile students in junior high school, I have observed that low-performing groups share some characteristics. All these factors have created an amalgam of obstacles hindering the low performing students to success in their studies, and shaping their profile as low or slow learners, often qualified as “difficult” and “problematic”. Low-performing students usually:

**A. Show considerable lacks in knowledge areas**

Some 7<sup>th</sup> graders arriving in secondary school from primary school lack in knowledge areas such as the linguistic and the mathematical one, which makes some of the curricular contents of English difficult to deliver or to elicit. In this case there has to be an explicit reference to the content and not to the language itself, and reinforce language areas whenever possible.

Many students in “diversitat” have failed the main areas of knowledge in primary school because of their behavioural problems, which has made their progress into quite an impossible aim. Having fallen behind, they feel that meeting the objectives of the current year are too hard. This fact is retro-fed by their lacks and continuously evolving into more anxiety and impulsivity together with the immaturity of the pre-high school years.

**B. Deal with frustration**

These groups of students are too impulsive, lack many personal abilities such as self-control and they find it difficult to be sitting and waiting for their turn in an average class environment. Sometimes the impulsive, immature attitudes, which are mainly affected by external factors, together with their obvious lacks in several areas in their knowledge, make a combination of difficult treatment. Besides, there can be conflicts among them, and also between the group and the teacher. The personal relationships among them can be difficult and even, hard for a teacher, as disrespect is a common practice.

**C. Utter the sentences “I don’t know any English” or “I don’t understand English”**

Language is difficult because their own level of language is not good enough in their first language, i.e. Spanish and Catalan and these students often say “Teacher, I don’t know any English.” and “I don’t understand English”.

**D. Think “I don’t need English”**

In many cases they reject the subject because they do not understand and do not follow what it is being done in class. They excuse themselves by referring to the nonexistent role of English in their future formation or job prospects.

**II. TIPS FOR THE ENGLISH CLASS IN JUNIOR HIGH LOW GROUPS**

Throughout the years, the “diversitat” groups have been and still are a challenge for me, as a teacher and as a person. Teaching these students is an intense experience, sometimes difficult and sometimes so rewarding that it is worth the teacher’s effort to set an effective way to deal with the “difficult” group. In general terms, I believe that to approach a low performing group it is advisable to:

- **Identify general and individual problems**
- **Approach every problem creatively**
- **Establish your goal for the group**
- **Put your own professional and personal resources to the test**
- **Attempt your solutions every time**
- **Try the student-friendly mode**

For the English class in “diversitat”, these strategies can sew a made-to-measure suit for each group and each teacher, but according to my experience,

1. **Personal relationships matter** a lot, and students like focusing their attention on their relationships with others and the teacher. Many conflicts arise from the bad relationships among them. Despite their apparent refusal of adult’s help, once the teacher knows the dynamics among them perfectly well, he or she can address each one in the appropriate way to achieve a good working atmosphere. In fact, these students look for the teacher’s reference and self-assurance, which helps the teacher create a psychologically safe environment for every learner. When dealing with these students, it is tempting to adopt a strict position to avoid conflicts but, as far as I can tell, negotiation and a reasonable degree of tolerance are more advisable not to “break” the many moments of “magical” understanding.
2. It is a good idea to **negotiate leisure time**. It can be watching a film, watching music videos, listening to music or playing games as long as the climate of work and respect

are maintained. Spotting the students' interests is extremely useful to smooth personal relationships and to offer opportunities to express themselves.

3. These students react very positively to **artistic activities**. In fact, integrating artistic skills such as painting, drawing, designing and creating visual prompts help them to focus and to calm down. Vocabulary, grammar descriptions, mind maps and other visual aids can illustrate the content of many lessons. Most students draw very well and showing their good skills is very positive at all levels.
4. **Competition** can bring the appropriate energy to the class, and some students are willing to take the lead for others to follow, for example in drilled interactions, simple dialogues and structured short texts. They enjoy getting the extra points and, specially, if they end up being first, second or third.
5. It is extremely important to establish **clear guidelines** for the class, which everyone has to respect. Likewise, it is recommended to daily explain what the lesson is going to be about, set the goals, and point to the minimum and the maximum work. These students are not precisely constant, tidy or patient and they need order, which helps them to measure their efforts.
6. Planning the activities in **recurrent patterns** to follow every day is helpful, as well as bringing something new or surprising to class.
7. Students enjoy producing and participating as **creators** in class because it makes them understand what they are doing.

### III. CLASS-FRIENDLY WEB TOOLS FOR LOW GROUPS

#### 1. Comic strip generators

Some low-profile students have surprising abilities and enjoy creating, drawing and inventing. 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders create a comic strip on paper or online. This makes them concentrate on their project and focus on language as well as on coherence of the story and creation of the characters and plot, whether more or less complex, with a maximum space of 10 frames.

This can be done on paper and also online and the following are some internet tools to create comic strips:

- ToonDoo (<http://www.toondoo.com>)
- Stripgenerator (<http://stripgenerator.com>)
- Make Beliefs Comix (<https://www.makebeliefscomix.com>)
- Toony Tool. (<https://www.toonytool.com>)

The teacher proposes a topic or establishes some conditions, for example, "The 1-5 recipe". In the recipe, the teacher lists the minimum requirements that the comic should have. For example: the comic has to contain 1 question word, 2 sentences in present continuous, 3 words related to family, 4 different characters and 5 words related to food.



The teacher supervises the process of creation of the comics and when they finish they can be displayed in their class or the school hall. Underneath there is the screenshot of the Make Beliefs Comix website, which has many useful tips for students with learning problems and ideas to engage the students in comic creation.



Make Beliefs Comix (<https://www.makebeliefscomix.com>)

## 2. Meme Creators

Memes are quick and effective communicative acts. They are becoming very fashionable lately and they can be useful to attract students' attention to a specific topic due to its simple and humorous nature. The definition of what memes are is self-explanatory:

**meme** 



### NOUN

- 1 An element of a culture or system of behaviour passed from one individual to another by imitation or other non-genetic means.

+ Example sentences

- 2 An image, video, piece of text, etc., typically humorous in nature, that is copied and spread rapidly by Internet users, often with slight variations.

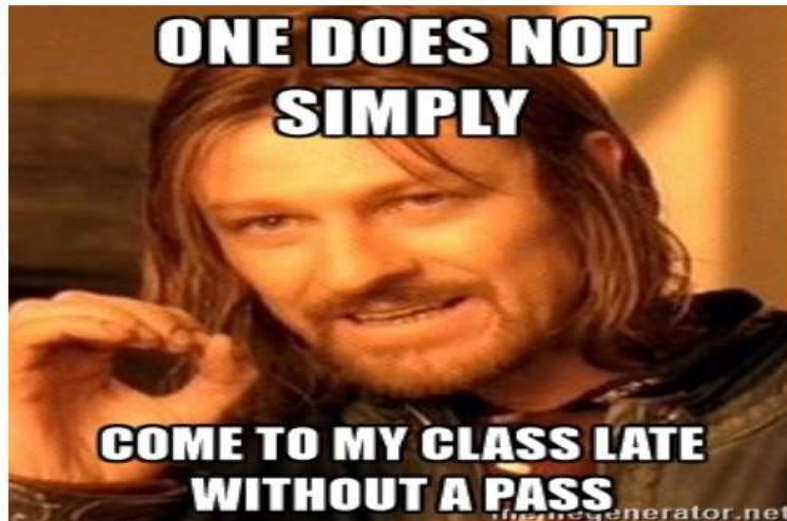
+ Example sentences

(<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/meme>)

Approaching the communicative reality of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, the teacher can propose the students several activities, for example, to create a meme about a specific topic, vocabulary or grammar, or copy a sentence to exemplify a grammatical or communicative aspect to present in class or that has already appeared in class.

Meme creation can generate a lot of different implementations, but some of the most practical ones are: description, narration and creation, or even, remind the class norms humorously, as the next image shows. This viral phenomenon can be created with mobile apps and also webpages such as:

- Meme Creator (<https://www.memecreator.org/>)
- Image Chef (<http://www.imagechef.com/meme-maker>)
- Meme Generator (<https://imgflip.com/memegenerator>)



From "5 Ways to Use Memes with Students"  
(<https://www.iste.org/explore/articleDetail?articleid=858>)

### **3. Short films and commercials**

Students generally like watching films but they are difficult to understand by students with a low level of English. Short films are a good option to offer these students authentic audiovisual material. Short films, as well as commercials, can be a positive stimulus to encourage the students' participation and involvement in the class. There are very few dialogues and they are very easy to understand. There are many good sources of short videos and commercials:

- YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com>)
- Vimeo (<https://vimeo.com>)
- Film English (<http://film-english.com>)
- FluentU (<https://www.fluentu.com/blog/english/learn-english-with-short-movies/>)

The last two sources offer a lot of material of very high quality, accompanied by lesson plans and suggestions. However, I have chosen "The Notebook" from FluentU to illustrate this subject because 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders have sufficient linguistic strategies to explain the contents of the commercial "The Notebook" and give interesting opinions. The teacher can present the short film or commercial as a session start-up to practise description and narration. The teacher should provide a vocabulary list to help them express what they want to convey, especially if it helps to review and extend the areas that have been worked on in class. Some questions to deal with a specific topic of vocabulary or grammar topic can be proposed too.

As a conclusion, the students can express their opinions when the theme allows it. Finally, students can create their own version of the short film or the commercial. They can use their mobile phones to record it and edit it. They can be guided with simple strategies to ensure that everyone will be capable of producing a video at their reach.

### Short Movies with Some Dialogue

#### “The Notebook”

“The Notebook” is about a boy helping his mother with the household chores.



**Vocabulary:** doing the cooking, vacuuming, tidying up, making the bed, walking the dog, watering the plants, sweeping, babysitting, washing the clothes, doing the washing up, ironing

**Discussion questions:**

1. Why is the boy helping his mother? What does he want?

From *FluentU* (<https://vimeo.com/1165236>)

#### 4. Music Videos

Music videos can bring freshness to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade class and give room to some of their interests. Fill-in-the-gap or simple phonetic exercises can help to elicit, and also to consolidate contents.


These should be accessible to them and presented with the necessary clarifications to ensure that they can do the activity autonomously. The internet provides us with a large number of options. Some activities, for instance, can deepen into grammatical aspects as well as phonetics.

The material next was used with 7th graders. It presents some verbs related to the topic “Football”, such as “score”, “shout”, “pass” and review numbers. The students watch the song video and then fill in the worksheet activities. I must say that my students can watch it up to ten times, and do not complain at all because they want to find out the answers to the activities on their own. They finish the lesson with the activity called “Football Kit”, in which they paint the football suit with their choice of design and colours.

Home > Learn and watch > Songs  
**We're going to win**

Practise football words with this song about a football match.

► Preparation



► Help and Support

- Getting started for kids
- House rules for kids
- Find out about levels
- Getting started for parents
- House rules for parents and teachers
- Frequently asked questions

► Courses

- Find a face-to-face or online course near you.


► More about this topic

- Colouring: Football kit
- Worksheets: Football
- Games: Match the kit
- Games: Keepy uppy
- Games: Beat the keeper
- Games

► Documents

- Print the words to the song
- Print an activity for the song
- Print the answers
- Print the sheet music for this song
- Download audio (3MB) (right click & save)

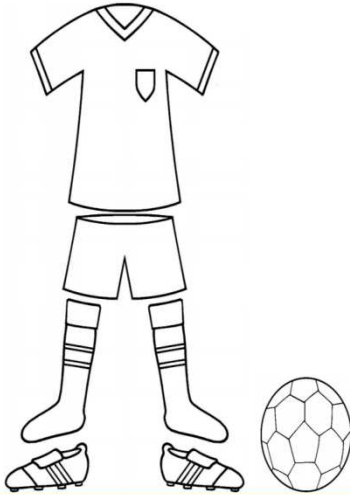
From "We're Going to Win",  
 (British Council Learn English Kids)

BRITISH COUNCIL  LearnEnglish Kids


**Football kit**

Read and colour!

Read the sentences and colour the picture.



From "Football Kit" (British Council Learning Kids)




BRITISH COUNCIL  LearnEnglish Kids

**We're going to win**

1. What's the word?

Write the word under the pictures.

one	two	three	four	six
eight	ten	win	ball	shout

4	1	8	2	
	one			
10	3	6		


2. What's the order?

Listen to the song and put the sentences in order.

	Score the goals and we can win.
	Hey! Defender, get that ball.
1	One in goal and then another ten.
	Now the striker's passed them all.
	We don't care about the weather.
	Yes! A goal and that's one more.
	We'll support our team forever.
	Hear us shout and hear us cheer.


www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishkids  
 © British Council, 2017. The British Council is an international organisation for educational opportunities and cultural relations. We are registered in England as a charity.

From "We're Going to Win" (British Council Learn English Kids)

BRITISH COUNCIL  LearnEnglish Kids

3. Make it right!

Listen to the song. Find the mistake, underline it and write the correct word.

a. One, two, three, five. a b c  four

b. How about another school? \_\_\_\_\_

c. One in goal and then another twelve. \_\_\_\_\_

d. Look for goal and get it in. \_\_\_\_\_

e. We'll support our team sometimes. \_\_\_\_\_

f. Hear us shout and hear us cry. \_\_\_\_\_

g. Defender, get that bat. \_\_\_\_\_


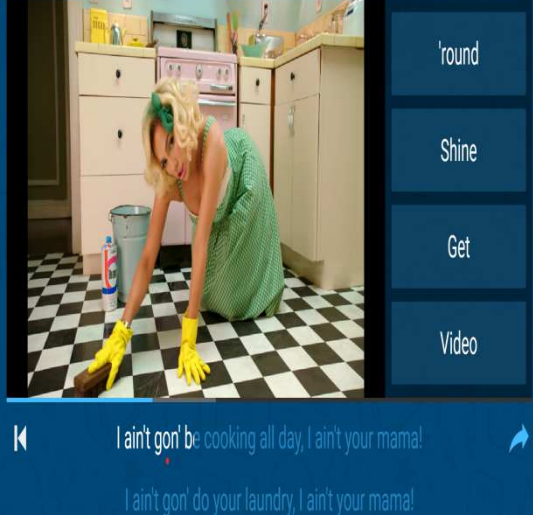
h. At the back, he tries to score. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Write and draw!

What football team do you support? How many goals did they score in their last match? Write about it and draw a picture!

www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglishkids  
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The following materials were implemented with 8<sup>th</sup> graders. On the left, the printable activity “Always”, consists of filling in the blanks with the suitable word emphasizing grammar too: adverbs of frequency. On the right, there is the screenshot from the website *Lyrics Training*, an interactive site to fill in song lyrics. By clicking the beginner level, students can take turns to either choose the right word from four options or, type the missing word in the lyrics. The activities are ready to be done or alternatively the teacher can create the blanks that he or she considers more appropriate.

<h2 style="text-align: center;">Song: Bon Jovi - Always</h2> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Click on the link below for the song.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BMwcO6_hyA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9BMwcO6_hyA</a></p> <p>This Romeo is bleeding, but you can't see his blood It's nothing but some feelings That this old dog kicked up It's been raining since you left _____ Now I'm drowning in the flood You see I've _____ been a fighter But without you I give up</p> <p>Now I can't sing a love song Like the way it's meant to be Well I guess I'm not that good anymore But baby, that's just me</p> <p>Yeah I, will love you, baby _____ and I'll be there Forever and a day, _____</p> <p>I'll be there, till the stars don't shine 'Til the heavens burst and the words don't rhyme I know when I die you'll be on my mind And I'll love you, _____</p> <p>Now your picture's that you left behind Are just memories of a different life Some that made us laugh Some that made us _____ One that made you have to say goodbye</p> <p>What I'd give to run my fingers through your _____ Touch your lips, to hold you near, When you say your prayers, try to understand I've made mistakes, I'm just a man</p> <p>When he holds you close, when he pulls you near When he says the words You've been needing to hear, I'll wish I was him 'Cause these words are mine, to say to you 'Til the end of _____</p> <p>Yeah I, will love you, baby _____ and I'll be there Forever and a day, _____</p> <p>If you told me to cry for you, I _____ If you told me to die for you, I _____</p> <p>Take a look at my face There's no price I won't pay To say these words to _____</p> <p>Well, there ain't no luck in these loaded _____ But baby, if you give me just one more try We can pack up our old dreams, and our old lives, We'll find a place, where the sun still shines</p> <p>Yeah I, will love you, baby _____ and I'll be there Forever and a day, _____</p> <p>I'll be there, till the stars don't shine 'Til the heavens burst and the words don't rhyme I know when I die you'll be on my _____</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; margin-top: 20px;"> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Questions</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What has he always been? _____</li> <li>2. What will he always do? _____</li> <li>3. What has he made? _____</li> <li>4. Who is bleeding? _____</li> </ol> </div> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Copyright © 2015 <a href="http://www.eslkidsworld.com">www.eslkidsworld.com</a></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>ESL Resources Site for Teachers of Young Learners</p> </div>	 <p><b>Ain't Your Mama</b> Jennifer Lopez</p> <p>Nuevo Ejercicio</p> <p>Título* _____</p> <p>Nivel* Seleccione un niv. ▾</p> <p>Modos de Entrada: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Escribir <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Selección</p> <p><input type="button" value="Guardar"/> <input type="button" value="Previsualizar"/></p> <p>Seleccione las palabras a rellenar</p> <p>Presione sobre una palabra para seleccionarla. Para seleccionar varias palabras mantén pulsado y arrastra a palabras adyacentes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="radio"/> Is that all you have to say for yourself ?</li> <li><input type="radio"/> Really ?</li> <li><input type="radio"/> I'm tired 'cause I've been working all day</li> <li><input type="radio"/> No I can't, you should !</li> <li><input type="radio"/> (Human rights are women's rights)</li> </ul>
<p>From “Always” (ESL Kids World)</p>	<p>From “Ain’t Your Mama” (Lyrics Training)</p>

### 5. Animation software

Animation software can be a very appealing tool if we want to attract the students' attention. The curriculum of 7<sup>th</sup> grade covers the topic of 'animals'. This topic can be linked with the topic of 'daily routines', so students are asked to write a short text imagining that they are the animal and they can invent its routines, as if the animal was explaining its daily routine. After, the teacher has revised the text, they record with a recorder app on their mobile phones.

Using the animation software Crazy Talk (<https://www.reallusion.com/crazytalk/default.html>), teachers can use voice and text to animate facial images. So, the image of the animal and the voice are put together in a short video clip. Students can see how their voices match the animals' face movements and gestures and they realise how important intonation, phonetics and expression are. To finish, the students watch their animations and their classmates' and consider their work as something creative, valuable and worthy.



From Google Images (<https://goo.gl/images/dqkqrP>)

### 6. Games on the whiteboard

Many classrooms nowadays are equipped with interactive whiteboards, IWBs. They open a wide new horizon to the interaction of teaching and the IT skills. Teaching with 21<sup>st</sup> century visual aids enhances the students' learning and involvement. The students can try in turns to solve vocabulary, grammar activities or other games from web pages with appealing interactive activities or web materials from the textbook publishers.

The content can be new or a review of the topics that have been dealt with in class before. This activity helps assimilate the basic contents of a grammar unit or consolidate the lexical part of a unit. Some useful sources are, for instance:

- Groove (<http://www.groovetoenglish.com/>)
- Teach Children ESL (<http://www.teachchildrenesl.com/>)

**Peter's Day**

Look at Peter's day and then answer the questions.  
Type your answer; then press "Check". If you need help, you can click on the "Hint" button to get a free letter.

1 / 10

What does he do at 8:00 p.m.?

From Groove's "Peter's Day" (<http://www.groovetoenglish.com/peterday.htm>)

**"SNACKS" ONLINE MEMORY MATCH GAME**

From Teach Children ESL (<http://www.teachchildrenesl.com/>)

**Burlington Books** Grammar Activity 1 Level 1

Click on the pile of cards. Look at the words before they disappear. Then click on the correct answer.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ you read many books?

Do      Does

Score: 4/20

From "Passport 1 (Burlington Books)

**Game Grammar - There is/There are; some/any**

Choose the correct answer.

bananas in the kitchen.

There are some      There are any      There is some

From "Next Move Active Teach" Level 1 (Pearson)

Both this article and the next one showcase practical and effective types of activities that prioritize the students' interest and needs. As it happens with the friendly web tools described here, the next article will also highlight what is key when teaching low-performing 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders: the importance of enhancing creativity, autonomous work and self-esteem for successful and diverse learning experiences.

Thus the present work will be complemented with useful visual class activities, which follow activity proposals and specific guidelines, which also led to satisfactory results. It will include specific work around picture dictionaries, inviting the students' to create their own animal, video recordings, and designing activities for their own classmates.

# Confidence Building Activities for Low-performing 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. Part II: Visual Activities and References

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All my work on confidence building activities for low-performing students in junior high school stands on an empirical analysis of my teaching practice with this type of groups. Situations arise, and pointing to difficulties in “Diversitat” groups is necessary, as solutions must be found. As teachers, we must consider every factor and every variable so that we can find strategies and classroom activities which can improve motivation and straighten class dynamics without causing additional trouble.

I have always been interested in activities which can counteract the main problems in low-performing junior high school English: our learners’ considerable lack in knowledge areas, the presence of frustration, the students’ beliefs that they do not know English or understand it, and, what can even be much worse, their feeling that they do not need the English language in their lives.

It is important that we identify general and individual problems, approach them creatively, establish our goals for the group, put our own professional and personal resources to the test, attempt our solutions every time, and, definitely, try the student-friendly mode too. For the English class in “diversitat”, there are lots of strategies that can fit each student, each group and each teacher.

In my experience, personal relationships in class matter, and they must be nourished. Negotiating leisure time is also relevant. Artistic activities cannot be discarded because students react very positively to them. Competition, clear guidelines and recurrent patterns to follow everyday turn out to be very useful. And we must bear in mind that students very much enjoy producing and participating as creators in class because that makes them understand what they are doing.

This article is part of a **collection of four articles on confidence building activities** which I have extensively implemented in **junior high schools (7<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade)**. They are reflection of my personal perspective and teaching practice about building confidence in low profile students and its class application.

I approach 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades separately from 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades because each block focuses on the corresponding age groups and considers their inherent characteristics and problematic areas, and secondly, because they share proven strategies and activities that have successfully applied to them.



The **first block**, working around **7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade**, is divided into **two articles**. The first article, “Confidence Building Activities for Low-performing 7th and 8th Grade. Part I: Theoretical Frame and Class-friendly Webtools” showed practical and effective types of activities that emphasized the relevance of students’ interest and needs, and provided friendly web tools for low-performing students.

This second article complements the previous one and revolves around useful class activities. They follow activity proposals and specific guidelines, which were also very effective in the EFL class. Four kinds of activities leading to successful and diverse learning experiences which promote creativity, independent work and self-esteem are described: working with picture dictionaries, inviting the students’ to create their own animal, video recordings, and designing activities for their own classmates.

This article also presents general references at the end. Sometimes the class friendly webtools which were thoroughly described and referred to in the previous article combine very well with other activities, such as the ones which are described next. Thus the bibliographical references here close up the first block of confidence building activities around the first two years in junior high school (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade), which, although divided into two articles, stand as a whole, as the two following articles on the higher levels (9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade) will also do in Volume 11 (*English Is It!* (ELT Training Series)).

As indicated earlier, my perspective and practical work on EFL confidence building activities which can be implemented in the last junior high school years (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade) is based of various activities which range from picture dictionaries to the creation of an animal, to video recording, and to, finally, the design of activities for classmates. A detailed description along with guidelines for their implementation are presented next:

### **1. Picture dictionaries**

Picture dictionaries serve as a review and consolidation of many topics for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. It is important to keep in mind that the content which is to be practiced should have been previously dealt with in class. This is how it works: students are given grids to fill in with photos of different sets of vocabulary. They can find the images in magazines, supermarket leaflets and other sources such as internet images, which they need to cut out and stick in the right place.

Instead of paper, students can make their own picture dictionary while using computers. Unlike working with paper, they only need to be given the grids in the word processor, and find the suitable image to illustrate every item. This simple activity works because it is manipulative and accessible. To find out the answers, they can ask the teacher for difficult words or look them up on paper or online dictionaries.

Students are also encouraged to negotiate with their peers, when they need a specific image from classmates. Following there are students’ works about the topic “Food” and “Daily activities”, the latter showing the teacher’s notation “1st”, which means that that was the first student to finish the activity.

Daily Routines Picture Dictionary Date: 21/2/2012 Name: ABDULLAH			Daily Routines Picture Dictionary Date: 21/2/2012 Name: ABDULLAH		
get up	have a shower	get dressed	ride a bicycle	Play football	listen to music
have breakfast	brush my teeth	go to school	Play computer game	watch TV	have dinner
arrive at school	have lessons	have lunch	read a book	go to bed	do my homework
leave school			sleep		

"Daily Activities" picture dictionary by 7<sup>th</sup> grade students

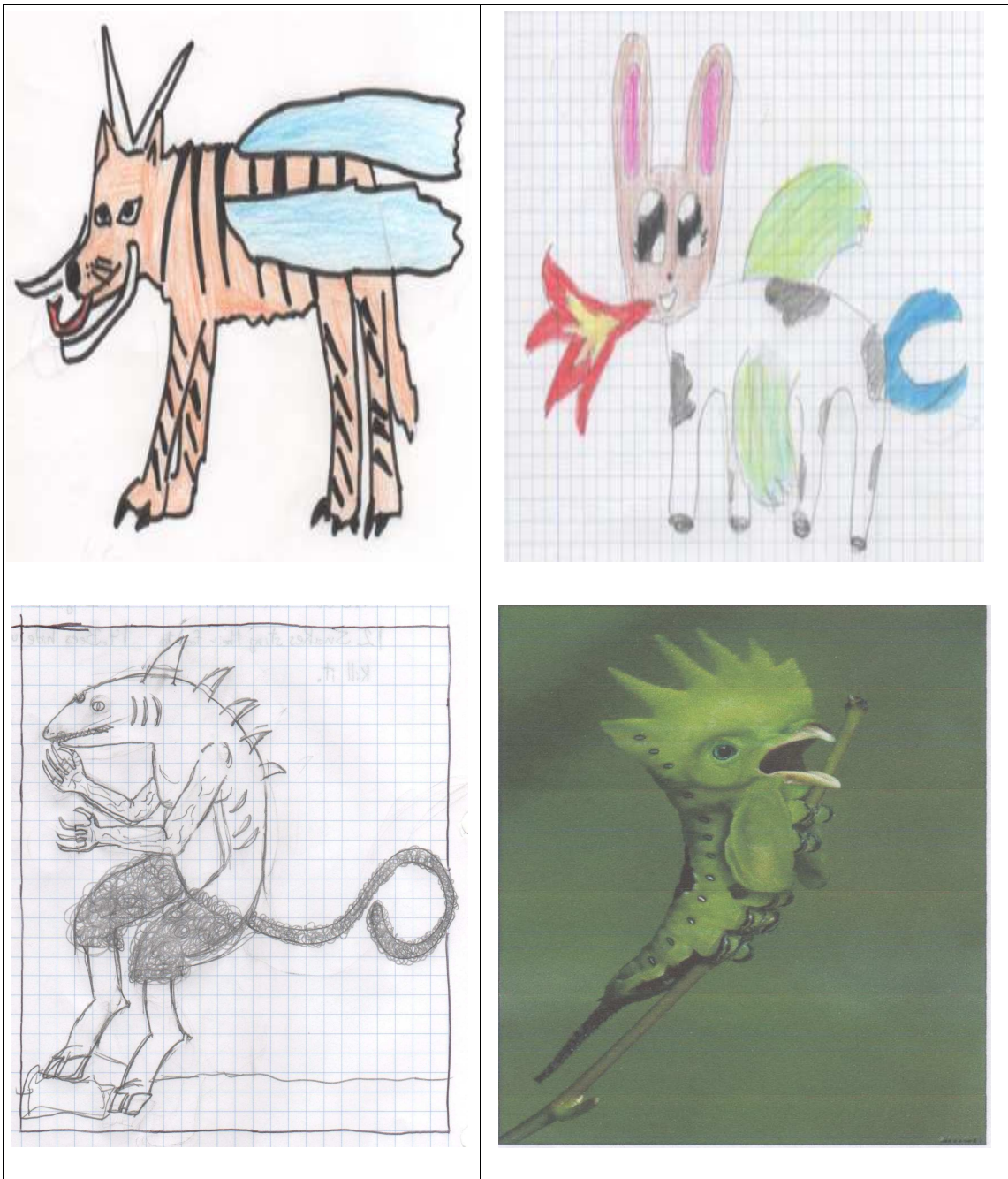
Fruits and vegetables			Meat and fish			Drinks		
artichokes	bananas	beans	bacon	beef steak	chicken	beer	champagne	coffee
cucumber	garlic	lettuce	cod	(beef) cutlet	hake	coke	lemonade	milk
mushroom	olive	onion	lamb	lobster	oyster	milkshake	mineral water	orange juice
peas	potatoes	pepper	sardines	salmon	sausage	peach juice	red wine	sparkling water
salad	strawberries	tomatoes	spicy sausage	tuna	turkey	tea	tomato juice	white wine

"Food" Picture Dictionary by 8<sup>th</sup> grade students

**2. Creation of a fantastic animal**

Preferably for students of 7<sup>th</sup> grade, the learners invent a fantastic animal. The curriculum of 7<sup>th</sup> grade includes the topic of “Animals”, their names and their body parts. To start, the teacher asks the students what their favourite animal is. Then, they review the animal parts and as a class conversation, they consider drawing a fantastic animal.

Once they have drawn the picture, they write the accurate description of their drawings so that their classmates can guess what the animal looks like. Each student reads the description in front of the class as a picture dictation. This activity encourages self-expression, careful listening and oral production.



‘My fantastic animal’ by 7<sup>th</sup> grade students

The former pictures are mostly students' designs on paper, except for the last one, since students are also encouraged to use image editors to create pictures on computer or their mobile, as an IT alternative. Exploiting this activity is very interesting from different perspectives

For example, students may design the imaginary animal with an image editor, study the biology of the animal, and add a description in English. The integration of English, Biology, IT and Art makes the activity an easy and practical hands-on cross-curricular activity for teachers of "diversitat".

The resulting drawings and their descriptions can also become beautiful posters to decorate the classrooms and, their works can even be published in the English section in the school magazine, on which, needless to say, the picture' designers take much pride on.

### **3. Video recording**

Students of any age range can create a **short film**, a **commercial** or any kind of *YouTube* video (<https://www.youtube.com>). The new "filmmakers" can cover topics that they have studied or vocabulary that they master or that they can develop more. The teacher can propose the topic or allow for the students' choice.

Firstly, in groups, they prepare the topic, they invent the characters and write the script, which will appear on subtitles on the screen. They can also use their mobile phones to record it and edit it. They can be guided with simple strategies to ensure that everyone will be capable of producing a video at their reach.



*"The Last Call" short created, recorded and edited by 8<sup>th</sup> graders*

At the end of the term or after a lesson unit, the teacher can play the students' videos. At that stage students are genuinely pleased with that part of the lessons. It is important to bear in mind that the involvement and the attitude to the subject changes a great deal when the level of implication is so high.

A more simple approach to video is '**dubbing**'. In pairs or groups students choose a short scene from a film that they like. The age ratings must be regarded. They start by writing a new script for their scenes. Students can invent a different topic of the conversations or they can give a different tone to the conversation among the characters, like a humorous or dramatic tone. Then, using recording mobile apps, they record the voice focusing on the right pronunciation and intonation and they replace the original one with their voice clip.



Screenshots from two students' dubbing films work

The resulting films can become useful class material of many kinds: for example, warmers. The teacher can play the short film and poses a question to make the students focus on the dialogue and the general understanding, such as 'What is the weather like?', 'What is the man like?', or 'What word does the customer say?'. These cues can serve as an elicitation to note a specific lexical topic or grammar topic, or simply to encourage a short speaking exercise, indicated by the teacher beforehand. Depending on the topics, this can be the starting point of a class discussion, narration and description.

#### **4. Creation of activities for their classmates**

Both for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students' can create activities for their own peers after, for example, they read a book which must be suitable for their level. The following activities are based on the story of *Sleepy Hollow* and *Rip Van Winkle*, American literature classics, which work very well for all kinds of readers.

This is how the activity works: firstly, students read and listen to the different chapters of the story *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow and Rip Van Winkle* (Oxford Dominoes), and once they finish and understand the stories, in groups they prepare activities for their classmates.





The possible activities may be wordsearches, crosswords, labelling the image and picture description to check comprehension, and the assimilation of vocabulary. Then, a selection of the groups' activities are put together in appealing worksheets and the names of the authors of the activities are highlighted, which makes students feel 'capable', 'useful', while their self-esteem is being reinforced.


Equally, the school magazine can publish these activities mentioning their name, giving room to their role in school life. Finally, the students do the activities in class, as peer work, and if there are any questions, the activities' creators help their peers to complete their tasks.

### The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

#### The Characters

Write the name of the characters under their pictures.

	
_____	_____
	
_____	_____



Pictures by Zulema Hernández, Kevin and Sergio Bujalar

### Rip Van Winkle

#### Chapter 1

Find 12 words from the chapter in this wordsearch. Read the sentences for help.

ACEXJZOGXHYVSXZROLRR  
 BDFASERRERAALIVENAEL  
 MAGICABYEFGFARMHGIJ  
 OTAVLBYWEZXYZMNNQYK  
 URMHOLJKFLZMYNOAPQRS  
 NYEZTAABICDEBARRELF  
 TKLMHNPWILDKTRSTVMX  
 AVFWEZXUZABCSPFEGHIJ  
 IMNOSRFUCOSQRIVERST  
 NEIGHBOURSNOCILLASNO  
 SZYXVBOASTDEGFGHIJKL

Do you want to play a \_\_\_\_\_?  
 These \_\_\_\_\_ are very nice.  
 The nature is very \_\_\_\_\_.  
 For superstitious people magic is real.  
 The husband and \_\_\_\_\_.  
 The Nile is the longest \_\_\_\_\_ in the world.  
 Rip drink from a \_\_\_\_\_ of beer.  
 Rip is very \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Everest is a \_\_\_\_\_.  
 Some animals live in \_\_\_\_\_.









Wordsearch by Albert Rodriguez

#### Chapter 2

Complete the blanks as you listen to this piece of the chapter.

When Rip opens his <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, it's a <sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ morning. 'Oh, no!' he cries. 'My <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ doesn't like me to <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ away from home!' Rip remembers his <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ on the mountain. He stands up, but finds he can't <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ very easily. And where's Wolf? In the <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, some <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ laugh at him. The <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, the people, and their clothes are all different. Rip feels <sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_.

Write the correct word under these pictures from the chapter.

Pictures by Angel Morillo

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

Date:

Place:

Chapter 1

J	G	H	V	T	I	B	Z	Q	U	W	C	H	H	I	B
L	E	G	E	N	D	H	I	D	S	S	Z	D	Y	E	F
C	H	I	L	M	N	S	O	Q	C	Z	A	R	Y	X	S
A	J	G	L	H	M	T	R	S	P	Q	A	V	U	W	X
R	H	E	A	D	L	E	S	S	H	O	P	Q	B	A	B
X	Z	H	V	I	N	M	E	S	C	H	O	O	L	O	V
E	T	H	I	N	J	A	I	G	H	I	O	X	L	L	Y
P	E	C	H	B	Y	E	N	C	H	U	R	C	H	R	S
O	D	I	R	M	K	N	O	R	B	C	H	I	J	K	L
S	A	C	A	M	N	D	O	D	H	A	U	N	T	E	D
S	I	C	V	B	L	A	C	K	M	A	G	I	C	C	H
I	A	H	E	Q	C	P	R	O	S	Z	X	P	T	C	

By Adrian Torralba








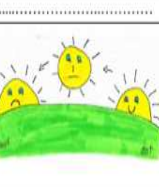




Chapter 2

Find words from the chapters.

P	P	X	B	N	T	M	J	C	L	S	D	H	A
Q	R	S	A	D	P	L	E	W	D	F	B	G	I
U	A	T	L	Y	F	A	V	O	U	R	I	T	E
S	W	O	V	A	Z	I	C	S	E	D	Z	J	K
K	N	F	C	A	P	U	M	P	K	I	N	U	G
I	E	I	S	G	N	B	L	O	X	F	M	L	S
C	S	L	F	Z	R	T	H	L	M	O	W	K	T
K	N	O	C	K	J	A	Z	L	Y	A	V	U	M
Y	K	S	Y	M	W	J	I	A	D	E	R	H	W
B	W	O	R	H	T	V	B	G	A	V	E	R	Y
C	H	T	G	K	L	A	D	M	C	F	N	Z	Y

By Zaira González

Write the appropriate words from the chapter under the pictures:

Images created by 7<sup>th</sup> graders

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

Describe the following picture.



Illustration by Sara Bravo

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.....

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.....

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From my personal experience I have had the chance to meet students from different origins, and become acquainted with a large variety of backgrounds, personal stories, and psychological traits. I have learned a lot from them and I am still learning, adapting and devising different ways to apply in class.

When students work as they are expected, and respond to our expectations, everything in teaching is *fine*. The problem comes when some or all the students in a group are reluctant to our comments, our explanations and our intervention. Indeed, school reality is sometimes hard, students are not ideal, and neither are teachers, and, sadly, these students' casuistry distills frustration and sometimes anger. It is no wonder that teaching some groups can be a difficult experience.

Fighting against many odds, such as bad attitude, knowledge deficits and their own psychological baggage, students with a low profile need a great deal of comprehension and patience. Stepping ahead is quite hard for the teacher and the students, and it is usually counteracted with a moment or two of disappointment. However, every little step is a big success and it is very important that they can go back on track, where they feel in the right place, in the centre of their own learning.

Through some years of experience with these groups, I have been able to collect types of activities that have worked with them. All the references listed below include the web tools and activity resources for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders, which have been precisely put together to help the teacher in need of ideas when facing a low-performing group.

Having approached junior high school 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, in the next volume I will explore 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade low-profile groups, and while appraising my own teaching experience, I will consider the intricate factors that influence students, who, closer to finish the obligatory education in the later junior high school years can lose hope in successful schooling, and, finally, drop out.

Also, simple guidelines and resources will be provided, accompanied by web tools and practical samples of student-friendly activities, which, ultimately, encapsulate the actual made to measure teaching. All the theses practical guidelines have become a turning point in EFL teaching, both for me and for the sake of my students' abilities, also resulting in rewarding experiences for us.

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*YouTube*

<https://www.youtube.com>

# Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 1: From Comprehension to Production

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“When the student is ready, the teacher will appear. When the student is truly ready... The teacher will disappear” (Lao Tzu)

*Diversity in EFL Learning* is a collection of three articles related to how **we help our students understand English learning**. When they do that, they successfully, get involved both individually and in their groups. Consequently, they are able to interact and produce their most willing oral and written expressions. This collection is based on my experience as an EFL teacher (in-session multi-level, distance learning, and university entrance access) classes and as teacher trainer. The ideas included have been previously tested at different levels, and feedback on the positive changes which EFL learners have undergone have been noted down. This collection is divided as follows:

- **Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 1: From Comprehension to Production**
- **Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 2: Group work**
- **Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 3: Individual work. A sample**

Generation after generation education applies pedagogy, teaching and learning which derives from disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, linguistics... Education is built on a combination of different elements: administrations, schools, and teachers, whose professional expertise need to work in unison to ensure that we all, from our positions, make wise choices, solve problems and break new ground in teaching and learning specific skills. Education also includes less tangible units: the teaching of knowledge, the passing of wisdom, culture, and opinion formation.

Education also means facilitating the students’ realization of their own potentials and talents, whether they are already developed or latent. Administrations, schools and teachers must enable students to increase their capacity and willingness to actively acquire knowledge, and productively apply it, along with their skills. This allows them to grow and mature, as they learn to successfully adapt to changes and challenges in society.

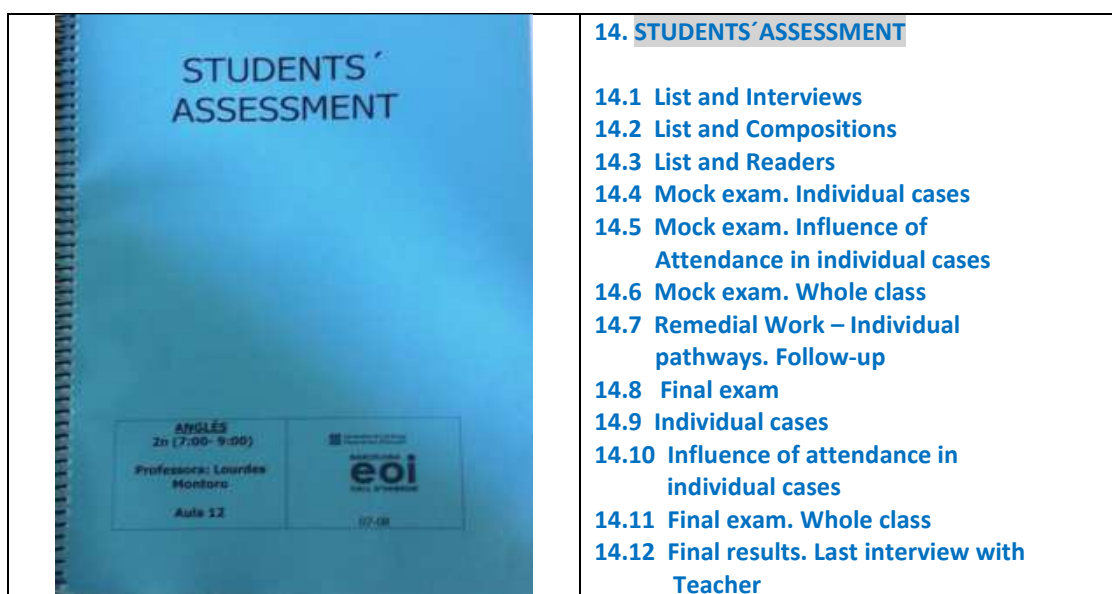
When students become autonomous, their talents are enhanced, and they find themselves prepared to accomplish initial objectives. They are unconsciously taken further in their learning process, while they realize that education is a lifelong sustainable process which is always exciting and renewable. **Education** is also like **a language**, and as such, **it means communication**, and there lies the key to the so-called student’s motivation in class contexts, in teaching and learning: the desire to do so, that is, to communicate.

Communication is an intrinsic part of human relations and life. Therefore **all parts involved need to aim at it**. Hence if all the parameters meet all the requirements, students simply and naturally find something that they want to say to the teacher or their classmates, or to their own selves, since they are **learning from experience**: life simply starts taking place in English in their the English classroom. “Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 1: From Comprehension to Production” includes theory and practice which help promote competences, learning and teaching strategies, assessment, tutoring sessions, and feedback.

When I sat for public professorship exams, I presented a **teaching project** which was based on what I just exposed. I had long implemented it, and passed it on in teacher training sessions and courses. It was part of an area called **Curriculum and Innovation: Instrumental competences, and learning strategies**. The project was called **“Research-Action from comprehension to production: developing students’ intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences, and personal learning pathways”**.

The project included the presentation of the pedagogical project; a brief account of the history of official public language schools; my professional career; a general framework in education, competition and occupation in Europe; the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages; LOE and its application; the different levels, and the Basic Certificate of English level reference framework (A2), through which I was going to exemplify my work.

Sections on mastering learning styles, teaching and curricular styles, and the difference between language acquisition and language practice followed. Finally the project was specifically devoted to the introduction to the adult students’ profile, and its influence in EFL teaching and learning. **Chapter 14** in the project included the students’ assessment method and samples, which I had devised and used for long. It was divided into twelve sections, which are listed below and will be described further on. The students’ assessment practice was recorded in a notebook which I had designed for my different courses, and which is shown underneath too.



This project exemplified part of my work at public language schools. Public language schools provide teachers with classrooms which from minute one are accurate language learning and teaching laboratories. They allow us to observe and record students’ performances in detail, and plan for further interventions of ours, as we tailor our **students and teacher joint work**.

The project was centered on **the necessity to closely work with students, and follow up their learning processes**, through interviews, self-assessment, continuous assessment..., while they were also being helped at other levels: the development of their intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences so that students could feel at ease; cooperative and collaborative work along with EFL class communication were also encouraged. At the end of the school

year, both parts, the students and the teacher, felt that the **goals** which had been aimed were **achieved in the best possible conditions**, and that is why the assessment project was presented.

I had reached a system which was the result of reflection on the official assessment guidelines, and the present educational context added up to brainstorming on what my own potential was like, and how both, the assessment guidelines and the educational context could be blended in. As a result, I devised a method which takes into account the following elements: interviews; the official guided written expression and written comprehension planning; the mock exam: results in individual cases, the influence of attendance, and results in the whole group; remedial work with open individual learning pathways and close follow-up both for students who needed it, and for those who did not but were willing to advance in other EFL areas of their interest; the final exam (individual cases, the Influence of attendance in individual cases, and the whole group); and last but not least, the final results, and the last interviews with the teacher.

From my experience, I have seen that **adult students at public language schools usually enjoy their classes, their classmates, their teacher, and their teaching sessions. They are also very fond of cooperative and collaborative learning. They are keen on learning what kind of learner they are and how that can be enhanced, learning about learning and learning about techniques, receiving immediate feedback, being guided remedial work, being autonomous, learning for pleasure, understanding the foreign language mental framework, and learning about English-speaking countries.**

In general, they appreciate advice given to them regarding their learning processes. They want to know what their weak and strong points are as learners. At the same time, students may be overwhelmed by hectic personal lives, and may not seem to have or find much time for assignment. They certainly have their **own problems as adults, and have to skip classes due to work and other personal circumstances**. They may end up missing class, and they may not be knowledgeable in the objectives which they are expected to achieve in the EFL courses in which they have enrolled.

Very often, they are not acquainted with how a language is to be taught and can be learned; they may also drag along previous negative English learning experiences; they might not have many learning strategies either. Additionally, they are **traditionally used to being tested quantitatively, but not qualitatively** (for example, with regards to written expression they easily focus on school linguistic accuracy, but take longer to see the relevance of linguistic range, text organization or global impression). They simply need to remember that thinking goes before doing. They also need the teacher's flexibility to help them reach the objectives in the level, and, finally, **they need to experience that EFL teaching and learning can be a pleasure.**

Besides this, it is important for the teacher to **maximize class time with students**: firstly, because it is **right in that time** gap when **students can attend the sessions**, no matter how late in the evening that may be, or how tired they can be; secondly, a **correct transfer of the knowledge** which is to be passed to them needs to be properly administered; and thirdly, during that time, we can **help them develop their learners' potential, their own learning styles, and EFL itineraries**. These all can take them to their best possible professional and autonomous student status, which, in turn, can mean that both performances, the teacher's and the students', are in place.

I will present next the 12 sections which were included in the assessment method and notebooks which I devised, and mentioned earlier. The twelve sections below include a list of contents, a general introduction, and the dates when they are recommended for implementation.

## **1. LIST AND INTERVIEWS** (October to May)

- **Noting down interviews date and data – Teacher’s initiative**
- **Noting down interviews date and data – Students’ initiative**

Students know that I can either call them at any time, and they are also encouraged to ask for **interviews at any time**. I either post an interview **sheet on the board**, or use a **set blackboard area for interview listing**. Whichever system I use, I follow it all school year. Whether it is one or the other, when students enter the classroom, **I have already noted down the students’ names who I would like to talk to, and, as they join in the session, students can also write down their name on the sheet or the board to ask for interview time.**

No matter what system we follow, I always know how many students need my help, and I can find time for them during class sessions. When interviews need longer time because they call for further work, both the teacher and student schedule another time during the week. **The records of each group are kept in my group notebook.** I use as many notebooks as groups I have. They have the **interview sheets** where I keep all the records. Students take their own notes. And the system becomes part of class.

<b>INTERVIEW RECORD SHEET</b>		
<b>DATE</b>	<b>STUDENT’S NAME</b>	<b>CHECKED</b>

## 2. LIST AND COMPOSITIONS

(October to May)

- Noting down written expression tasks
- Qualitative and quantitative study

All written tasks are noted down. Both the **quantitative number and the progress** which they show are taken into account and commented to the student. I also use two trays for written expression: The **IN and OUT Trays**. Students leave their writing exercises and compositions in the IN tray and find them **corrected** in the OUT tray **on the next day**. Systematically finding results in the OUT tray in the following class is very encouraging for students. If there is a need for an interview about their work, they find a note from me there, and automatically know that they need to ask for interview time with me.

**Students** are not encouraged to present old writings in an improved form, but to **create new written excerpts and passages through which they can prove to themselves and to me that they are implementing what they learned from the previous correction practice**. The novelty of new writings emotionally takes them away from failed work, and students just focus on what is to be done next, which only depends on them. It is also important to point that students are allowed to present **only one writing practice per day**. This is so because students' mistakes obviously persevere in different written expression samples created in the same time lapse.

They are just copies of their own selves as writers. Since they are made by the same person, the mental patterns are the same and so are the linguistic problems. One composition at a time allows students to focus on less, directly exposes them to their chance to learn from corrections, while challenges them to do so. On the other hand, at the same time, as they are limited to one, they also learn that in my classes, **handing in compositions does not have an expiring date**. Once more they are invited to hand in as many written pieces as they wish to at any time, as long as they follow this method, which soon they start seeing that works for us all.

## 3. LIST AND READERS

(October to May)

- Noting down written comprehension tasks
- Noting down oral expression tasks
- Noting down written expression tasks
- Qualitative and quantitative study

**Written comprehension** tasks refer to students' work through **readers**. And so do **oral expression** tasks which are used on **readers' days** to check their written comprehension. For school readings, students must follow a calendar. However, school class **work on readers does not quantitatively affect official scores**. So, if my students have **not been able to finish the book by the fixed date**, I encourage them to **do so at their own pace**, and to let me know. When they finish their reader, they are expected to inform me by leaving a summary of the story and a personal commentary in the IN Tray. On the next day, they find my feedback comments and assessment in the OUT Tray. If there is a need for an interview, I add an additional note, and the interview system gets started again.

If students who have not finished the reader, come to class, on the day when assigned school reader work is due, they can either use the class time to proceed with their reading, opt for

study time, and/or a tutoring session with me while their classmates work on what had been originally scheduled. I must say that when I **note down** their works on readings, that includes both **the ones that the school requires** and any other readings that they may have been interested in, and which they have enjoyed. With regards to **optional readers**, they can let me know at any time. The IN and OUT trays are used once more as qualitative and quantitative reading assessment takes place.

#### **4. MOCK EXAM – INDIVIDUAL CASES**

**(February)**

- Exams on five skills
- Individual feedback sheet by skills: state and suggestions for improvement

EFL courses last for two terms. Mock exams take place just at the end of the first term. Students are exposed to a final exam simulation, which besides challenging them at the linguistic level, ensures that they all become familiar with the format: what to do, how to do it, and how long they need per section to succeed. Mock exams do not have any quantitatively effect on the final score at the end of the second term. I use an individual **feedback mock exam sheet** which refers to the five skills. **It includes each score, a general impression comment per each one, and possible reasons for failure; if so, there are sections where specific areas for improvement can be noted down, and an agreed recommended timing for checking that. Both the teacher and the student keep the same copy.**

This way they can both refer to it at any time during the second part of the course, as students overcome difficulties and prepare for the final exam. Students themselves are responsible for noting down their own results, as they get the different scores. After exams have been reviewed in class, I call students for individual interviews to check that they interpreted results well. It is right then, when interviews take place, when I fill in the different areas with my feedback comments. We agree upon the remedial work that needs to be done (Please see section 7 for individual EFL learning pathways). And right after that, I pass them a copy of our joint work which is registered on the sheet.

#### **5. MOCK EXAM – INFLUENCE OF ATTENDANCE IN INDIVIDUAL CASES**

**(February)**

- Individual results
- Attendance percentage in the first term
- Correspondence between attendance and getting the most of class sessions and learning processes

After having quantitative results from the linguistic mock exam, and before individual mock exam feedback interviews take place, I study the data which shows in the school attendance sheet. I see what the connection with the results is, and share the information with those students who may have attended classes regularly but failed, and those who have skipped classes, and have not passed either. During the mock exam interviews (explained in 4) I ask students who have failed to tell me about their studying techniques. There is obviously some wrong procedure that needs to be pointed for correction, so that they can improve from there. A scheduled tutoring session to check advances is planned and noted down in the feedback sheet. If students fall in the second category, I remind them of the effect of lack of attendance



on their grades as well as of the chance which they still have to make changes. They are informed about the virtual options which my EFL class has for students who cannot attend classes regularly.

All EFL practices which I do in class have the key, and are also uploaded in the class *Moodle*. Therefore they are ready for self-assessment, which is recommended along with some tutoring sessions. This information was already passed to the students at the start of the school year, but it is worth pointing it out again. Students still have the opportunity to follow that system, which is an option which I, as a teacher, provide (because the course is not virtual). Or they can agree to start a study program based on attendance and interviews which they can still embark on. It is always up to them. They need to be responsible for their work, and find the teacher.

## **6. MOCK EXAM – CLASS GROUP**

**(February)**

**Study of the class group based on:**

- **General results in exams**
- **Results by skills**
- **Conclusions**
- **Remedial work**
- **Interview work**

I study the results per group with regards to their general grade, and their score by skills. I compare them. I note them down on a class list which is also part of my class notebook. This includes my statistics, and notes which I want to convey to each student in the individual interviews which take place around their individual mock exam results. They include suggestions for EFL pathways for further language work. They will be commented during the individual interviews.

## **7. REMEDIAL WORK – FOLLOW-UP ON INDIVIDUAL ITINERARY**

**(February to May)**

- **Notes on advances**
- **Reinforcement on all necessary areas**

During interviews the teacher provides both quantitative and qualitative feedback on the student's exam performance. The teacher also suggests remedial work. Repair and reinforcement time begins then and can last for as long as the student agrees on. After completion, whether it is before the deadline or after it, or it simply meets the deadline, the teacher and the student have another interview to close all the work and to see if further work is suggested by either part.

Students who get good grades are also encouraged to go on personal learning EFL pathways. That can include any personal EFL interest of their own. The pathways which students follow are usually related to either **linguistic areas and/or to topics of their interest in English**. They range from **oral expression, written expression, oral comprehension, written comprehension and grammar competence to specialty lexis, British English and American English, phonetics, British and American slang, English speaking countries, English through songs and movie sound tracks, English through recipes, referential readings in areas of their expertise, English**

practice opportunities where they live, hobbies of theirs in English (horsebackriding, scrapbooking, baking, tennis...).

In all cases students are presented an **EFL personal pathway sheet** which they have to fill in. They can follow as many pathways as they wish to. In the sheets, they have to fill in spaces related to: **level; full name; time period; skills, grammar, vocabulary or else; name of task; aim; individual, pair or group work; real timing; if they finished what they aimed at; if they need more practice on it; if they needed or need the teacher's help; if they used dictionaries; textbook; grammar; class notes; Moodle class, or else; if they wanted to share some information which they found which might be useful to classmates (recommended readers, websites...), if they worked with classmates for reinforcement; and needed the teacher for continuous assessment.** Students usually share what they enjoy learning and find it unique as a finding of their own, which encourages group work class, and enhances individual work which takes into account the group too.

<b>STUDENT'S PERSONAL EFL PATHWAY</b>	
<b>SELF-ACCESS STUDY</b>	<b>Prof. Lourdes Montoro</b>
<b>LEVEL:</b>	
<b>NAME:</b>	
<b>TIME PERIOD:</b>	
<b>SKILLS, VOCABULARY OR OTHER</b>	
<b>NAME OF TASK</b>	
<b>AIM</b>	
<b>INDIVIDUAL, PAIR WORK OR GROUP WORK</b>	
<b>REAL TIMING</b>	
<b>FINISHED IT?</b>	
<b>NEEDS MORE PRACTICE ON IT?</b>	
<b>NEEDED OR NEEDS TEACHER'S HELP?</b>	
<b>USED DICTIONARIES, TEXTBOOK, GRAMMARS, CLASS NOTES, MOODLE CLASS?</b>	
<b>WORKED WITH CLASSMATES FOR REINFORCEMENT?</b>	
<b>INFORMATION WHICH COULD BE USEFUL FOR CLASSMATES? (Recommended readers, websites...)</b>	
<b>WORKED WITH TEACHER FOR CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT?</b>	
<b>WANTS TO DO FURTHER ITINERARIES? WHAT ABOUT?</b>	

<b>TEACHER’S RECORD OF PERSONAL EFL PATHWAY</b>	
<b>Student’s full name</b>	<p><b>POSSIBLE PERSONAL EFL LEARNING ITINERARIES (If your preference is not here, tell your teacher and add it up)</b></p> <p>Oral expression / Written expression / Oral comprehension / Written comprehension / Grammar competence / Specialty lexis / British English / American English / Phonetics / British and American slang / English speaking countries / English through songs and movie sound tracks / English through recipes / Referential readings in expertise areas / English practice opportunities where they live, hobbies in English (horsebackriding, scrapbooking, baking, tennis...)</p>

### 8. FINAL EXAM RESULTS

(June)

- Copy of final grades by skills

It will include a copy of each group final exam records. At a glance the teacher can see what the grades have been like.

### 9. FINAL EXAM – INDIVIDUAL CASES

(June)

Last feedback including variables which relate the final exam to the students’:

- EFL Learning process
- Mock exam
- Individual EFL Learning pathways
- Interviews
- Personal circumstances...

In my group notebook there is also a section for the last interview records. The model next shows a student sample, including name and commentaries related to the five skills which students have been tested on the final exam: oral expression, written expression, oral comprehension, written comprehension and grammar competence.

<b>INTERVIEW RECORD SHEET</b>	
Oral Expression, written expression, oral comprehension, written comprehension and grammar competence)	
STUDENT'S NAME	COMMENTARIES
<b>FINAL GRADES (COMPETENCES)</b>	
OE	OE
WE	WE
OC	OC
WC	WC
GC	GC

## 10. FINAL EXAM – INFLUENCE OF ATTENDANCE IN INDIVIDUAL CASES

(February to May)

- Individual results
- Attendance percentage in the second term
- Correspondence between attendance and getting the most of class sessions and learning processes

After having quantitative results from the final exam, and before final exam feedback, I study the data which shows in the school attendance sheet. I follow the same procedure described in section 5. Along with comments on attendance – if necessary – and feedback on possible failure, I also congratulate students on their performance because the ones following the interview system and EFL learning itineraries often succeed.

I usually guide them once more towards the new level which they will be entitled to, provide feedback on necessary items that they would like to know about, and basically encourage them to continue learning English as a foreign language, whether it is in the same level, or, hopefully, a higher one, and most important, to enjoy what they are doing, and themselves as learners.

## 11. FINAL EXAM – CLASS GROUP

(J u n e)

Study of the class group based on:

- General results in exams
- Results by skills
- Conclusions
- Remedial work
- Interview work

I study the results per group with regards to their general grade, and their score by skills. As I had done with the previous results related to the mock exam, once more, I compare them. I note them down on a class list. This includes my statistics, and notes. They will be conveyed to each student in the last individual interviews. They will include assessment and suggestions for the new level which they will hopefully be entitled to enroll in, and for the same level, if they need to take it again.

## 12. REACHING FINAL GRADES – FINAL INTERVIEW WITH THE TEACHER

(J u n e)

Individual interviews about:

- Quantitative final results
- Qualitative final results
- Study of individual cases
- General view on each student's learning process, and suggestions for next academic level, or the same level, if still necessary

All results on final exams are reviewed with each student. Quantitative and qualitative results are related and commented. The teacher's comments are based on the feedback, which has been previously noted down (please see # 9) .

After I devised and implemented the system which I have just presented, the EFL self-access center at school asked for volunteers to provide for tutoring sessions, because the government no longer sent teachers for that. For some years, I volunteered in the Intermediate level of English so that enrollment in that school area could go on. Students were entitled to a monthly tutoring session which I devised and implemented as follows. It contained:

- a pathway selection
- doubts about the previous lessons
- writing workshop
- possible readers
- speaking workshop
- speaking final exam simulation
- final orientations to end up textbook
- preparation for the final exam

If students wished to, they could also sign up for further speaking and written tutoring sessions.

<p><b>TUTORIES CA CERTIFICAT INTERMEDI</b></p> <p><b>Dilluns (de 1.30 a 2.00 o de 4.30 a 5.00)</b></p> <p><b>A/</b></p> <p><b>Octubre – Tutoria Inicial (inscripció itineraris + presentació treball).</b></p> <p><b>B/</b></p> <p><b>5 de novembre: Dubtes Llic 1 + presentació Expressió Escrita (preparació de treball de redacció fins gener) + possibles llibres de lectura</b></p> <p><b>C/</b></p> <p><b>3 de desembre: Dubtes Llic 2 + presentació Expressió Oral (preparació de treball amb companys per simulacre examen oral)</b></p> <p><b>D/</b></p> <p><b>28 de gener: Dubtes Llic 3 i 4 + Orientació per la finalització del llibre i preparació examen final (juny)</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>REFORC EXPRESSIÓ ORAL I ESCRITA + TUTORIA</b></p> <p>(19ª i 20ª Hora) Professora: Lourdes Montoro Mes:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 25%;">Alumne/a</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Nivell</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Consulta</th> <th style="width: 25%;">Itinerari</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> <tr><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td><td> </td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Alumne/a	Nivell	Consulta	Itinerari																																																																																				
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With the time, that ended, and state language schools required teachers to officially provide one week tutoring sessions. It was called the 19<sup>th</sup> hour. I will present next the syllabus which I formally presented, and which I still follow. This syllabus was soon adopted by some of my colleagues as well.

**EFL LEARNING PATHWAYS: NEEDS DETECTION AND INDIVIDUAL ATTENTION**

**19th hour: Intermediate level** **Prof. Lourdes Montoro**

**OBJECTIVES**

1. To make students aware of the teacher’s informative and formative training
2. To detect the students’ educational needs to get the most of the students’ learning capacity
3. To guide students according to their general and individual traits: ability to learn a foreign language, difficulties in learning process, personal situation (motivation, time, work, family, attendance...)
4. To create individual EFL learning pathways which can fit students’ needs and help them improve their oral expression as well as their written expression, listening comprehension, written comprehension, and grammatical competences
5. To facilitate strategies, tools and resources to students (worksheets, webpages, Moodle site...) so that they can focus on them, in order to master them and improve in their necessary skills
6. To do the students’ follow-up in all cases.

**CONTENTS**

1. Learning strategies in general
2. Learning strategies to improve in the learning of English as a foreign language
3. Tools and resources to help students focus on what they need to master and improve in oral expression, written expression, oral comprehension, written comprehension and grammar competence
4. Work calendar
5. Analysis of the students' learning process, and follow-up to assess their work through sessions

**METHODOLOGY:**

It is based on an educational formative intervention. The teacher will detect EFL learning problems which her students may have. She will be calling them for individual interviews. During the tutoring sessions, she will provide assessment, and suggest language learning itineraries which can lead to the students' improvement. She will present strategies, tools, resources and will agree with the student on a personalized calendar so that students can do their work, and the teacher can monitor work and progress in the detected default learning parameters, while everything is being focused on the specific objectives at which both the teacher and the students jointly aim.

**TOTAL NUMBER OF HOURS: 30**

**TIMING: Monday (300-4.00)**

**ROOM: 12**

**REFERENCES**

- *Projecte escolta'm. Tutoria personalitzada* (2009) Barcelona: ICE - UB.
- *L'avaluació del procés formatiu d'un assessorament* (2009) Barcelona: ICE – UB.
- *La tutoria y el tutor. Estrategias para su práctica.* (2008). Barcelona: Editorial Horsori.

Whether EFL tutoring sessions are required or voluntary, they must be part of an educational project which helps teachers learn about their students' interests and difficulties. Through tailor-made EFL learning strategies, we can reinforce knowledge and skills, which can lead our students to acquire both knowledge and autonomy. This creates an excellent study and work atmosphere for all, and provides immediate feedback which both teachers and students can immediately benefit from. Responsibility is it in both parts, and we must work together. Sometimes students can work in twos and threes, and they may have their own proposals. Both the teacher and the students need to be active listeners and adjust to what may be necessary at all times.

Students succeed when they aware of how they learn in class and outside; if they attend class, they need to pay attention to what they use to learn and how they practise what they learn. They also need to realize that they can provide linguistic suggestions to classmates, must listen to their classmates' suggestions, and also ask the teacher for help when they have the chance. When they keep learning outside, they need to keep track of their class notes, use them, do any necessary assignment, prepare work to be handed in, use self-access through the class Moodle site, support their groups, enjoy what they do, and aim for the best.

The activities which students end up doing, the projects which they get involved in, and their success in EFL learning pathways entirely depend on them. If the human mind precedes all, everything may reflect our own minds, and therefore everything can be modified by our minds too: the teacher's and the students'. Tutoring sessions can be the start of a discovery journey for our students. Based on our expertise, we offer our students what we consider their best options, but, as in Robert Frost' "The road not taken" (1920. <http://www.bartleby.com/119/1.html>), it is up to them to choose the less travelled one, or not. The following two articles will present observations on both group work (general) and on an individual case (specific), along with the procedures followed in all cases.

# Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 2: Group Work

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*If people were doing what they are supposed to do, everything would be easier. You enter a classroom, observe your students, and you know exactly who is who and how to lead them each, and all.*

(In memoriam of Francisco Guix, an outstanding 80-year old student of mine)

Scrivener (1994=2011) states that the process of learning involves five steps: doing something, recalling what happened, reflecting on that, drawing conclusions, and using them to prepare for future practical experience. He adds that learning needs energy and attention from the learner and that one person can only learn for oneself. Therefore it depends on one's effort, and understanding and skills cannot be transmitted.

This explains why a teacher might be doing very well, and have his/her students not learn much, and vice versa; a teacher could apparently not do much, but have his/her students learn. Scrivener affirms that teaching the EFL subject comprises different areas: language systems, language skills exam techniques, working with and learning about other people, and learning better ways of learning.

"Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 1: From Comprehension to Production" included theory and and practice which promoted competences, learning and teaching strategies, assessment, tutoring sessions, and feedback. It was part of a professorship **teaching project**, called "**Research-Action from comprehension to production: developing students' intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligences, and personal learning pathways**". For implementation, it contained guidelines to create tailor-made teachers' notebooks, and included samples.

The notebooks were ready to store **individual students' and groups' data** based on feedback from interviews, compositions, readers, mock exam, individual cases, influence of attendance, whole class view, remedial work, advanced work, EFL learning pathways, follow-ups, final exam and results and last interviews with the teacher.

"Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 2: Group work" is the second article of a collection of three related to how **we help our students understand English learning**. They all revolve around **communication**, which **both parts, the teacher and the students need to be involved in to commonly aim at it**. Joint work ensures that learning can take place by experience, and that English is perceived and lived throughout the lessons, as part of life, which during the teaching sessions happens in English. While this all happens, individual students, the whole group and the teacher work in unison, and the productions on everybody's part can turn out to be the best expected.

In sections 9 and 10 of the project which I had introduced in the first article, I emphasized the relevance of getting to know our students and mastering learning styles and well as pointed to the different teaching and curricular styles, to remind of the background, from which we can intervene in diverse EFL Learning and teaching students in class contexts, which we all may encounter at some point or another. This article will be divided into four sections:

1. **MASTERING LEARNING STYLES**
2. **MASTERING TEACHING AND CURRICULAR STYLES**
3. **PERFECT LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS. GENERAL SAMPLES**
4. **DIVERSITY AND INTERFERENCE IN THE EFL LEARNING PROCESS**



## **1. MASTERING LEARNING STYLES**

For years, traditional linguistic or logical ways of instruction have prevailed. Yet, we have learned that we can teach our students to learn in different ways, besides those two, and that we can do that when we realize the kind of learners that our students are. The traditional Intelligence quotient (I.Q.) notion of intelligence testing was extended with Howard Gardner's *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligence (1983)* which provided different potential pathways to learning, through which teaching material might be presented differently to facilitate effective learning. Learners are accounted for a broader range of human potential, be them children or adults in general, teachers, or teachers as learners, in particular

In *Intelligence reframed: Multiple intelligences for the 21st century (1999)* Gardner first distinguishes candidates for intelligence who can be detected if they meet eight criteria which have come from biological sciences, logical analysis, developmental psychology, experimental psychology, and psychometrics. They are as follows: brain isolation by brain damage, place granted by evolution, presence of core operations, encoding through symbolic expression, a distinct developmental progression, being savants, prodigy or exceptional people, experimental psychology and/or psychometrics back-up. He adds that "*one 'candidate intelligence' can be dissociated from others*".

Gardner concludes on seven intelligences, and although they are anatomically separated, they may complement each other, as we develop skills or solve problems, since intelligence had already been defined as "*the capacity to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural setting*" (Gardner & Hatch, 1989). Depending on who we are, we may learn better through: words (linguistic intelligence), numbers or logics (logical-mathematical intelligence), pictures (spatial intelligence), music (musical intelligence), physical experience (bodily-kinesthetic intelligence), self-reflection (intrapersonal intelligence), social experience (interpersonal intelligence), and experience in the natural world (naturalistic intelligence). Other possible intelligences that were added up are spiritual, existential and moral.

While schools often focus their attention on accomplishment through the linguistic intelligence and the logical-mathematical intelligences, Gardner (1999) presents a system which enhances the students' talents and skills. If teachers approach learning and teaching from this view, a larger number of students is entitled to reach success in the EFL class. Therefore our students' gifts are to be encouraged and placed at their service. Tutoring students, providing their own pathways and monitoring them, lead to a sense of accompaniment which make a big difference when implemented.

Needless to say that the theory of Multiple Intelligences has strong implications in adult learning too. A large number of adults find that they do not know how to get the most of their learning/teaching situations and developed intelligences. Through English courses at state language schools, we observe adults who are willing to share their talent, and/or examine their potential and develop it, for their own benefit and for their group. They may have used it in their childhood or teens, or even still use it at work, if they are fortunate enough to be professionals at what they can do best.

The variety of backgrounds of our adult students (artists, architects, college students, computer science programmers, designers, dancers, entrepreneurs, high school students, housewives, musicians, naturalists, teachers, therapists, retired professionals, among others) enrich the world in which we live, and the class context where learning/teaching processes take place.

Through interviews, tutoring sessions, feedback, monitoring and individual and group EFL learning pathways, we can certainly take our students' talents and intelligences into account. We can incorporate them in our daily teaching and assessing, so that we get to know our students and become acquainted with their unique ways of thinking and learning. By diligent application of our expertise as professionals and our awareness of our own learning/teaching styles, we can smoothly lead our students onto the objectives which are aimed at, while we – teachers and students - enjoy both the journey and the final destination.

## **2. MASTERING TEACHING AND CURRICULAR STYLES**

In teaching environments, there seem to be **three main teaching styles**: technical, practical and critical. The **technical style** is implemented by teachers who basically transfer curriculum contents, without much considering what is the most adequate for students. They usually train students in problem solving, develop their competitiveness strategies, and lead students to success. The **practical style** is followed by teachers who reflect upon the reason why they do what they do, and what the objective aimed at is. They are interested in making students learn to learn. They use varied teaching methods, and adjust to changes well. They are considered innovative.

The **critical style** is put into practice by teachers who reflect upon their understanding of the development of the curriculum as part of a democratic, educational and participative community. They are concerned with their task, and the role which they play. Styles overlap one another, and it is the combination of them all what I believe that teachers need to master. This way we can be on our way to proficiency in providing the necessary answers to the comprehensive and diversified teaching contexts where we find ourselves daily.

Several points interest me as a teacher regarding quality, efficiency, teacher training, and administrators: prioritizing the relevance of working among people and with people, and taking into account what this means, regarding the learning and teaching process; working in excellent learning/teaching teams, while being able to keep and develop one's beliefs; using reflection to see the role of responsibility when taking decisions both for the teacher and the students, and taking them along with students; taking students to correct results, further objectives, while continuously looking for systems which ensure this; going beyond teaching conditions; and favoring learning and teaching situations, which may be richer than the teaching of the English language teaching itself;

Other interests are involved: facilitating meaningful learning through meaningful teaching; being centered in the learning/teaching process; providing analysis to facilitate comprehension about learning processes and intelligences, and reflection at all times; offering dynamic classes which open up students' intelligences and their minds; making learning activities satisfying, and developing students' curiosities and talents, to continue learning both inside and outside the class; showing that there are timeless chances for learning everywhere; and showing interested in learning from students, while the teacher is seen as a learner in class too, since learning is an intrinsic part of life, as it develops our minds.

Last but not least: helping students to be autonomous while knowing how to find the teachers when they need them; providing clear guidelines at all times; favoring qualitative work by reviewing learning/teaching contexts; researching in the classroom through constant observation of the learning/teaching contexts which it provides; and making students aware

of their need to be prepared for a society which is constantly evolving, and needs their expertise.

I have taught EFL for over thirty years, and collected notes on a large number of learning cases which I have encountered when teaching all English levels to both adults and young college students. As an EFL teacher trainer I have provided questionnaires for teachers to see how they were dealing with their own different cases, both for veteran professionals, and for the most novice ones.

Sometimes both kinds of teachers have attended the sessions so that the work has been very varied and productive for all. At the start of the training sessions, I also place on the scale those wonderful students of ours, the majority, who help us teach: they are ready to learn, and make it easy for us. Their technical and personal parameters as learners are in place. I would use that to have teachers brainstorm on the qualities which they have, so that they can easily acknowledge them in their own good students too.

After that, I presented the list of special cases (listed by their initial), which deserved diverse attention and a specific viewpoint. In general, students were technically good but presented own human traits as learners which were unconscious impediments on their way to learn English as a foreign language. As soon as students were made aware of them, they started having a chance to make their own difference. They realized that as indicated at the start (Scrivener, 1994=2011). Their EFL learning depended on them.

In the teacher training courses, we reviewed the cases of numerous students whose main traits I had collected along the years, some of which will be referred in section 4. When doing so, they reflected on how they could have been sorted out, if they had had similar cases, or how they thought that they would do if they ever had them. Afterwards, I would unveil the procedure.

### **3. PERFECT LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND SITUATIONS. GENERAL SAMPLES**

From my view, we all find ourselves in perfect EFL learning and teaching situations, because all of us share a common element: some of our students participating in them are autonomous learners. As this article focuses on diverse interference in EFL learning, the chart below just represents students who we all probably relate to, and who we also need to bear in mind.

Their excellent work needs to be acknowledged as we observe how they continue advancing, and enjoying themselves as learners. Therefore the pleasure of teaching must also be enhanced as we take the chance to acknowledge our students' motivating and enthusiastic responses. We constantly see them in situations where these students know how to take the most out of them, becoming role models for the rest of their classmates (students are referred by their first initial).

<b>STUDENTS' PROFILES</b>
<b>KNOWS WHAT TO DO IF MISSING CLASS (O.)</b>

<p><b>IS APPLIED AND OBEDIENT</b> (M.)</p>
<p><b>MAKES AN EFFORT</b> (R.)</p>
<p><b>SHOWS ENTHUSIASM</b> (Cr.)</p>
<p><b>TRUSTS</b> (J. M.)</p>
<p><b>IS GENEROUS</b> (S.)</p>
<p><b>IS HUMBLE</b> (P.)</p>
<p><b>IS RESPONSIBLE</b> (R.)</p>
<p><b>EXTENDS NOTES, SHARES WITH CLASSMATES, HELPS TEACHER, STUDIES AT HOME</b> (X.)</p>
<p><b>DOES IT ALL. FOLLOWS CLASSES, FOLLOWS INDICATIONS, IMMEDIATELY WORKS ON FEEDBACK</b> P.</p>
<p><b>HAS INNATE BASIC KNOWLEDGE + IS APPLIED</b> M.</p>
<p><b>“FAN”</b> (V.) (You name it. He does it!)</p>
<p><b>STUDENTS WHO ASK FOR HELP (help is commented)</b> N.</p>
<p>Writes beautifully, but does not know how to proceed with speaking, when having to describe a picture. Student points to the need of a reason for a story. The teacher’s recommendation is to imagine a life behind the scenario which the picture presents, as student did in creative writing. It worked.</p>
<p><b>R.</b></p>
<p>Has no imagination. The teacher told her to visualize herself in the stories, both written and oral, as an active participant, and to make them her through true personal life stories. Was also told to observe what fresh classmates did: they talked and talked, despite not being technically as prepared as the student was, because they simply did not study, invested nothing, and therefore felt that they had nothing to lose. So the student finally understood that the written and oral exams were instances where one’s own practical knowledge has to be defended as if it was an art exhibit. This way the teacher can be witness to that in a formal setting, and certify it.</p>

#### **4. DIVERSITY AND INTERFERENCE IN THE EFL LEARNING PROCESS**

After exams results and interviews, I usually collect data on possible reasons for the students' failure. They are impediments of some sort for their success in effective EFL learning. Students may have a low English level source, have some learning difficulty, find applying grammar hard, and/or transfer their mother tongue into English. They may lack in vocabulary and in writing skills.

Sometimes students do not want to think much, devote much time to studying, or do assignment. They may show lack of comprehension, and their expression may not be coherent. I also observe that students may not review what they do either. Of course some may have trouble concentrating too. In general, prior to exams, they may not get the most in class, are not aware of what being part of a class group is, want to do things in their own way, and/or do not know how to do them.

Originally, they could not be considered independent learners. But the truth is that they are often dependent on their own attitude choices. Some of them are conscious about that while others are not. As I see it, the origin of the different cases lies in various sources which have nothing to do with EFL teaching: lack of learning methods, possible lack of humbleness, and/or personal problems. As teachers, we simply want our students to learn, as we teach them our specialty: TEFL. The variety of cases call for different approaches, which will be referred to next.

Among the different cases which will be described here, I would like to firstly refer to two of them in particular, because they epitomize those students who need our help but are not aware that they do, and those who need it as well, and probably do not expect that they will be helped by us. I read once a quote on one of the bulletin boards at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse: *"Our job is to teach the students we have. Not the ones we would like to have. Not the ones we used to have. Those we have right now. All of them"* (Kevin Maxwell).

I totally agree. The first cases which I will refer to have to do with students who needed to improve their handwriting because it could not be deciphered or was expressed only in capital letters. I had also wondered how they took notes of what was being said in class, and if they knew how to interpret their own notes. To my surprise, they practically took practically no notes. When I asked them: *"Can I see your year notes?"* Their answer in all cases was: *"Which notes?"*; *"The class notes"*, I insisted. They had almost none.

The idea about asking them for their notes came to my mind because I noticed that they always observed me, and I could see how they kept thinking, and thinking, and of course, they looked as if they wrote little, but sometimes students write little because they know it already and do not need to. Yet, in the above-mentioned cases, they did not know either the matter or how to put it down in writing to make it theirs. They were adults in their forties and fifties who had been schooled but had not been trained in basic school technics. Some other cases on which I took notes had to do with students who showed a negative attitude per se. Years ago, I was given the following quote in the United States, and have had it in my classroom board since then. I also keep printed copies of it for some of my students to take home.

***The Winner is always part of the answer  
The Loser is always part of the problem.***

*The Winner always has a program  
The Loser always has an excuse.*

*The Winner says "Let me do it for you"  
The Loser says "That's not my job".*

*The Winner sees an answer for every problem  
The Loser sees a problem for every answer.*

*The Winner sees a green near every sand trap  
The Loser sees two or three sand traps near every green.*

*The Winner says "It may be difficult but it's possible"  
The Loser says "It may be possible but it's too difficult".*

So when I catch some negative glimpse from students, I usually nip it from the bud by calling them and friendly asking them who they think they are according to the quote, and to kindly justify it, so that we can work from there. It is important for students to realize that we are always there and ready to help them. When the ice is broken, and the first dialog takes place, other dialogs can easily follow. Then if students have any EFL or general learning impediment, they unfold it for us, because they know that we can help them, that we mean what we do, and that what we do is for their own sake.

When dealing with good-hearted distracted troublemakers, I usually remind them that they still have the chance and the time to seriously catch up with the course, so that I can monitor them, and help them, as they see me do it for others. Out of common sense and intelligence, at some point or another, they give up not being concentrated on what they should not, and start work with me. Sometimes I personalize their English assignment into topics of their own liking. Students can all turn into successful students and can learn to enjoy their class time, get the most out of it, look forward to that, enjoy their classmates, the comradeship which they all create, and the whole class atmosphere.

Next I will include samples around 21 students whose profile may be common in our EFL classrooms. The problems which they had were related to interference of their mother tongue, being lazy, being out of focus, dealing with English as truly foreign, being in need to call attention, having will power but facing learning difficulties, and, last but not least, being in need of building their own confidence. How the different teaching/learning situations were addressed, and what the outcome was are indicated as well.

<b>STUDENTS' PROFILES</b>
<b>MOTHER TONGUE INTERFERENCE</b>
<b>1/ INTERFERENCE FROM ANOTHER LANGUAGE DIFFERENT FROM SPANISH OR CATALAN (E.)</b>
<b>2/ GOOD AT STUDYING GRAMMAR. INTERFERENCE FROM SPANISH (L.)</b>
<b>3/ DIFFICULTIES TO LEARN ENGLISH + INTERFERENCE WITH SPANISH (J.) - E.g.: "it made cold"</b>

The teacher helps the students focus on the need to apply models which are learnt, and to start saying and writing what they learn. The teacher explains that when they do so, they start telling the brain what it has to do for them, and therefore, they stop doing what the brain is telling them to do. Both students are asked to work together on a common pathway.

### **LAZINESS...**

**4/ LAZINESS + INTELLIGENCE (I.)**

**5/ LAZINESS + APPARENT SLOWNESS (M.) - Gets results only in a stressful situations**

**6/ LAZINESS + TIREDNESS (N.)**

Their unwillingness to work or use energy is an impediment to move forward. They are individually told. The first student has no other drawback. The second one needs to start working to be able to practise action and reaction. So, reduced specific timed-assignment is recommended for homework. The third student starts a pathway on elementary English review and weekly interviews are scheduled until the student is able to apply correct models in the corresponding level.

### **OUT OF FOCUS**

**5/ PASSION FOR COMPUTERS (F) - Out of focus**

**6/ PASSION FOR LITERATURE (M.A.) - Out of focus**

The teacher helps students realize that their tools to study are not used because they are focusing elsewhere. The teacher provides EFL practice which is related to their main fields of interest as well as other areas, which they need to be acquainted with, and encourages them to start aiming at the subject academically too. She explains that the more they learn in English, the easier, the more pleasant and more satisfying reading about their passions in English will be.

### **FOREIGN ENGLISH**

**7/ RECEPTIVE SKILLS ONLY. NO RIGHT PRODUCTION. DESIRE TO TRANSLATE HER OWN SELF AS IF PERSON WAS A NATIVE SPEAKER. STRONG READER TOO (A.)**

**8/ NEEDS TO TRANSLATE DUE TO ENORMOUS LACK OF CONFIDENCE + NEGATIVE APPROACH TO EVERYTHING UNLESS IN CHARGE (N.)**

**9/ INSISTS ON SPEAKING IN SPANISH/CATALAN (E.)**

The teacher lets students know about learning patterns, and compares them to language acquisition, and EFL learning where learner must imitate what being exposed to, to be finally able to freely use it. The learner does not translate what he/she has not been taught to say in the foreign language yet, because he/she wishes to let his/her brain say what it wants. Learner makes their brain work for them and not the other way round. It is their choice to wish to make changes and to train their brain to make them, until action becomes automatic. This is explained to them as a group, and then the teacher offers them the chance to individually start working with the teacher on initial pathways and tutoring sessions. She also explains that after the first work in the pathway, they can suggest pair work with other students in their 3-member group, or group work among the three, work with other classmates, or continue individual pathways. They got started, and moved on to different pair and group work.

**NEED TO CALL ATTENTION**

**10/ FINDS SPEAKING ENGLISH FUNNY (D.)**

**11/ LIKES BEING A FOOL IN CLASS (V.)**

**12/ FRESH YET GRACEFULLY KIND (I.)**

**13/ WASTES TIME WITH PARTNER IN CLASS (R. )**

**14/ NEEDS TO CALL ATTENTION + VERY INTELLIGENT (M.)**

The teacher lets students know about their learning impediments and the option which they still have to make changes. They are told that as a teacher she can only correct linguistic patterns, and that, as soon as the students start using English, the teacher will begin her work and help them to linguistically improve from there. The teacher also reminds them that there are people who would love to have the chance to be EFL students, but cannot afford it, or have real problems to do so. After that, the teacher suggests some dates for individual interviews to begin preparing pathways, which they can already start thinking about at home. They know that favorite topics of theirs can be included and that they can start working in pairs. Dates are arranged, and individual pathways are agreed on. Their EFL work begins. After some time, the teacher assigns individual work.

**WILL POWER BUT DIFFICULTIES**

**15/ TAKES THE CLASS AGAIN. DID THE COURSE BEFORE WITH A DIFFERENT TEACHER (R.)**

**16/ BASIC GRAMMAR PROBLEMS (J.)**

**17/ NEEDS FOR LONGER MORE CONCENTRATED EXPOSURE IN CLASS. NEEDS EXPOSURE AT HOME (F.)**

**18/ NEEDS REGULAR TIME TO STUDY + HAS DIFFICULTIES (P.)**

The teacher talks to them each, and offers monitoring them. She pairs them up with other students in class who they can sit with. The last two are asked to discreetly sit near the teacher so that she can easily see if they need some immediate help. Of course, they are also paired up with new students. Very soon they start blooming, and harder pathways start for them.

**IN NEED OF CONFIDENCE**

**19/ FOLLOWS GROUP (D.)**

**20/ APPLIED STUDENT BUT GETS NERVOUS (L.)**

**21/ FEELS ALONE ALTHOUGH WORKS HARD IN CLASS.**

The teacher talks to each student individually and asks for permission to have a group tutoring session, in which she recommends them to start working as a group, both in class and outside, when home assignment or study time is it. The teacher emphasizes that it is a pity not to succeed because of our emotional states, that we all go through difficult times, but that they need to accept them and welcome them as not being the general rule. She reminds them that if they have any problem, they can get back to the teacher any time, and that they



must start taking care of their own selves while they also begin to help one another too. They all start group itineraries, and after that, they work in pairs, individually, and with other classmates.

We are teachers but not psychologists. We apply what we know, our vocation, our expertise, and our techniques. Sometimes, we may look at a group and know what to do. Others we do not and we need to analyze the participants as part of that group too. It all takes practice, trial and error. My experience in applying the interview and EFL pathway system which I have implemented for long have led my students to bend to one extent or another. They have turned toward their own academic and personal academic success, and, of course, rounded up my teaching goals in each case and group.

I do not have all my students eating out of my palm, so as to speak, but to follow up the metaphor, I must say that practically all of them are concentrated on what they must and keep looking at my palm: they are ready for guidelines at any time, which can fit their talents, expertise, responsibility, and will power, and take them to EFL learning success and their own satisfaction.

Students learn to take pride in the personal academic work which they do, because they simply acknowledge and enjoy the opportunity to live in English. They put their own unique learning into practice, which cannot be done by anybody else but themselves. There is a question which I have sometimes directly posed to several students: *“Do you plan to just attend the class this year, and pass the course later on, when you may have more time?”*. We are all human after all, and we need to approach one another and be approached as well. When positive outcome comes from individual and group tutoring sessions, I always recall the old and classic John Hannibal Smith’s A-Team catchphrase, *“I love it when a plan comes together”*.

Some of the references which I used in the professorship teaching project (mentioned in the series of three articles) and whose methodology is explained and exemplified along them, is presented next.

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# Diversity in EFL Learning. Part 3: A Case Study in the Elementary Level



Lourdes Montoro  
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- 'Bitzer,' said Thomas Gradgrind. 'Your definition of a horse.'  
 - 'Quadruped. Graminivorous. Forty teeth, namely twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisive. Sheds coat in the spring; in marshy countries, sheds hoofs, too. Hoofs hard, but requiring to be shod with iron. Age known by marks in mouth.'  
 - Thus (and much more) Bitzer.  
 - 'Now girl number twenty,' said Mr. Gradgrind.  
 - 'You know what a horse is.'  
 (Ch. Dickens, *Hard times*)

This is the third article in the collection of three articles which deal with how **we help our students understand English learning**. For years I have encouraged individual tutoring, which later turned into regular **English Language Clinic Sections** both in **EFL classes** and in **EFL Teacher training**. This formally took the shape of a corner in my EFL workshops for trainee teachers and professional teachers.

With the time, it was also a formal component of the **first 30-hour virtual EFL teacher training courses** at the University of Barcelona (Institute of Educational Sciences). I was free to design its pedagogical format: 3 sections plus contents that could be covered, and I was assigned a computer specialist to technically turn it into a virtual course.

The course, called **Assessorament didàctic-virtual d'anglès (Didactic-Virtual Assessment)** counted on a three didactic areas: a **Virtual Board**, a **Didactic Forum**, and the above-mentioned **Didactic Clinic**. For the latter, participants would ask me about details on projects which they knew that I had carried out and trained on, as well as send me their linguistic and cultural cases, and requests. I would sort them out, and publicly respond to. If teachers needed help which had to be dealt with privately, then both the requests and answers were taken care of at an individual basis.

IN – SESSION	VIRTUAL
<p>LAMINATED POSTER FOR CORNERS IN EFL TEACHER TRAINING COURSES</p>	<p>SAMPLES OF THE VIRTUAL DIDACTIC CLINIC (ICE EFL VIRTUAL TEACHER TRAINING COURSES)</p>
<p>DIDACTIC CLINIC - PEDAGOGICAL ASSESSMENT Trainer: Lourdes Montoro</p>  <p><a href="https://www.google.es/url?sa=i&amp;rct=i&amp;q=&amp;esrc=s&amp;source=images&amp;cd=&amp;cad=rja&amp;uact=8&amp;ved=0ahUKEwjPyKao2pjZAhURCuwKHamWCUAQiRwIBw&amp;url=http%3A%2F%2Fblog.albertaroseeducation.com%2F2015%2F10%2Fstudy-options-beyond-mbbs%2F&amp;psig=AOvVaw3UuJtlo66GPUvqQ0o8sBe&amp;ust=1518261305356363">https://www.google.es/url?sa=i&amp;rct=i&amp;q=&amp;esrc=s&amp;source=images&amp;cd=&amp;cad=rja&amp;uact=8&amp;ved=0ahUKEwjPyKao2pjZAhURCuwKHamWCUAQiRwIBw&amp;url=http%3A%2F%2Fblog.albertaroseeducation.com%2F2015%2F10%2Fstudy-options-beyond-mbbs%2F&amp;psig=AOvVaw3UuJtlo66GPUvqQ0o8sBe&amp;ust=1518261305356363</a></p>	<p>DIDACTIC VIRTUAL ASSESSMENT Trainer: Lourdes Montoro</p>  <p>(Picture designed by the IT department at ICE)</p>

<p><i>This is a space where trainee teachers and professional teachers in training can stop by to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Ask for assessment on the classes which they teach. How they guide their students through skills, how they keep language acquisition and language learning balanced in their students, how their students live English as a foreign language, which areas they want to improve in, what role enjoyment plays...</i></li> <li>- <i>Consult practical aspects related to oral and written expression in the EFL classroom: from guiding students to free expression by them. Intervention areas.</i></li> <li>- <i>Ask for help regarding class projects (festivals, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, comics, plays, radio programs, cooking competitions... and the wealth of talents in the classroom.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comics</li> <li>Magazines</li> <li>Newspapers</li> <li>Radio programs</li> <li>Plays</li> <li>Cooking and Recipe books</li> <li>American festivals (Halloween, Thanksgiving, Xmas, Valentine's Easter, 4<sup>th</sup> of July)</li> <li>Class Graduations</li> <li>Background music</li> <li>Songbooks and Karaoke</li> <li>Students' grammar-based invented games</li> <li>The five senses</li> <li>Epals</li> <li>Class decor</li> <li>Groupings</li> <li>Tutoring</li> <li>Listening and Speaking skills</li> <li>English Speaking countries</li> <li>Teacher training venues</li> </ul>
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This article presents an individual tutoring work-based case, which derived from the general **English Language Clinic Section** which I lead in in-session **EFL classes**. Unlike other cases, it was presented to me after the final exam took place, and few days were left for results and goodbyes. What surprised me was not the contents of a student's request, which I had dealt with other times, but the timing.

Classes had finished. It was the end of May. Tutoring sessions were over too. It was time for teachers to examine students, to correct exams, and to work in boards with other colleagues. However, I was challenged by the problem which a student, a young lady, seemed to have been facing for a number of years, and which could affect her performance in oral and written expression in the years to come.

The unusual timing added up to the fact that the student had been effectively following the course, and was doing well in final exams. Needless to say that she had kept the idea of the class didactic clinic in mind until the very end, and, better late than never, she had made up her mind, relieved her tension and learning concerns, and felt strong enough to ask me for help, at least, on the very last academic day.

As soon as the student presented her case to me in late May, and cried for help, I offered to listen to what her worries could be, and monitor her on remedial work which I was going to pass to her during the last school month. Through a series of emails and tutoring sessions, that student, referred to as J. from now on, and I arranged our joint work. It is presented next in chronological order. The information next is divided into three parts: **Introduction**, **Development**, and **End**

## 1/ BEGINNING

On May 25<sup>th</sup>, the student finishes her oral exam. She had been nervous during the whole exam. After that, the teacher asks her why. She explained that it all had to do with written and oral expression, that she was very logical and had no abstract thought. She began to cry

and said that she would be willing to learn strategies to overcome that. The student told me that she had wanted to do that by herself, but had not managed. She admitted not knowing how. I offered her some tutoring sessions.

The following emails were sent back and forth to each other. I aimed at helping her keep focused on her request and objective, and to have her started being responsible for her action. Acknowledging her talents was also part of the beginning, and last but not least, I wanted her to realize that she already had the answer to her own question. As a teacher, I emailed the student on the same night, told her I had some questions in mind to ask her, and an experiment to do with her, that could start before the next tutoring session.

I also emphasized the good qualities that she had: being disciplined, humorous, intelligent, and having resources on what to lean on. During the talk after the last exam, she had said that she saw her problem as a wall; in the email, I expressed what I viewed: a door, which probably did not look like that, and whose key was missing. I also offered to meet before scores were published, and referred to my schedule at the end-of-school year. It was also important to ensure that the student felt comfortable at all times.

**MAY 25th**

**(TEACHER)**

*Buenas noches, J.*

*Se me han ocurrido unas preguntas para hacerte, y un experimento que creo que te puede ayudar, y a partir de aquí, ya te daría un trabajo a hacer, y ya nos reuniríamos. Y yo creo que, tras las tutorías, ya podrías seguir, con lo que tengas que hacer, que sé que harías si supieras cómo. Eres muy disciplinada. Opino también que tu sentido de humor, tu inteligencia, y los recursos que ya tienes pueden servirte de gran aliado. Debes empezar a crear un equipo contigo misma.*

*No creo que se trate de una pared infranqueable. Supongo que es una puerta, que no lo aparenta, y hay que dar con ella, y luego la cerradura, y la llave. No podemos dejar todo lo que ya sabes sin salida. No crees? No es justo, pero, todavía es más importante, que te sientas cómoda para permitir que lo intentemos.*

*Si te parece bien la idea de una reunión, en este momento, mi horario es totalmente variable, pero seguramente podemos coincidir en la escuela en algún momento. Dime, por favor, cuál es tu disponibilidad de horario, y vemos cuándo nos podemos reunir. Y si no, no pasa nada. Es sólo una idea, e igualmente, nos veríamos después de comentar los exámenes.*

*Buen fin de semana! Lourdes*

The student gave a thought to it, embarked on the door metaphor, expressed her willingness to cross it, and do what could be necessary, offered dates to meet, and expressed her gratitude for my involvement in her case.

**MAY 31<sup>st</sup>**

**(STUDENT)**

*Buenas tardes Lourdes,*

*Estoy muy interesada en poder cruzar esa puerta que siempre me ha bloqueado. Así que estoy dispuesta a todo aquello que pueda ayudarme.*

*Lo que queda de semana me es imposible quedar, pero para la que viene (del 6 al 12) cuando quieras a partir de las 19h.*

*Muchas gracias por tu interés y preocupación.*

*Quedo a la espera de tu disponibilidad para vernos Un saludo, J.*

## 2/ DEVELOPMENT

As a teacher I provided my schedule and explained that I was preparing a reading pack. I added that I was attaching two screenshots which, from my view, exemplified what I thought it was a main pillar to stand on: human beings can always accomplish what she thought that she did not have: abstract thought; and that is always true whenever human beings are not sick. I also referred to the door and let her know that I was there too, the starting key being so far the reading pack, and a series of assignment, which, if it was all right with her, I was going to ask her to do.

**MAY 31st**

**(TEACHER)**

*Buenas noches, J.*

*Mañana por la tarde/noche sabré si tengo una hora libre el miércoles 7, de 8 a 9. Ésa es la única opción de la semana. El día 12 también tendría seguramente una hora libre en esa misma franja. Pendiente también de confirmar. El día 13 nos reuniremos con tus compañeros a las 8. Y si ni el 7 ni el 12 pudieramos reunirnos, sé que habría opción después del 13. Y además creo que necesitaremos más de una reunión.*

*Estoy preparando un pack de lecturas. Creo que iría muy bien que las tuvieras hechas para cuando nos veamos. No sé si las voy a combinar con preguntas. Si hoy lo termino, te lo enviaré escaneado. Y ya te comentaré.*

*Te envío a modo de ejemplo 2 capturas de 1 texto que ejemplifica lo que creía que es: el ser humano que no está enfermo lo puede hacer. Vamos, pues, a por esa pared que es una puerta, y a por su llave, de momento con tu disposición, el pack de lecturas, y luego una serie de deberes que, si me permites, te voy a ir poniendo, y que revisaremos en tutoría. Y por supuesto, todo lo que se te ocurra mientras todo ésto está sucediendo.*

*Gracias por tu atención.*

*Hasta pronto. Have a nice day! Lourdes*

**JUNE 1<sup>st</sup>**

**STUDENT**

*Buenos días, Lourdes,*

*Pues quedo a la espera de tu confirmación de horario disponible y de la posibilidad de que me mandes esas lecturas.*

*Saludos, J.*

**JUNE 1st**

**TEACHER**

*Buenas tardes, J.,*

*te envío el pack de lecturas. Muchas tienen comentarios míos sobre algunos aspectos y preguntas. Lo he preparado según he percibido lo que te ocurre. Contesta lo que desees, y siéntete bien haciéndolo. Lo que no te guste - si es así - , lo dejas, y ya me lo dirás en persona. No te preocupes. Creo que estas lecturas te pueden ir bien para empezar a reflexionar, para luego poder abordar lo que desees, y poder ordenar a tu cerebro que trabaje para ti.*

*La tutoría la haremos a partir de tus respuestas, y algunas otras preguntas que enlazaré con ellas en nuestra entrevista. El miércoles próximo, de 8.20 a 9, estoy libre (Aula 12).*

*Ya me confirmarás tu asistencia. Gracias.*

*Un saludo, Lourdes*

The quotes which I had mentioned were from the same definition. The first one defined abstract thought as the capacity to accept a mental frame voluntarily. This implied the possibility of changing at will one situation by another one, of decomposing a whole into parts,

and that of analyzing different aspects of the same reality. So, through it, I was telling my student that at whatever time or in whatever way she pleased, she could make the change. I was basically making sure that she knew that the ball was on her roof, where it had always been, and that coherence and responsibility were to follow.

**El pensamiento abstracto** supone la capacidad de **asumir un marco mental de forma voluntaria**. Esto implica la posibilidad de cambiar, a voluntad, de una situación a otra, de descomponer el todo en partes y de analizar de forma simultánea distintos aspectos de una misma realidad, por ejemplo.

[\(https://definicion.de/pensamiento-abstracto/\)](https://definicion.de/pensamiento-abstracto/)

The second excerpt was the continuation of the first one, and was concluding that abstract thought allows the distinction between common properties, planning and assuming simulations, and thinking and acting symbolically. It finally went back to the main pillar through an example: people suffering from mental disorder such as schizophrenia had originally had damaged skills, and that was so, because both these people's perceptions and reality are altered.

De esta forma, el pensamiento abstracto permite discernir las propiedades comunes, planear y asumir simulacros, y **pensar y actuar simbólicamente**. Estas habilidades, por lo general, se encuentran dañadas en sujetos que sufren de trastornos mentales como la **esquizofrenia**.

Una patología mental esta que acabamos de citar que se caracteriza fundamentalmente por el hecho de que la persona que la sufre tiene no sólo alteraciones en lo que es el ámbito de la percepción sino también en lo que es la propia realidad.

[\(https://definicion.de/pensamiento-abstracto/\)](https://definicion.de/pensamiento-abstracto/)

The reading pack turned out to be a 57-page one, which I had prepared by copying and pasting some reading excerpts while focusing on what I thought that the student needed. Just before every reading, the sources were acknowledged. These are the topics and the addresses which I had consulted and arranged in this specific order for my student's work:





**Definición de pensamiento abstracto**

<http://definicion.de/pensamiento-abstracto/>

**Pensament**

<https://ca.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pensament>

**La mente desatada: ¿Qué ocurre en el cerebro de los genios?**

<http://www.rinconpsicologia.com/2012/01/la-mente-desatada-que-ocurre-en-el.html>

**Inteligencia y creatividad**

<https://www.rinconpsicologia.com/search/label/Inteligencia%20y%20Creatividad?max-results=8>

**El genio que venció a su mente. Obituario John Nash**

<http://www.elmundo.es/ciencia/2015/05/25/5562da38ca4741f7618b456e.html>

**3 conferencias TED para potenciar la imaginación**

<http://noticias.universia.es/consejos-profesionales/noticia/2015/05/26/1125659/3-conferencias-ted-potenciar-imaginacion.html>

**Aprender a pensar**

<https://ined21.com/aprender-a-pensar/>

**Manual muy rápido para aprender a pensar**

<http://www.elperiodico.com/es/noticias/opinion/manual-muy-rapido-para-aprender-pensar-3278908>

**Por qué aprender a pensar?**

<http://aprenderapensar.net/2009/06/05/%C2%BFpor-que-aprender-a-pensar/>

**Cinco ejercicios para nivelar tu hemisferio lógico con tu hemisferio creativo**

[http://manuelgross.bligoo.com/20120808-cinco-ejercicios-para-nivelar-tu-hemisferio-logico-con-tu-hemisferio-creativo#.WS\\_CYmgp7MI](http://manuelgross.bligoo.com/20120808-cinco-ejercicios-para-nivelar-tu-hemisferio-logico-con-tu-hemisferio-creativo#.WS_CYmgp7MI)

**Pensamiento lógico y pensamiento creativo**

<http://www.tauniversity.org/editorial/pensamiento-logico-y-pensamiento-creativo>

**Ingeniería, investigación y tecnología**

[http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S1405-77432014000200012](http://www.scielo.org.mx/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1405-77432014000200012)

**Lo abstracto y lo concreto**

<http://www.filosofia.org/enc/ros/abstr3.htm>

<b>Abstracción (lógica)</b> <a href="https://es.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abstracci%C3%B3n_%28l%C3%B3gica%29">https://es.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abstracci%C3%B3n_%28l%C3%B3gica%29</a>
<b>Definición de Pensamiento Abstracto</b> <a href="https://www.definicionabc.com/social/pensamiento-abstracto.php">https://www.definicionabc.com/social/pensamiento-abstracto.php</a>
<b>Pensamiento abstracto</b> <a href="https://www.ecured.cu/Pensamiento_abstracto">https://www.ecured.cu/Pensamiento_abstracto</a>
<b>10 ventajas del pensamiento abstracto (mejoras cognitivas en el individuo conectado)</b> <a href="http://www.dreig.eu/caparazon/2012/06/25/pensamiento-abstracto/">http://www.dreig.eu/caparazon/2012/06/25/pensamiento-abstracto/</a>
<b>Pensamiento abstracto</b> <a href="http://educacion.laguia2000.com/general/pensamiento-abstracto">http://educacion.laguia2000.com/general/pensamiento-abstracto</a>
<b>Definición del pensamiento abstracto</b> <a href="http://www.ehowenespanol.com/definicion-del-pensamiento-abstracto-info_364362/#page=5">http://www.ehowenespanol.com/definicion-del-pensamiento-abstracto-info_364362/#page=5</a>
<b>¿Qué es el pensamiento abstracto y como potenciarlo?</b> <a href="https://www.tuuon.com/que-es-el-pensamiento-abstracto-y-como-potenciarlo/">https://www.tuuon.com/que-es-el-pensamiento-abstracto-y-como-potenciarlo/</a>

The reading excerpts had handwritten comments and questions of mine for the student to consider, and provide answers to. The mental dialog which my student and I carried out to help her start reflecting and moving forward is exemplified through the following 2 sample pages.

The reading in **Sample 1** enhances the role of success when students accomplish things by themselves, and when they can get to show them. At the same time it emphasizes the necessity to link their present lack of concentration which they may show, with the new skills that they seem to be developing. Nowadays students face various information channels, assimilate knowledge fast, and react fast, but they must repeat what they learn so that the new knowledge remains in the long term memory.

The text reminds us that as teachers we are training people, and that they will always have the need to be learners, like us, because learning to think will always be a necessity and an adventure which will remain so all life. My student could read a final comment from me:

*"You need to take into account your English knowledge along with the person who you are, as well as your wish to communicate in a language, which is to gradually become less foreign".*

SAMPLE PAGE 1

12

Nuestros alumnos se crecen cuando hacen las cosas por si mismos, y más si tienen el aliciente de mostrar el resultado públicamente y de poder compartirlo y ayudar a otros. Es verdad que nuestros jóvenes parecen estar perdiendo capacidades que antes nos parecían indispensables para la adquisición de conocimientos (la capacidad de concentración, los procesos lineales de atención), pero también están desarrollando otras nuevas, y es nuestra tarea enlazar unas con otras de manera que aprovechemos las nuevas reforzando las "antiguas".

Su capacidad de atender a varios canales de información necesita del criterio para resaltar unos en detrimento de otros. Su capacidad de rápida asimilación y reacción a los estímulos necesita también de la repetición, que asegure el paso de esos nuevos conocimientos de la memoria a corto plazo a la memoria "de larga duración". Etcétera, etcétera. Pensemos en lo que pensemos, la labor del docente sigue ahí, como tutor del aprendizaje, como guía entre los gigabytes de información, pues no debemos olvidar que estamos formando personas, ciudadanos, y no robots ni esclavos.

Por eso mismo, "aprender a pensar" será siempre una necesidad, y una aventura que dura toda la vida.

Debes  
Enjuagar  
Conocimienta  
de inglés  
En la penosa  
que tú eres  
y tu deseo  
de comunicación  
en una lengua  
que debe ir  
convirtiéndose en  
cada vez menos  
extranjera.

**Sample 2** focused on the fact that biological principles apply to thought and provide some straightforward information on that. Prior to that, the student was to read a section through which she could become aware that critical thought is entitled to create modifications. She needed to understand what the text was throwing light on:

Critical thoughts, being a concrete thought, analyzes the validity of the reasoning which are considered true. This thought leads to question statements which are our own, as well as those which come from others. Also, it makes the person conscious of prejudices or false ideas which may be usually accepted by habit or coherence within the belief system.

Critical thought is responsible for analyzing or assessing the structure or the consistency of the reasoning, which is based on observation, experience, reasoning and the scientific method. Therefore, since it goes beyond impressions and private opinions, it needs clarity, exactness, precision, evidence and equity.

And although it uses logics, it overcomes the formal aspect of this one so that statements can be both understood and assessed, as it provides intellectual tools to distinguish what is true. Just by the initial reference to thought being related to modifying, I had written 2 questions of mine to help my student reflect on the contents, and, above all, take charge of her own position as a learner. They were as follows:

"Are you questioning if you are doing it well?... Or... Are just communicating or expressing that you wish to do it, with your being aware that if, so, correction will occupy its place in due time?"

SAMPLE PAGE 2

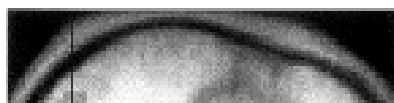
- **Abstracció:** operació que consisteix a mostrar mentalment certs trets, generalment ocultats per la persona, distingits de trets i annexos accidentals, primaris i prescindint d'aquells pensaments.

**Pensament crític** *Modifica*

El pensament crític és un tipus concret de pensament que analitza la validesa dels raonaments que hom considera com a veritables. Aquest pensament comporta qüestionar les afirmacions pròpies i alienes, ser conscients dels prejudicis i falsedats acceptades per costum o per coherència amb el sistema dominant de creences. Es proposa analitzar o avaluar l'estructura i consistència dels raonaments, particularment opinions o afirmacions que la gent accepta com a veritables en el context de la vida quotidiana. Tal avaluació pot basar-se en l'observació, en l'experiència, en el raonament o en el mètode científic. El pensament crític es basa en valors intel·lectuals que tracten d'anar més enllà de les impressions i opinions particulars, per la qual cosa requereix claredat, exactitud, precisió, evidència i equitat. Té, per tant, un vessant analític i un altre d'avaluador. Encara que utilitza la lògica, intenta superar l'aspecte formal d'aquesta per poder entendre i avaluar els arguments en el seu context i dotar d'eines intel·lectuals per distingir el raonable del no raonable, el vertader del fals.

El pensament crític es troba molt lligat a l'escepticisme i l'estudi i detecció de les fal·làcies.

**Biologia del pensament** *Modifica*



16

Te pregunto si lo  
estas expresando  
Si en?  
o  
te  
comuni-  
car o  
de sea  
hacerlo  
y el resto  
(la corrección)  
ya ocupare  
su lugar?

These 2 pages were used because along the previous pages (1 to 9), the student had already been oriented to find her place in a responsible and coherent way. After that, and some general readings, she would be ready to face a major milestone, and to accept it if it was true for her: she could join forces with her true wish to communicate with the others (p. 12). And finally, through the last page at this stage (p. 16), she should be able to see where the turning point for her was (p.12): acknowledging her being shy and her need to be reinforced so that a feeling of imaginary failure would no longer fly over her.

More reading and tutoring stages followed in June, and they each were related to the feedback provided by the student in each previous tutoring session. Since right after having sent her the reading dossier, her involvement was maximum, the student's decisive and will-

powered actions and reactions soon led her to success and completion. That along with the contents of the tutoring sessions which followed, together with the closure of the teacher and student joint work will be presented in the next section.

### **3/ END**

The following emails are to show the student's immediate eagerness to learn, not to miss chances, and to work, go through interviews, and make changes. She also continued expressing gratitude. It also points to another activity which was going to take place in class in the next tutoring session: a thought practice which would be based on the textbook, and particularly, on the development of oral expression from there.

#### **JUNE 1st**

**STUDENT**

*Buenas tardes Lourdes,  
Me pongo con las lecturas! Y cuenta con nuestra entrevista para el próximo miércoles a las 20:20h.  
Muchas gracias por tus molestias.  
J.*

#### **JUNE 4**

**TEACHER**

*Buenos días, J.,  
puedes traer el libro de texto el miércoles?  
Haremos alguna práctica de pensamiento enfocada hacia él, y de la expresión desde el inglés.  
El miércoles tengo exámenes orales de tercero. Si observo que pueden terminar un poquito antes, te enviaría un mensajito para que vinieras también antes, y así tener más tiempo.  
Gracias por tu atención.  
Have a nice Sunday!  
Lourdes*

#### **JUNE 6**

**STUDENT**

*Buenas noches Lourdes,  
Llevaré el libro de texto, no hay problema. Y estaré atenta por si me escribes y podemos empezar antes.  
Saludos, J.*

At the beginning of the initial tutoring session, the student said that she had things to point about the readings which she had done, and that she had noticed that readings directly aimed at the source of the problem which she thought she has. She started by saying that she had read all the pack, that it had helped her get familiar with the subject, and find her own self there, and that some pages in particular were very relevant to her. After that, she started to share her comments, and while she was talking and talking, I had to interrupt her at times to ensure that I was understanding the amount of information that she was sharing with me.

She had answered all the questions/comments which were posed by me in the reading pack, and, what is more, she had transformed them along with the contents of the reading into a very valuable reasoning: Her position as a student of English as a foreign language. As she continued referring to the reading pack, she presented me her career as an English learner, which, by the way, had started at 4 with a neighbor who was a native speaker.

Based on all the discoveries which I made in the previous tutoring session, on the next day, I sent her some more assignment. The student was asked to reflect on what, from her experience, a first level foreign language class teaches in general; also to specify what her first level English course had taught her. To do that she needed to create a table, with columns which could be called WHAT?, WHY?, AND HOW?. That table was to store all the 1<sup>st</sup> level contents, and needed to have room for the new ones which she was going to learn in the following years.

I took the liberty of adding a metaphorical comparison to that table, which modeled the work that she was responsible for in her profession. In the previous session she had told me that, as a professional, she was responsible for making teams composed of different workers construct. The moral was that her modus operandi in her role as an EFL learner was the same: fulfilling a compromise, in this case, with her own self, and ensuring that everything within her worked for her at all levels.

Last but not least, I asked her a question based on the first *Harry Potter* book (which she told that she loved) and the table that she had to construct. That could be answered only under one condition: just after finishing the table, and not before doing it or while doing it. Discipline and honesty while being diligent were important at all times. I also gave her a hint in case she had doubts when that moment would exactly be: as soon as her head and her heart knew and felt, and so made her conscious that she had finished the table.

## **JUNE 7**

## **TEACHER**

*Buenas noches, J,*

*incluyo los puntos básicos que deben reflejar tus tareas :*

- **qué enseña un curso de primero de un idioma y para qué sirve**
- *en particular, **qué te ha enseñado el tuyo, el de primero de inglés***
- *Puedes reflejar al detalle este segundo punto con una **tabla de 2 o 3 columnas** (o las que tú necesites). Las puedes titular **QUÈ?, POR QUÈ?, CÓMO?**, o lo que tú veas.*

*Esta tabla debe ser lo suficientemente específica como para*

- A. *reflejar todos los contenidos de primero y su función, y estar lista para ser justificada, y consultada*
- B. *admitir adiciones en segundo, y así sucesivamente, en todos los cursos.*

*Esa tabla va a estar en un gran polígono, que eres tú, y va a contar con varias naves con todo tipo de materiales, para servir a todo tipo de público, economías, sociedades, o sea, atenderá muchas demandas, en una gran variedad de situaciones, pero, sobre todo, las que a ti te interesen.*

*Luego, ya te coordinarás con todos tus "industriales", los que están a tu cargo, o sea, en tu caso, ya te coordinarás contigo misma, para que hagan lo que desees construir según el compromiso que habrás deseado adquirir previamente, y ya harás que trabajen para ti, cumplan los plazos, y que lo hagan según la calidad prevista, desde la realidad, a la que ya te habrás anticipado.*

*La realidad de ahora hasta el lunes será la construcción de la tabla en el polígono de tu elección. Y también, responder una pregunta en cuando des por terminada tu tabla de primero (= decidas que te gusta y la apruebes):*

- **Dónde está el vínculo de unión entre el primer libro de Harry Potter y tu tabla?**

*Sólo lo sabrás en cuánto sepas de cabeza y de corazón que la has terminado.*

*Y ahí se transformará la pared en puerta. Y tú, que sabes muchísimo de materiales, ya decidirás que tipo de llave tú quieres tener. Y ya me lo contarás. Te deseo lo mejor. Buen estudio! Hasta el lunes!*

*Lourdes*

**JUNE 7**

**S T U D E N T**

Buenas noches Lourdes,  
Me pongo con mis deberes. Nos vemos el lunes a las 8:10h.  
Muchísimas gracias por tu dedicación.  
Que tengas un buen fin de semana! J. .

In the next tutoring sessions we reviewed the table. It was so functional that I asked her to improvise telling me about a trip to Indonesia that she had referred to earlier, and to use the formulas that she had collected in her table to do so. She had learnt the relevance of always working with theory and practice. The student could not wait to tell me what the answer was to the only question in the previous assignment: she had crossed the invisible wall on the platform in the *Harry Potter* book.

Therefore I concluded that there was obviously no wall anywhere, because by crossing it, she had demolished it. Therefore that platform and her previous assignment resembled because they both needed belief and wish to cross it. I also let the student realize that there was no key either, because crossing that wall was the key itself, and finally, that there was never a door, because the door was her own self.

So, I told her that she was in Hogwarts (Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry), and that that was her real school, not the Official Language School, that she attended. I explained that at the language school, we prepare students technically. I added that, however, the good usage of magic in her oral and written expression (what she already knew), and what she would continue learning on as years passed, depended entirely on her. That was so because **SHE WAS FINALLY THERE: WHERE SHE HAD WISHED TO BE.**

To conclude the month tutoring work I suggested some final assignment for the last tutoring session: The student had 2 questions to answer: WHAT ARE LANGUAGES FOR? And HOW CAN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE BE LEARNT?. Finally I suggested that if she liked Harry Potter, she could just tell me about a link which I had found for her enjoyment:

[http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Hogwarts\\_School\\_of\\_Witchcraft\\_and\\_Wizardry](http://harrypotter.wikia.com/wiki/Hogwarts_School_of_Witchcraft_and_Wizardry)

About the questions, these are the conclusions which J, my student, and I reached:

#### **WHAT LANGUAGES ARE FOR**

Languages are used to communicate with one another. The oral expression and the written expression are the hardest, yet, they are also the most fun and satisfying, because they keep you in a constant trip, surrounded by all kinds of adventures, as it happens when we learnt our mother tongue, from someone who love us and loves us the most. That was the compass.

#### **HOW TO LEARN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

When we learn a foreign language, one must takes care of oneself while going toward it, and must also advance with enthusiasm, steadiness and common sense. I told my student that it was clear that she knew how, because she was doing it, and added that the rest was just practice.

### HARRY POTTER

Checking the link directly pointed to the relevance of indulging in authentic English if it expresses something that we love. I let my student know that I was sure that she had numerous interests in life, as we all do, and that she would soon know how to put them at her service in English too.

On the last tutoring session, I encouraged J to ask questions about her oral expression, or comment on her table, she practised pictures, and also had to tell me a story out of a blank paper, which she happily did. She had resources to build mental images and texts. We also revised concept cards, which I often use in tutoring session to check on mental agility.

I also told my student that I also had a request: from then on she also needed to be responsible for helping other classmates of hers in the next years to come; she could help them to advance in what she had just done. She smiled and nodded. Next is the final email which she was so kind to send me on the next day. My mission had certainly been accomplished, and so was hers.

**JUNE 28<sup>TH</sup>**

**S T U D E N T**

*Buenos días Lourdes,*

*Te agradezco tu gran implicación y dedicación con el tema. Tengo muchísimo que agradecerte, ojalá hubieran más docentes como tú. Solo agradecerte toda la confianza que has depositado en mí y espero ser capaz de aplicar todos los consejos que me has aportado de ahora en adelante.*

*Muchas gracias por todo, de verdad. Muchas gracias!*

*Un saludo,*

*J.*

J. was a student that was daring enough to ask for help right after the final exams. Upon observing my response, she defended her compromise and responsibility. That helped her place her where she had always been: Her. The solution to her problem was: her own self. I was very satisfied with her progress and with my having taken on the challenge and work to react and act upon what I could see.

I think that J's case is an example of what happens to a large number of students: they keep a foreign language by their side as years pass, but, this is not the right accompaniment to move along. As I see it, they simply need to learn to make friends with their own English. J. exemplifies what changes are like: exciting, ready, and, what is more, they are always awaiting us.



# *ADDENDA*

# EFL Visible Learning and Thinking Routines Applied to Four-to-six-year-olds

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After teaching 4 to 6 year-olds in over a decade, learning through play along with innovation have definitely become our predominant tools for learning. But what kind of learning do we value in the classroom? What is the focus of our English class? We have often wondered. We teach at a trilingual school, and when during or after teaching sessions we reflected on this with our pupils, and asked them what they had done, the answer used to be either “*nothing*” or “*just play*”.

We wanted to see our pupils reflecting on their learning, and answering differently. During teacher-directed activities, we also noticed that pupils would consistently use the vocabulary which was being taught in class, but they rarely spoke to each other in English. Pupils were able to acquire new language structures; however, they were not assimilating or integrating the language. What was lacking? What could we change? How could we make this kind of learning visible?.

We kept asking ourselves. We wanted to make teaching and learning more accessible to the children, but we did not know how. Fortunately, at the beginning of this school year, we were introduced to visible thinking routines in our school. At first, we were very skeptical about implementing them with 4, 5 and 6 year-olds, and using them in English seemed even harder.

Yet, we got fully acquainted with them, which led us to get started in our EFL classes. When applying the methodology, one of our main objectives was to encourage pupils to be more autonomous while learning, and after we applied the visible learning methodology to EFL teaching and learning, our pupils’ answers finally varied.

Thinking routines started in Harvard as part of Project Zero (<http://www.pz.harvard.edu/>). These routines constitute patterns that aim to structure the way students process learning, and make this learning visible. These routines have a variety of objectives. They go from observing to classifying, to learning, to asking questions, or even to being able to change points of view.

We have implemented them at least once a week, for the last five months, and the results surpass by far what we had initially aimed at. One important aspect to consider is that, thinking routines do not take more time, or replace the activities that we normally teach in class, but rather provide an instructional framework that structures the whole learning process.

The different actions, reactions and answers will be pointed out within the different typology of activities which are presented here. We will refer to the reasoning and foundations of the project which we devised, along with work on the pupils’ mind set, the role of emotion, creativity and critical thinking, and, last but not least, the relevance of the generated curiosity

around it. The 4 sections will be divided as follows, and activities, along with comments and timing will be indicated:

**1. Laying the foundations: from class objectives to assessment**

- 1.1 Establishing learning objectives: creating a student-centered learning environment
- 1.2 Developing the student's ability to be aware of their own learning
- 1.3 Promoting critical thinking: How to use the metacognition ladder

**2. "How fast can you melt the ice?" Creating an inquiry-based mindset in the classroom**

- 2.1 Implementing the thinking routine: I used to think, now I think

**3. Emotion, creativity and critical thinking: Basic tools for language acquisition**

- 3.1 Establishing a listening environment: Think-pair-share
- 3.2 Creating a culture of wonder: Zoom in and 3 times 2 (mystery box)
- 3.3 Building vocabulary and introducing storytelling: Headlines and 10 times 2

**4. Generating curiosity through project-based learning**

- 4.1 Starting a project: I see, I think, I wonder
- 4.2 Creativity & Lateral thinking: Parts and whole

**1. LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS: FROM CLASS OBJECTIVES TO ASSESSMENT**

**1.1 Establishing learning objectives: creating a student-centered learning environment**

Recent research in education has demonstrated the fact that pupils should be more involved in their own learning processes. However, teaching strategies implemented in the classroom are usually directive and tend to maintain the student in a passive role. Ritchhart, Church, and Morrison, (2011) describe classrooms as *"too often places of 'tell and practice'. The teacher tells the students what is important to know or do and has them practice that skill or knowledge" or on the other hand students can be provided with a lot of activities...but too often the thinking that is required to turn activity into learning is left to chance"*.

Considering this fact, we determined that our lesson plans should be revised into giving students a more active role in achieving learning goals. Therefore, we concluded that, firstly, we should ensure that children could become more self-reflexive, and, secondly, that one of our main responsibilities was to provide opportunities to let them think about their own learning process, so that they could become successful learners.

At present, after our work in visible learning and thinking routines, our present definition of what a successful learner is as follows: Successful learners include their being capable to organize and plan what mental strategies are to be used in order to acquire and integrate new knowledge.

**1.2 Developing the student's ability to be aware of their own learning**

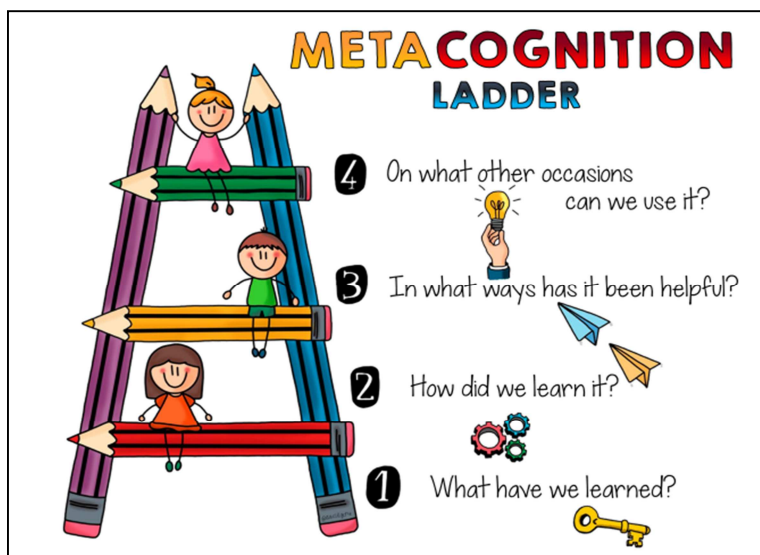
To pursue our goals, meta-learning strategies were going to be included in our weekly 90-minute sessions. We understand them as fundamental tools for developing the pupils' self-awareness of new language acquisition. One of the first implementations, accomplished at the beginning of the sessions, was encouraging children to verbalize what they thought that they were going to learn, and how they were going to learn it.

Consequently, the teacher is no longer the person who introduces and explains the activities; pupils are the ones who converse and establish the learning goals for each task and the steps that they are going to follow to attain these goals. The role of the teacher is to document the students' reflections, so that at the end of each session pupils can easily revise the learning acquisition process.

Letting the children establish their learning goals provides them with the opportunity of focusing on the content of tasks and, furthermore, they are given the chance of evolving as successful learners, as they are an active part on the development of these activities.

### 1.3 Promoting critical thinking: How to use the metacognition ladder

At the end of every session, during the last 10 minutes, we provided the children with the opportunity to reflect on the tasks that they have been developing in class. To do that, we started using the metacognition ladder, which shows, in a very visible way, the necessary steps to produce a satisfactory reflection on their everyday learning experience.



[\(http://dacilgonz.tumblr.com/\)](http://dacilgonz.tumblr.com/)

The first step considers the content and the new vocabulary that they had learnt. At this point, one fact, which amazed us, was that pupils were able to identify not only the content objectives, but also that they were conscious of the importance of social skills. They mentioned that it was necessary to be respectful and to listen to their classmates since they could also learn from them.

The next step consists of reflecting how pupils had achieved this content. Children usually verbalized the material which they had employed and indicated if they had used it appropriately. For step three, pupils comment on how useful contents are. This step is one of the most important ones as it enables them to see the functional part of the language. They can realize that they did not learn just words or phrases, but that they can employ them to communicate and transmit information and feelings to one another.

We have been using learning objectives and the metacognition ladder for several months now, and have been able to observe a great improvement in concentration, in their ability to listen and to work together and, ultimately, they have become aware of what they are learning and why.

## **2. “HOW FAST CAN YOU MELT THE ICE?” CREATING AN INQUIRY-BASED MINDSET IN THE CLASSROOM**

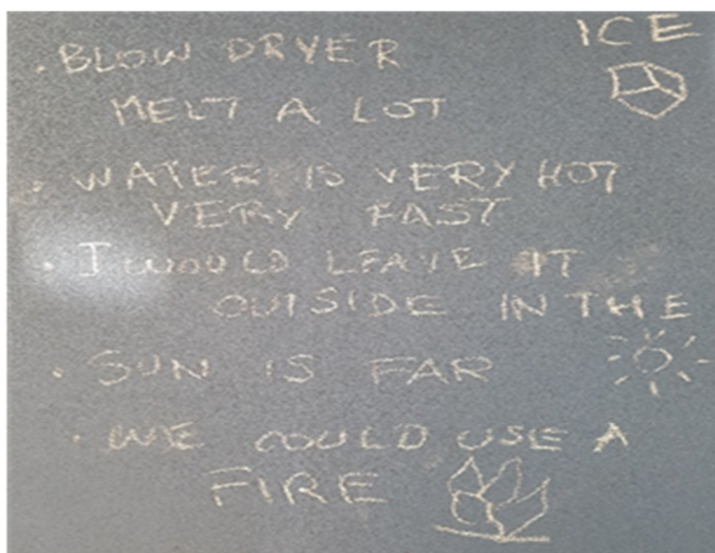
### **2.1 Implementing the thinking routine: I used to think, now I think**

We will present here an example of one of the exercises that we can recreate in class to start fostering the abilities which are necessary to create an inquiry-based mindset in children. At the beginning of the winter, we decided to present a simple experiment to our six-year-old children. With the knowledge that ice melts and becomes water, as a class, we wondered what we could do to make ice melt faster.

This was a 1-hour session. First, we told them that they could not copy each other’s experiments and that, as if they were true scientists, they were going to measure their results. In groups of three, each team presented and recreated their ideas, which started flying: *“take it outside in the sun”, “put it under the hot water”, “put it in your mouth”, “shake it and roll the ice around in a bowl”, “warm it with your hands”, “leave it in the shade...”*.

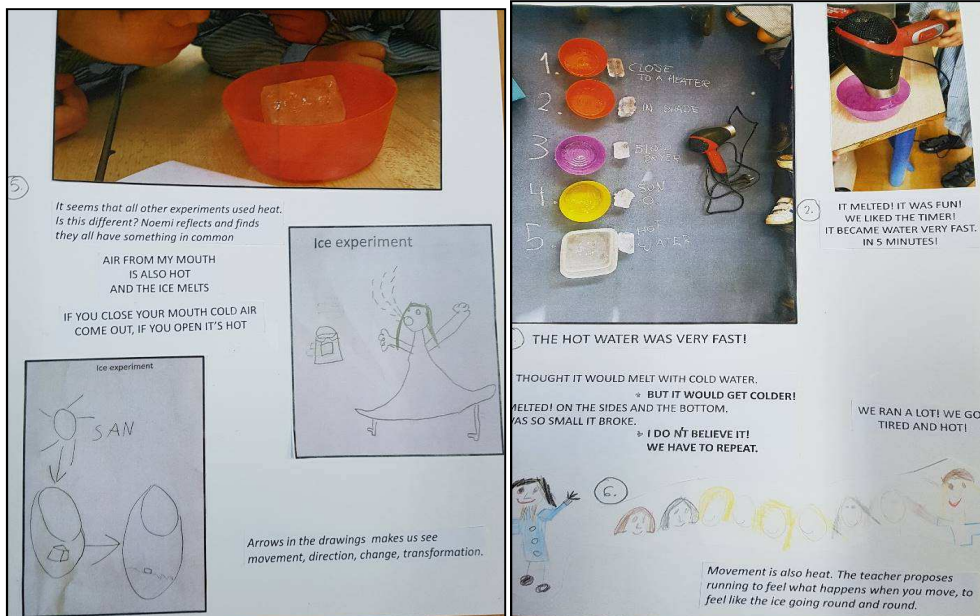
We used a stopwatch to record the amount of time which was necessary for the ice to melt and later we compared how fast it had melted in each condition. The activity and the results were very rewarding in terms of creativity and engagement. We noticed that every child was actively participating in learning, and there was a quiet but excited buzz in the class. They were talking to one another and comparing one experiment to another, and their results as well.

We decided to take a step further and used the thinking routine **“I used to think...Now I think...”**. With the photographs of the experiments at hand, we started the conversation and recorded their thoughts. This was a 30-minute session. We began to recognize amazing thought patterns and ways of thinking which we had not expected, and which if they had not been given the time, they would not have recognized:

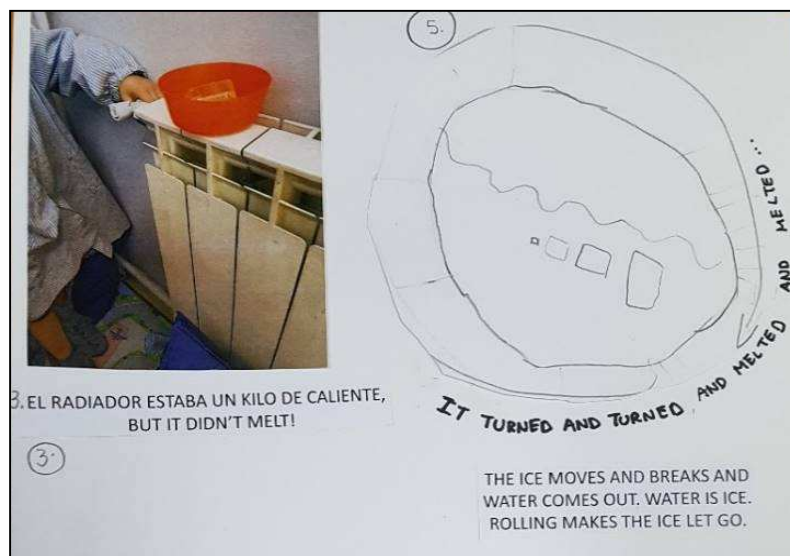


When pupils were asked **“Now what do you think...”** we started to notice real and functional use of language, and scientific thought patterns and abilities came into play. We noticed how knowledge started to transfer from a few of the children to the rest of the group. There was even a moment, which seemed magical to us: our pupils even concluded that heat was the main factor, and that since it was winter, the Sun was too far away to compete against very hot water.

“Air from my mouth is very hot, and it melts the ice”.  
 “The Sun is far away, that’s why it’s slow. It made the hot slow”.  
 “The ice moves and breaks and water comes out”.



However, what about moving the ice? As teachers, we challenged our pupils' thought processes, and asked: "What about when you rolled the ice around in the bowl? Where is the heat there?" Nobody answered. As a challenge, we proposed recreating the ice movement with our bodies and run in circles in the playground. After several laps, we stopped and asked ourselves how we felt... "I feel hot now!"- said a girl", "Like the ice!"- said another one. Movement is also heat.



### **3. EMOTION, CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING: BASIC TOOLS FOR LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

#### **3.1 Establishing a listening environment: Think-pair-share**

When introducing new language structures or vocabulary, we traditionally engage in games, flashcards, rhymes and songs, that is, basic elements of learning by doing; yet, when we use “think – pair - share”, we take learning a step further. The teacher stops being the sole purveyor of knowledge, and each child is empowered into teaching and helping each other, which was also our purpose when working on visible learning and thinking routines.

When that happens, this helps us create empathy and collaboration in the group. Getting to know one another, being able to maintain eye contact, concentrating on the other person, and sharing with everybody else makes the language that we use even more significant and useful. We will present this through a 30-minute session in which pupils needed to be able to communicate what their favorite food was.

First, the pupils sat in a circle and thought by themselves for a few seconds. The next step was turning to the person next to them to create pairs. Each pair expressed to each other what their favourite food was: *“I like to eat pizza...”* or *“My favourite food is pasta”*.

Finally, each pair took turns sharing with the rest of the class what their partner liked to eat: *“She likes to eat pizza”* or *“His favourite food is pasta”*. We use this activity throughout the year with different objectives so that the pupils get to know each other better, create an active listening habit and use different grammatical structures.

#### **3.2 Creating a culture of wonder: Zoom in and 3 times 2 (mystery box)**

It is part of human nature to enjoy mystery and wonder. Just putting an object inside a box or behind a panel and letting the children only touch, hear or smell it, creates expectation and gets the imagination flowing. We use the **“zoom in”** and the **“three times two”** routines to create wonder and promote lateral thinking in class. These activities are about 30 minutes long.

To implement the routines, we have a mystery box or a mystery panel. This is how it works: Children come into the class, eager to start the day and to share with one another what they had done the previous day or over the weekend. In the middle of the class, they find a big box...a mystery box!

Alternatively, on another day they find a panel on the wall, but it is hidden behind a piece of cloth or some pieces of paper. What will they find inside? What is underneath?, they start to think.. Expectations and conversations start to build, some children start to hypothesize...*“it’s a train”*, *“it’s something to eat”*. A few bold ones try to have a peek.

They start asking questions: *“What is it?”*. Since there is a hidden image or a word behind a piece of cloth or the pieces of paper, that must be gradually lifted. Each time we uncovered part of an image or a word, we ask the children: *What do you see? What do you think it is? What makes you say that?* Starting a new theme or project this way, or introducing a new idea or word with this thinking routine is especially engaging.



When using “3 x 2”, we asked the children to think and imagine three things based on one of their senses. For example, the first time we would only let them smell: *What do you think it is?*, we ask. Afterwards, we write their ideas down. The second time we go around the class circle, we let them touch or hear, and again, and we write their ideas down.

Another way to use the mystery box is to have one pupil look inside and give a clue or clues. The other children think and share their ideas, and the whole class repeats the process until pupils have guessed what is inside. This thinking routine is very useful when reinforcing vocabulary and the pupils’ ability to describe.

### **3.3 Building vocabulary and introducing storytelling: Headlines and 10 times 2**

We have noticed that when the children create a habit of observing and documenting what they see, they listen to each other better. For instance, they go beyond copying the same sentence which they hear from their classmates, and they start developing more vocabulary.

Before we even open a book, we can start generating knowledge. Some questions which can be asked are: *Do we start by looking at the cover? What are we going to find inside? What is the story about?* We use this thinking routine when working on “Headlines”. This is a 45-minute session. Before we start a storytelling session, we first look at the book, and what we see on the front cover.

Then we generate a list of possible titles for the book: *What would the title be if we could name this book?* After the storytelling session, we compare our titles to the real ones and see which one is the most accurate. This is how we start to model reading comprehension strategies, which they will need to master as they grow older. Furthermore, we also generate active interest in the story and prepare them to listen and engage.

To build on vocabulary, we use the “**Ten times two**” thinking routine. This is a 30-minute session. This routine was created especially for the Artful Thinking Art & Music Academy (<http://pzartfulthinking.org/>). It aimed at promoting observation and attention to detail. We use it while presenting a new art piece, a mural or a poster with a variety of objects. To start with, we present the image and let the children observe it quietly for around 15-30 seconds. Then, depending on the children’s age, we hide it or leave it where it can be easily viewed.



Afterwards, the pupils say words or phrases about what they just observed and the teacher writes down a maximum of ten items. This process is repeated a second time. When the children are describing what they see, the teacher can also ask, “*What makes you say that?*” to reinforce attention to detail and help them think creatively and autonomously.

#### **4. GENERATING CURIOSITY THROUGH PROJECT-BASED LEARNING**

##### **4.1 Starting a project: I see, I think, I wonder**

One of the approaches which helped us to incorporate thinking routines was also Project-based learning. This methodology gives us the chance to stimulate children's curiosity, since they choose what they really want to learn. “**I think, I see, I wonder**” is a great way to introduce a new subject or project to a class. It is a thinking routine which provides us with the opportunity to train students’ higher thinking and observational skills. We implemented it in two separate 45-minute sessions.

We used this thinking routine to introduce our first project of the year during the first session. When entering the classroom, children found a mystery bag full of objects related to a specific topic. After observing the objects, we initiated a conversation with our pupils by asking them what objects they could see. In this case, all the objects were related to space and astronauts. The first time when we introduced this routine, some pupils had difficulty distinguishing between the first and the second steps: see and think. For example they would say: “*I see an astronaut that lost his ship*”. We would then challenge them by asking: “*Do you see that he lost his ship or do you think it?*”.

This question helped them distinguish between facts and assumptions. It is important to follow up their remarks with the question: “*What makes you say that?*” to help them distinguish between the two, and show them the difference. The first step involves stating only what they can observe and the second step focuses on having their thoughts expressed.

The second session involved the last part of the thinking routine: “*I wonder...*”. This step involves creating expectations and asking pupils about what they want to investigate and learn. Our young learners may have difficulty formulating what they want to know. We can help by listening to them, spotting disagreements in their conversations, and then reformulating their ideas into questions.



For example, while examining an astronaut's spacesuit one pupil said: "I think they can breathe with a box on their back; another pupil contradicted that: "No, I think they hold their breath!". Our teacher's role is to mediate, step into these moments, and model how to create questions such as: "I can see that you have different ideas. I wonder..Can we investigate how astronauts breathe in space?". When we do that, more often than not, the questions which pupils come up with are better than anything that we can anticipate to.

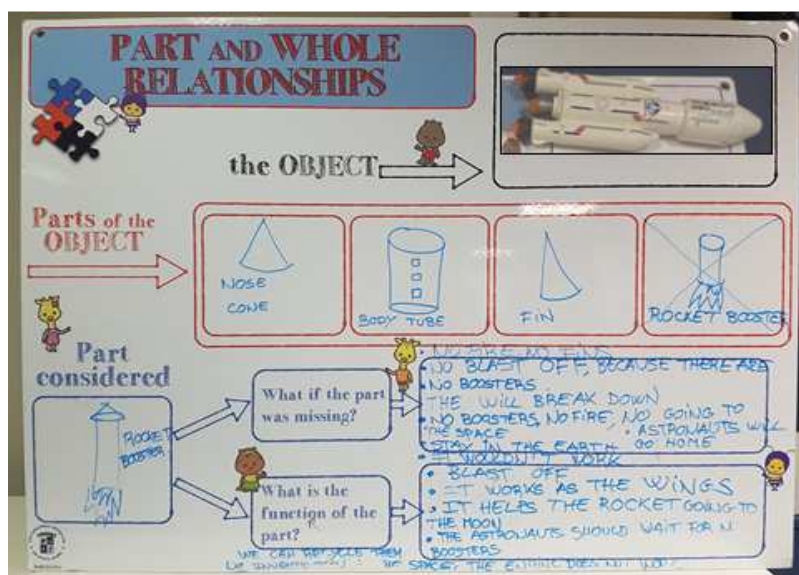
These are some of the questions which the pupils developed for this project: "What and how do they eat in space?, How do they live up there?, How do they breathe?, What do they wear?, Why do they float in space?, How do rockets take off?, To what planets do they travel?, Do they have houses on other planets?".... After them, we were able to start our project by working in teams. We could investigate on the answers to these questions.

#### 4.2 Creativity & divergent thinking: Parts and whole

"Parts and whole" provokes an out-of-the-box way of thinking that helps promote creativity and divergent thinking, essential in a successful learning process. After a few weeks investigating the project, we considered that time had come to work on it. To succeed in this activity, pupils must have previous knowledge of the content and master the specific vocabulary. This prevents difficulties with the abstract reasoning aspect of this routine

This routine was implemented in a 45-minute session, and, as we were investigating astronauts, the chosen object was a rocket. We had a previous conversation in which the children verbalized the parts of the rocket. We had drawn them on the board. Afterwards, one of the questions was "What would happen if the rocket had no boosters?". The children had a lot of ideas and we were able to brainstorm on that extensively: "The rocket won't blast off...", "The rocket will break down", "The rocket will stay on Earth"...

To conclude, we had a dialogue about the usefulness of the missing part. This is one of the most difficult aspects of this routine, since it is very abstract thought for young children. Pupils have to indicate the function of that part. Although initially we had our misgivings, the truth is that they were capable of reaching amazing conclusions. Some interesting ideas that came up were: "The booster helps the rocket go to the moon", "They work as wings", or "The astronauts should wait for new boosters".



After implementing the visible learning methodology and the thinking routines which have been described, our pupils were more capable of being self-reflective. There was no doubt that they had been trained on their quality of thinking. Developing the pupils mental resources definitely helped them to organize and plan the strategies which they needed to become effective and to turn into active learners.

In addition, as classes continue we observe that their strategies continue enabling them to know what steps they must follow to acquire English as a foreign language, and, what is more, to use it in their everyday lives.

We truly believe that if we expect our children to be critical thinkers and successful learners in the future, we must start developing these routines as early as they are schooled. We recommend implementing visible thinking routines as part of the classroom strategies which are necessary to acquire 21<sup>st</sup> century thinking skills and metacognition.

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# An EFL Gardening Experience: Growing Competences at a Growing Orchard

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“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much” (Helen Keller)

While thinking of new experiences to enjoy EFL teaching and learning, we encountered a new and enticing door: “**The Orchard**”, a school project, which was created by a group of daring teachers who had taken the responsibility of designing and building an orchard in our six-to-ten-year-old playground. “The orchard” is part of the “Green Schools” program ([http://mediambient.gencat.cat/ca/05\\_ambits\\_dactuacio/educacio\\_i\\_sostenibilitat/educacio\\_per\\_a\\_la\\_sostenibilitat/escoles\\_verdes/el\\_programa\\_escoles\\_verdes/](http://mediambient.gencat.cat/ca/05_ambits_dactuacio/educacio_i_sostenibilitat/educacio_per_a_la_sostenibilitat/escoles_verdes/el_programa_escoles_verdes/)) at Departament d’Ensenyament. As motivated and risk-taking EFL teachers, we could not miss the chance of also diving into the project through our **English classes and hands-on-projects** of ours.

The **areas or work** were going to be cross-curricular: English and Science, and we were fascinated by the potential of the project and linked it to the concept of **sprouting with our classes**: we wanted to aim at growing English knowledge through an all-manipulative and sensorial experience. However, this is not a new idea. As Comenius (1650=2004) recollected, one has to use as many **senses** as possible during the learning process. Pestalozzi (1980) pointed that every learning process should revolve around the application and search of different stimuli that objects surrounding us offer. This way, children, for instance, can be presented with the most varied experiences.

We could not help taking on the challenge of submerging into the beginning of an English orchard, which we understood as a field of **meaningful and interactive EFL learning**, as well as an extremely **cooperative experience for all**, our pupils and us. Cooperative learning gives us chances to deal with diverse pupils that, needless to say, at some point or another, we often encounter in class. In our initial English orchard, all pupils are given a role. They also have the possibility to prove that they can carry out their part of the proposed didactic deal, and what is more, that they can do it quite successfully.

Through our experience, we saw that the orchard offered the ideal context to elicit EFL learning from our pupils in a natural way, as well as provided the opportunity to educate them emotionally in a **social environment**. When we created the project, we did not only want to make our pupils competent in English language but also in skills which are related to real life and their context, in this case, our school.

In the context of the classroom, communicative activities are, sometimes, too structured and social aspects may be missing too, as Christina Bratt (1992) claims. Communicative competence acquisition must be seen as a creative construction process. Therefore, with “The orchard” project we fostered the inherent communicative competence in our pupils. To do this, we designed work that applied to two dimensions: the **oral dimensions** (listening and speaking), and the reading and **writing dimensions** (reading comprehension and written production).

The main aim of our **Orchard project** was not to create a big orchard, but to welcome a space where to place new sprouts from where further building could occur, which is what happened. The closure of our initial project consisted of a **beginning**: planting vegetables, and, specifically, carrots. So, the end of the project led us to the start of the next orchard projects, which continue at present, and on which we are working.

We could see that less was more from minute one because **simplicity** was it, and the project caught the attention of **all kinds of pupils**: highly motivated ones who welcomed it from the start, and a few less motivated ones, who could not help embarking on the adventure from the very beginning too.

Our project was **implemented in 4<sup>th</sup> grade**. No matter how difficult the vocabulary could seem to our pupils at a glance, they were so challenged by the whole project that, unit after unit, they proved that they had no learning problem at all. On the other hand, we ensured that grammar structures were not highly demanding, so that the blend of both vocabulary and grammar balanced out, which certainly helped our students maintain their motivation, and eagerness to succeed in all.

It must be said that this project can be **easily adapted to all age groups in elementary school**, from the **Second Cycle (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grades)** where it started, to both the **First Cycle (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grades)**, and the **Third Cycle (5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade)**. Teachers can easily adjust the contents to the different needs and teaching styles. For example, there would be a need to limit the varied vocabulary and the online research with regards to the First Cycle, whereas, for the Third Cycle, increasing and demanding more reciprocity at a structural and syntactic level would be a must.

Our **Orchard project** was divided into **seven units**, which are presented as follows:

<b>UNIT 1 - THE LIFE CYCLE OF A PLANT</b>
<b>UNIT 2 - VOCABULARY PRESENTATION</b>
<b>UNIT 3 - VOCABULARY REVIEW</b>
<b>UNIT 4 - PLANT RESEARCH</b>
<b>UNIT 5 - CHASE THE PLANT!</b>
<b>UNIT 6 - PLANTING A CARROT – PART I</b>
<b>UNIT 7 - PLANTING A CARROT - PART II AND SELF-ASSESSMENT</b>

The **main objective** through all the units was to help our pupils develop and practise their oral skills in a meaningful and practical context, and to involve pupils in the whole school project: The Green Schools. We also expected them to master specific gardening vocabulary, while collaborative work was promoted and communication skills were encouraged. The grouping and timing were common as well throughout the project. As to **Grouping**, there were groups

of 12 pupils, divided into groups of 4, with no more than 5 in each one. **Timing** involved 2 sessions per week: one 90-minute session (80' lesson plan) and one 60-minute session (50' lesson plan).

**Grammar and communicative structures** included work on the present, future and past simple tenses, demonstrative pronouns, imperatives, permission questions, and superlatives. **Vocabulary** work covered general nouns, ordinal numbers, general adjectives, ICT Nouns, fruits and vegetables, seasons and months, and orchard nouns.

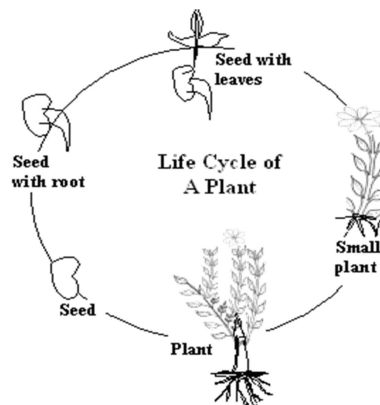
Various **materials** were also necessary for implementation, ranging from regular computers and tablets to the white board, netbooks, applications, programs, videos, and online dictionaries among others. Specific references will be provided next within the description of each unit.

**Assessment** was carried out by both pupils and the teachers through rubrics. As cooperative work and meaningful learning are essential keys in our project, our main rubric aims directly at testing the collaborative skills of our pupils. Although grammar aspects are also taken into account, they do not play a key role in this project.

Assessment was carried out in the last unit (Unit 7). However, since cooperative skills are already evidently displayed in Unit 5, the rubric could also start being used then. Additionally, it could be adjusted for usage throughout the whole set of units as well.

<b>UNIT 1</b>		<b>THE LIFE CYCLE OF A PLANT</b>	
<b>Specific aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To get to know the basics of the life cycle of a plant</li> <li>- To create a flower diagram to get to know better the process</li> </ul>		
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Video 'How Peep plants a seed' (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yxs7P7LWzDg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yxs7P7LWzDg</a>)</li> <li>- Flower worksheet</li> <li>- Green coloured paper</li> </ul>		
<b>Timing</b>	50 minutes	<b>Skills</b>	Listening, Speaking, Writing
<b>Communicative structures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>I have a...</i></li> <li>- <i>Yes, I do / No, I don't</i></li> </ul>		
<b>Grammar structures</b>	Present Simple		
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nouns: flower, orchard, seed, seedling, soil</li> <li>- Ordinal numbers: first, second, third</li> <li>- Verbs: to grow, to plant, to sprout, to water</li> </ul>		
<b>Procedure</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The teacher asks pupils if they have an orchard, or if someone in their family has one; also if they know how a plant grows (10').</li> <li>- They watch the video (10').</li> <li>- They brainstorm on the contents of the video (5'). The teacher makes a diagram of the life</li> </ul>			

cycle of a plant (10').



(<http://www.kwiznet.com/p/takeQuiz.php?ChapterID=1580&CurriculumID=7&Num=2.24>)

- Pupils are told that they are going to draw the life cycle of a plant on a cardboard. They are given a simple drawing of a five-leaved flower to fill in with the life cycle of the plant that has just been seen (15').
- All the pupils' works are hanged off the walls.



## UNIT 2

## VOCABULARY PRESENTATION

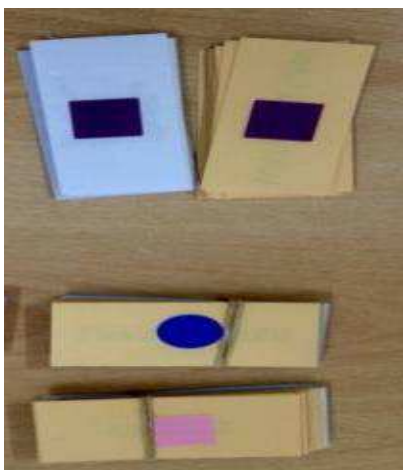
<b>Specific aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To present the new orchard vocabulary</li> <li>- To review their previous knowledge about the topic</li> <li>- To match images of the specific vocabulary with corresponding Words</li> </ul>		
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Three packs of vocabulary cards (pictures + names)</li> <li>- Orchard vocabulary worksheet</li> <li>- Dictionaries (paper and online)</li> </ul>		
<b>Timing</b>	80 minutes	<b>Skills</b>	Speaking
<b>Communicative structures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>What is this?</i></li> <li>- <i>This is a/an...</i></li> </ul>		



<b>Grammar structures</b>	Demonstrative pronouns: This one, that other one
<b>Vocabulary</b>	- Orchard tools: axe, garden fork, hoe, hose, lawn mower, rake, scythe, shears, shovel, trowel, watering can, wheelbarrow

**Procedure**

- The teacher reviews the life cycle of the plant. Pupils look at their productions on the walls (10’).
- Pupils are given each a worksheet to work on new vocabulary. Each group must check the meaning of each word (25’).
- Once they complete the task, the teacher projects the answers (10’).
- The teacher gives out a pack of the pictures and the vocabulary words to each group for them to match up. The pictures and the vocabulary words are printed in different colours (the pictures in white and the words in coloured papers). Each pack has a different sticker.



- Each group receives a different set and they start matching them up. The teacher goes around checking the pupils’ work and providing some clues if they need help (20’).
- At the end, the teacher projects the answers again and revises each one, making sure that all the pupils have corrected their work (10’).

**UNIT 3** **VOCABULARY REVIEW**

<b>Specific aims</b>	To review orchard vocabulary		
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Three packs of vocabulary cards (pictures + names).</li> <li>- Orchard crossword worksheet</li> <li>- Crossword answer key</li> </ul>		
<b>Timing</b>	50 minutes	<b>Skills</b>	Listening, Speaking
<b>Communicative structures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>What is this?</i></li> <li>- <i>This is a/an...</i></li> </ul>		
<b>Grammar structures</b>	Demonstrative pronouns: This one, that other one		

<b>Vocabulary</b>	Orchard tools: axe, garden fork, hoe, hose, lawn mower, rake, scythe, shears, shovel, trowel, watering can, wheelbarrow
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**Procedure**

- The teacher hands out the same pack of matching cards of the lesson above and each group of pupils sorts that out (20').
- The teacher projects the answers (10').
- Next a new different worksheet, a crossword, is handed out. They work in groups. The correction is done chorally (20').



<https://www.englishworksheets.com/gardening-tools.html>

<b>UNIT 4</b>	<b>PLANT RESEARCH</b>
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<b>Specific aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To create a grid using a word processor</li> <li>- To be able to find the information related to specific fruits and vegetables</li> </ul>		
<b>Materials</b>	Computers, online dictionaries ( <a href="#">Wordreference</a> )		
<b>Timing</b>	80 minutes	<b>Skills</b>	Speaking, Writing
<b>Communicative structures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Can you help me?</i></li> <li>- <i>How do I find...? How do you say (...) in English?</i></li> <li>- <i>Imperatives: Open a new file/ Give format to the page/ Insert a grid/ Write "Plant", "When to plant", "When to harvest" / All the titles have to be written in bold and capital letter</i></li> </ul>		
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ICT Verbs: to copy, to create, to enter, to google, to paste, to save</li> <li>- ICT Nouns: bold, capital letters, column, document, folder, grid, row, title, website</li> <li>- Fruits and vegetables: beans, carrot, cauliflower, cucumber, lettuce, pumpkin, radish, strawberry, tomato</li> <li>- Seasons and months of the year</li> </ul>		

**Procedure**

- The children sit at the computers in pairs. They have to create a grid using a word processor. -
- They follow the instructions given by the teacher (25’).
- When the grids are ready, each group decides which plants they are going to research on, and they divide this task in pairs (10’).
- The teacher monitors the pairs and helps them out. If the children need extra help to find the information, they are provided an online page where they can find all the information: <https://www.almanac.com> (40’). Children must introduce their zip code and obtain the planting time for their region. The teacher goes around checking if there are any mistakes and helps them whenever necessary.
- Once they have finished the task, they save it in a specific folder (5’).
- The teacher will later proofread them so that they are ready for the next session.



**UNIT 5 CHASE THE PLANT!**

<b>Specific aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To enhance cooperative work and to develop the sense of belonging to the whole class</li> <li>- To create a unique mural with all the information gathered by the different groups</li> <li>- To practise visual and memorization techniques</li> </ul>		
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two wall murals: one complete/ one blank</li> <li>- Four types of flashcards: "Name", "Picture", "When to plant" and "When to harvest"</li> </ul>		
<b>Timing</b>	50 minutes	<b>Skills</b>	Listening, Reading, Speaking
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nouns: months of the year</li> <li>- Fruits and vegetables: bean, broccoli, carrot, cauliflower, cucumber, lettuce, pumpkin, radish, strawberry, tomato</li> <li>- Verbs: to harvest, to plant</li> </ul>		

**Procedure**

- This activity takes place in the playground. Pupils find two big murals on two walls of the playground: one has all the plant information, and the other one is a blank grid which must be completed by them.
- The flashcards are scattered all over the playground, not to be easily found by the pupils at

<p>first sight.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- While sitting in a circle, the teacher tells them that they are going to start a ‘Scavenger Hunt’ (5’). They have to collect the information that they gathered in the last session. Each group is given one flashcard with the picture of a plant on it. Then they have to find the flashcard with the name of this plant and also the flashcards with the ‘When to plant’ and ‘When to harvest’ information.</li> <li>- Once they think they have a correct answer, they have to go to the ‘reference or answer key mural’ on the playground wall to check that their guess is correct. They do not take the flashcard until they have verified it. If their guess is correct, they have to go back again where they found the card, take it and stick it on the blank mural. The activity is continued until the whole grid is completed (45’).</li> <li>- For the next session, pupils have to bring a yogurt container which they will use the next day. They must also decorate them at home. Carrots will be planted there.</li> </ul>			
<h2 style="margin: 0;">UNIT 6</h2> <h2 style="margin: 0; color: #0056b3;">PLANTING A CARROT (Part I)</h2>			
<b>Specific aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To know the process of how a new plant is created</li> <li>- To make guesses</li> <li>- To express their new knowledge in a ‘concept map’</li> </ul>		
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The top half of a carrot (one for each pupil)</li> <li>- DIN A3 paper</li> <li>- Markers, pencils</li> <li>- Online dictionaries</li> <li>- Pots</li> <li>- Video ‘How to grow a carrot’ (<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoE7nhkYf4E">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoE7nhkYf4E</a>)</li> </ul>		
<b>Timing</b>	80 minutes	<b>Skills</b>	Listening, Speaking, Writing
<b>Communicative structures</b>	<i>I think that...</i>		
<b>Grammar structures</b>	Present simple, Future simple		
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nouns: top halves of a carrot, concept gap</li> <li>- Verbs: to sprout, to water</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Procedure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The teacher elicits from the pupils what the planting process might be like (15’). Then she gives each group a DIN A3 sheet. They have access to the internet (both at the computer or the tablets). They create a concept map (40’).</li> <li>- They share their maps with the rest of the class (10’).</li> <li>- They review the planting process through the video (5’).</li> <li>- They take their pots (which are already decorated, and have their names stamped on) and the top half of a carrot. They pour some water into the pot and then they take it to a suitable place, where they can have daily access to it and see how they evolve (10’).</li> </ul>			



<b>UNIT 7</b>		<b>PLANTING A CARROT (Part II)</b>	
<b>Specific aims</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To know the process of how a new plant is created</li> <li>- To be able to refer to the changes in English</li> </ul>		
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Top halves of the sprouted carrots</li> <li>- Containers</li> <li>- Orchard vocabulary worksheets</li> <li>- 3 white DIN A5 papers (one per group)</li> <li>- Soil</li> </ul>		
<b>Timing</b>	50 minutes	<b>Skills</b>	Speaking, Writing
<b>Communicative structures</b>	<i>Could I have... / Could I borrow...?</i>		
<b>Grammar structures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adjectives: boring, great, interesting</li> <li>- Past simple</li> <li>- Asking for permission questions: <i>Could I have... / Could I borrow...?</i></li> <li>- Superlatives: <i>The most difficult thing</i></li> <li>- Inversion for emphasis</li> </ul>		
<b>Vocabulary</b>	Orchard tools: axe, garden fork, hoe, hose, lawn mower, rake, scythe, shears, shovel, trowel, watering can, wheelbarrow		
<p><b>Procedure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pupils transplant the carrot tops to the soil. Students review which tools they need for transplanting. They take their orchard worksheets and they write on a separate paper what they think that they are going to use (similar to a shopping list) (10').</li> <li>- Then they go to the playground, where the teacher has already set a stand with all the tools. The pupils, in teams, have to ask the teacher for the materials which they need. Once every team has the tools, the teacher shows them the container where they can plant the seedling (20').</li> <li>- They return to the classroom, where the teacher encourages the pupils to analyse their own performance during the whole project.</li> </ul>			



- Pupils return to the classroom, where the teacher encourages the pupils to analyse their own performance during the whole project.
- The teacher gives the pupils a cooperative self-assessment sheet which they must complete.
- They are expected to write sentences such as: *"I found this project Great!/Interesting.../OK /boring/"*, *"What I liked the most was..."*, or *"The most difficult thing to learn was..."*.

<b>COLLABORATION RUBRIC</b>				
Adapted from the <i>Buck Institute of Education</i> ( <a href="http://www.bie.org/">http://www.bie.org/</a> )				
Individual performance	Below Standard	Approaching Standard	At Standard	Above Standard
<b>Takes Responsibility for Oneself</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is not prepared, informed, and ready to work with the team</li> <li>- does not complete tasks on time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is usually prepared, informed and ready to work with the team</li> <li>- completes most tasks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is prepared and ready to work; is well informed on the project topic</li> <li>- completes tasks on time</li> </ul>	
<b>Helps the Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- does not help the team solve problems; may cause problems</li> <li>- does not give useful feedback to others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- cooperates with the team but may not actively help it solve problems</li> <li>- gives feedback to others, but it may not always be useful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- helps the team solve problems and manage conflicts</li> <li>- gives useful feedback (specific, feasible, supportive) to others so they can improve their work</li> </ul>	
<b>Respects Others</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is impolite or unkind to teammates</li> <li>- does not</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is usually polite and kind to teammates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- is polite and kind to teammates</li> <li>- acknowledges</li> </ul>	

	acknowledge or respect other perspectives	- usually acknowledges and respects other perspectives and disagrees diplomatically	and respects other perspectives; disagrees diplomatically	
<b>Organizes Work</b>	- wastes time and does not run meetings well; materials, drafts, notes are not organized	- usually uses time and runs meetings well, but may occasionally waste time; keeps materials, drafts, notes, but not always organized	- uses time and runs meetings efficiently; keeps materials, drafts, notes organized	

- Pupils are also asked to decorate the rubric at home. They are encouraged to include pictures of theirs. On the next day, they take the self-assessment sheets back to the teacher. All self-assessment forms are reviewed, and relevant information is extracted. The teacher provides a general overview of the whole project performance to the class. This information will be taken into account by both the teacher and the pupils in the future.

Through our EFL classes, our diverse children embarked on a hands-on-project which keeps advancing. Reaching its goal meant the beginning of new stages, which, as indicated earlier, we are now working on. Our children took the responsibility in their growth as pupils and in the growth of the whole school orchard. Sprouting through the English class through simple assignment happened in the regular classroom and the playground.

Focused on different areas of work, pupils used their senses, and turned their work into a varied learning experience, which was meaningful for all. Interactive and cooperative learning and teaching was it. They worked on a friendly social environment which encouraged all language skills. And, as if in the plant cycle, while that happened, EFL teaching and learning through our orchard bloomed: it was enjoyed by both parts, our pupils and us. Further references to help in implementing similar gardening projects and/or adjust to different levels follow.

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<https://www.englishworksheets.com/gardening-tools.html>

Gardening For Dummies

<https://books.google.es/books?id=xIQEHIHdd8UC&pg=PT184&dq=plant+a+mini+orchard&hl=ca&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwji3oLBoYnTAhVEAxoKHeR5ClgQ6AEIKjAC#v=onepage&q=plant%20a%20mini%20orchard&f=false>

How to regrow carrots? Tutorial to sprout carrots by Wasteless Wednesday

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoE7nhkYf4E>

KwizNet Learning System

<http://www.kwiznet.com/p/takeQuiz.php?ChapterID=1580&CurriculumID=7&Num=2.24>

Nature Sparks: Connecting Children's Learning to the Natural World

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Wordreference

<http://www.wordreference.com/es/>



# The Effect of Language Exposure and Classroom English. Three Worksheets

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We encourage our students to do the things that we believe that they can do. Sometimes, they think that they are able to or that they are not. However, when we do that, our students have the chance to accomplish them. This applies to the teaching English as a foreign language. Insisting on the need to master the language which we teach might sound obvious. Yet, I have always observed both in EFL teaching and in EFL teacher training that there is a need to ensure that this always happens.

The **three worksheets** which follow were created for teaching methods courses aimed at EFL trainee teachers at the Teacher Training School at the University of Barcelona. They will be described in detail next. They cover a series of hands-on aspects which were later used in refresher courses for both new and veteran teachers. The three worksheets were titled as follows:

<b>A/ Language Exposure – Awareness and Responsibility into Action</b>
<b>B/ Classroom Language – Mastering it. Part 1</b>
<b>C/ Classroom Language – Mastering it. Part 2</b>

## **A/ LANGUAGE EXPOSURE – AWARENESS AND RESPONSIBILITY INTO ACTION**

This worksheet contains a selection of excerpts which had been part of class sessions and notes. They were intended to reinforce main EFL teaching and learning notions. Students were asked to reread them in order to answer a few questions. Questions dealt with the **difference between language learning and language acquisition**, which Susan House (1997, p. 7) so clearly refers to: the role of experience in the former, the result of what normally comes through formal teaching, and the relevance of a stimulating environment in them both, since the latter must be as close as possible to the former to be successful.

Students were also asked if they could see the relevance of approaching experience to formal teaching, and if so, they were invited to think about ways to do it, and to exemplify them. If students were already into teaching, they were expected to provide data showing that they were trying to take the English life into their English classroom.

Through some other reading students had learnt that there is a need for intensity in language exposure since language learning does not happen fast, and, what is more, the **exposure** of years which students have had with regards to the acquired language versus the learnt one can not be balanced out with the hours invested in EFL courses. Students were also reminded of the need to develop both formal practice and informal practice, the latter happening precisely through classroom communication, which turns it into free.

Students were also asked to assess if the students' involvement in the learning process makes mastering classroom language into one of the means to get close to experience. They were to reason that, to visualize themselves as teachers, and to comment on to what an extent they made all that into part of their classroom life. They were also expected to point to the effects which they thought that they would reach. Students were also asked to apply that methodology to other areas in EFL learning and teaching.

The relevance of **encouraging the learning process** was emphasized through reading passages as well, the bottom line being that learners need to listen to the language as much as possible both in formal and informal situations, and also, that the teacher must ensure that this happens, devoting part of the class to the speaking skill.

Students were prompted to react to the fact that some students want to know grammar, but are not able to use it to communicate in speaking and writing. They were also asked to point to the person who was to be blamed for that. Students were also told to recall their own learning experience: what their English teachers had focused on, what lessons they could still get from looking back at them, and if those lessons could still be applied in their teaching.

Finally, **motivation** for language learning was approached, succinctly understood as "*the desire to communicate*" (House, 1997, p. 10). While students wish to communicate with one another, teachers must adjust their classes to these needs, and viceversa, and it is the combination for them both, which does the trick for all, and spurs the learning and teaching joint work.

Trainee teachers were to brainstorm on ways which could help potential and real students communicate so that their need and desire were not only kept but fed too. That student-teacher tandem is to be experienced by both parts, and student teachers were asked to check if they felt it and encouraged it.

As trainee teachers, they had the chance to practise individually, in their groups, through the teaching sessions, the microteaching sessions or units of work of their choice, in class, or, during their internships, or private teaching sessions. Those students who were already teaching were asked to share with the rest of students how they planned the content and methodology of their teaching and the criteria which they followed. Ideas were to be exchanged and written down, along with all the participants' names, so that all their group work could be also assessed on that basis.

## **T A S K**

### **LANGUAGE EXPOSURE**

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#### **Awareness and responsibility into action**

*I hear, I know, I see, I remember, I do, I understand* – Confucious

The following excerpts correspond to class sessions and notes. Read them and answer the corresponding questions:

## **1. LANGUAGE LEARNING VERSUS LANGUAGE ACQUISITION**

**“The first language is acquired from experience, while the second usually comes with formal teaching. Language acquisition takes place in a constantly stimulating environment: children are exposed to their first language from the very beginning and they are literally bombarded with language all the time. Although we cannot reproduce these circumstance exactly, we should try to provide our students with at least some of the stimuli which are present in language acquisition in order to facilitate language learning.”**

House, S. (1997): *An Introduction to Teaching English to Children*. London: Richmond Publishing (p. 7)

Can you see the need for formal teaching to get closer to experience? How can that be done? Provide specific examples.

Some of you are already teaching. What are you doing to get closer to English life within the English classroom?

## **2. EXPOSURE TO THE LANGUAGE**

**“It is important to take the matter of intensity of exposure into account when we assess our expectations of the children. Learning a language is a slow process. By the time the children come into the English class, their first language is usually very developed. They have had eight or nine years of continuous exposure to this language; we are obviously not going to achieve the same results with a second language where their exposure over a year may be about eighty hours, if they are lucky!.”**

House, S. (1997): *An Introduction to Teaching English to Children*. London: Richmond Publishing (p. 8)

**“...the exercises in the course materials will provide formal practice but classroom communications also provides less formal practice, which is often integrated, of the four skills. You should take advantage of the informal practice because it represents free communication”**

House, S. (1997): *An Introduction to Teaching English to Children*. London: Richmond Publishing (p. 8)

Do you agree that mastering classroom language is, for instance, one of the means to achieve the end of getting closer to experience, and the students’ involvement in the learning process? Why? How important is that you master it, and that you make it into part of your classroom life? What will the effects be?

Do you agree that this is the starting point to ensure that you can later build up on that and take them into further practice, to help your students experience other aspects of English life in the classroom?

## **4. ENCOURAGING THE LEARNING PROCESS**

**(...) “The children need to listen to language on tapes (now Cd’s, internet...) as part of formal instruction and from you through informal communication in the classroom. Talk to the children in English and use natural language.”**

(...)

**Spend a good part of your class time getting students speaking. The purpose of the language is communication“ (...)**

House, S. (1997): *An Introduction to Teaching English to Children*. London: Richmond Publishing (p. 8)

What is your reaction to these two passages? What is the point of grammar, if your students are unable to use it to communicate, both through oral and written expression? Whose mistake will that be?

Think about your own learning experience. What did your English teachers focus on? Was it the same? What can you learn from looking back on your school days? Can you apply it to your teaching?

### 5. MOTIVATION

**“The main motivation for language learning has to be the desire to communicate. Children want to communicate if they have something that they want to say to each other. We have to determine what language the children will learn to use and how they will enjoy using it. This means designing the content and methodology of our teaching accordingly. “**

House, S. (1997): *An Introduction to Teaching English to Children*. London: Richmond Publishing (p. 10)

What can you do to help your students communicate so that they can feel the need and the desire to do so? Do you feel the need to communicate with them all, as a group and individually too? (If you are not teaching yet, picture yourself through your microteaching sessions, or conducting your unit of work). If not, let your teacher know.

If you are already teaching, what are you doing? Who do you have in mind? How do you plan the content and methodology of your teaching? What are your criteria? Share your ideas with partners of yours who are not teaching yet. Exchange ideas and write them here. Include the names of the partners who you have worked with.

### **B/ CLASSROOM LANGUAGE – MASTERING IT. PART 1**

The first worksheet reminds participants of the need to remember that EFL **and learning is always being built**, which make **daily encouraging classroom language** fundamental for both the teacher and the students. By using classroom language, we all have fun, and students look forward to more **excitement** and **novelty** in the next class session. As they improve by doing that, and get linguistically involved in class, we keep observing them and helping them, as the needs arise. The game of EFL teaching and learning truly happens in English.

It is important to get started at the **beginning of the school year**. At the start, it might look as if you were not advancing much, but little by little, day by day, results are seen: while English teaching takes place, English is being used communicatively **while life happens in class in each EFL session**. Changes happen, and our students learn to recycle that language which they are being presented in each lesson

When we do that, that leads us to be more creative, and to keep focused on activities and class English which fulfill what they must. Besides, that course of action keeps both parts delighted: on the one hand, students keep consolidating what they learn, by making it theirs; on the other, in-session results and exam results are high in quantity and quality, which satisfies us. That ensures our place in great **non-stop EFL teaching and learning laboratories**, which are constantly shared and taken care of by both parts.

When teaching in college, at different stages in the course, I had passed my students **explicit lists on classroom English**, which had come from several sources: Roth's (1998): *Teaching Very Young Children* (1998), Seligson's *Helping Students to Speak* (1997), and The Learning Shop: <http://www.learningshop.com>. Those lists had been intended to help my students review words and expressions which dealt with EFL classic areas such as **class management, classroom materials, action games, board games, card games, and songs**.

I wanted my students to be acquainted with them all, and start using them in case they were already involved in college internships or were part-time teaching in private language schools. Of course, they were also aimed for immediate implementation in their groups' class lesson plans which they had to present and carry out in front of their classmates (as if they were their students). And needless to say, I wanted them each to **start having their own lists with most essential EFL class vocabulary bank**, which could start right in college, and which they could be completing as years passed and they became fully professional.

Tips to prepare their microteaching team work with regards to the presentation of lessons were also provided by me in different sessions. Students needed to make sure **that they each and all understood all the words and expressions, and knew how to pronounce them well and use them in the corresponding appropriate situations**. This was a measure which I passed to my EFL trainee teachers to have them realize that their students will imitate them at all times, and therefore it is mandatory to teach correct English at all times.

Such relevance was being given to classroom language that students were not allowed to present their own materials unless the sine qua non condition was met. The sessions on classroom language were complemented with other words and expressions which students might have been learning in EFL internships, their own learning, their own teachers in language schools, etc. Classroom language was not only on paper or a web site. It was happening and students themselves were the spitting image for one another.

## **T A S K**

### **CLASSROOM LANGUAGE**

Prof. Lourdes Montoro

#### **Mastering it – Part 1**

*The pupil who is never required to do what he cannot do, never does what he can do -  
John Stuart Mill*

.....  
"Remember that learning is a building task. However, there will be no need to "recycle" classroom language if you encourage its usage from day one: your students will naturally and happily use it, because you will too, and by doing that, by playing that game, you will make that a part of their fun daily

life in the English class: they will look forward to more learning, and so will you, through your teaching and your own observations.

Of course, I never said that that was going to be an easy job. Just the opposite, because if you are on the right track, you will have just started to teach them to learn. Yet, the key to success in this area will depend on your wish to see results, your persistence, and above all, on your own trust to be able to do so, and help your students reach out for the best which you can give them, and which they, themselves, somehow already have.

Some of you are very fortunate because you are already teaching: you can start experimenting. Maybe you not dare use classroom language all the time, although you would like to change that, and begin doing so. If this is your case, and you wish to improve, please contact me.

Once you reach that point, you should not wait until day two for results. It will be late. Your students and you need to see them, feel them, right away on day one. If you do that:

- a. Your students will be taken into a formidable imaginary trip by their English teacher: Y O U, where a lot of adventures will be awaiting them. Do not lose your enthusiasm. Hope for the best always.
- b. You will be free from worries about that point, and will be able to start preparing yourselves to help your students recycle the rest of the language, which they will accumulate through the units, as the course progresses, and through all their English studies too.

This will be an endless fascinating challenge in your teaching career, which will keep you happily entertained if you remain being as vocational as you are now. It will also make you into a better professional, as you will wisely learn to collect and store your own large number of learning experiences, and enjoy the lessons behind them all”.

Lourdes

.....

Check the following sections and ensure that you know what is expected from you:

**1. Your teacher has passed you 3 lists on classroom language from:**

- a. Roth, G. (1998) : *Teaching Very Young Children*. London: Richmond
- b. Seligson, P. (1997) *Helping Students to Speak*. London: Richmond
- c. The learning Shop: <http://www.learningshop.com>

Check that you have them all. The third one is optional (American English).

**2. These lists will help you review words and expressions related to:  
Class management**

**Classroom materials**

**Action games**

**Board games**

## Card games

## Songs

Do you know them all? Can you use them? Do you already put them into practice if you are teaching?

Indicate the sections where you have had the most problems as you prepared to master them (please see task in # 3).

### 3. You need to work with your microteaching team to ensure that you all:

1. understand all words and expressions
2. can pronounce them well and use them in the appropriate situations. This way your students will learn correct English from you.

#### Note:

- You will not be allowed to present any teaching materials (microteaching + unit of work) until you master classroom language. You can use some time during the individual interviews in April to prepare it all with your group.
- If you need your teacher's help, plan ahead and ask her in advance

### 4. Some of you are teaching and might be using some other expressions. If they are useful, list them here and share with the class. Thank you.

## C/ CLASSROOM LANGUAGE – MASTERING IT. PART 2

This worksheet presents **two writings by two boys**, David and Oriol. It is based on collected evidence which was used to pose ten questions to students; they were supposed to tell the differences, infer meaning from them, guess at their ages, visualize who had helped David to write and what they had based their writings on.

Last but not least, at the end of their analysis, students were asked to think about the **main objective in teaching and learning a foreign language: free communication**. And in that line,

they were to explain why if it was the main objective in oral expression and written expression, it had to be guided first, and why that main objective was so hard to obtain.

In David's writing students could observe that, besides my name, lots of nouns were not well spelled. They meant to say: "thank", "dictionary", "teacher", "like", "merry", and "Xmas". However, they had the correct spelling in brackets, which somebody else had added in small handwriting. The writing was a note written on a decorated sheet. In fact, it was a *thank you* note for a dictionary which students guessed that I had sent the boy, and that he had showed to his school teacher. The holiday greeting made them realize about the time when he had got the present: Christmas.

Unlike David's, Oriol's writing was done on the back of a postcard, which had clearly been sent to me during his summer holidays, and mine. No misspellings were found. There was a beginning and an ending, and despite indicating that he was very happy, he also said that he had preferred to go to the United States, where I was, and where the card had been forwarded. The text also had some direct translations from Spanish or Catalan, which were used to refer to funfair rides and fireworks.

After students pointed to the main differences between both written samples, and guessed at who they could be with regards to me, I finally let the cat out the bag, and let them know that they were my two godsons: David was an **American** godson, who was a young child when he had written that note for me. With his mom's help, he was acknowledging a present which I had sent him. He had a long way to go at school, since he was starting.

Oriol was my godson in **Spain**. Since I had spoken to him in English very early in time, **English** had long turned into **a game** for him. He looked forward to learning English at school. It was a pleasure to see that **learning English** was quite **a natural thing** for him. As a child, he used to write to me in **English for fun**, when he was on vacation with his family. In the card, he was telling me about a nearby town, and what he had done there. He also longed to go to the United States, since he had heard so much about them from me.

I used Oriol's example to model **the need to help students live what we teach them at school**. I recall a comment of his to his friends when he was only four. He knew basic greetings, and words, such as ice-cream and the flavors. He had been with his friends for a long while, and I simply got close to him, and said: "*Oriol, would you like an ice-cream?*" He nodded to me, and immediately after said to her friends in Catalan the equivalent sentence to: "*Sorry, I need to go with my godmother*".

Additionally, it is **always effective to share part of one's life in class**. It does not have to be much. And these examples stood out for that too, bringing both **practicality and closeness** to my trainee teachers

The worksheet also has a final section which oriented students with regards to oral communication and other specific examples. They were provided along 18 pages in a book which I recommended them to read (Dunn's *Beginning English with Young Children*, (1990). it covered numerous areas which I wanted them to be acquainted with: **starting, sustaining and ending an activity; language for socializing, for agreement, disagreement, and for praise; translation; simplification; repetition; transfer; consolidation; dialog; error and correction; sounds and pronunciation.**



## **T A S K**

### **CLASSROOM LANGUAGE**

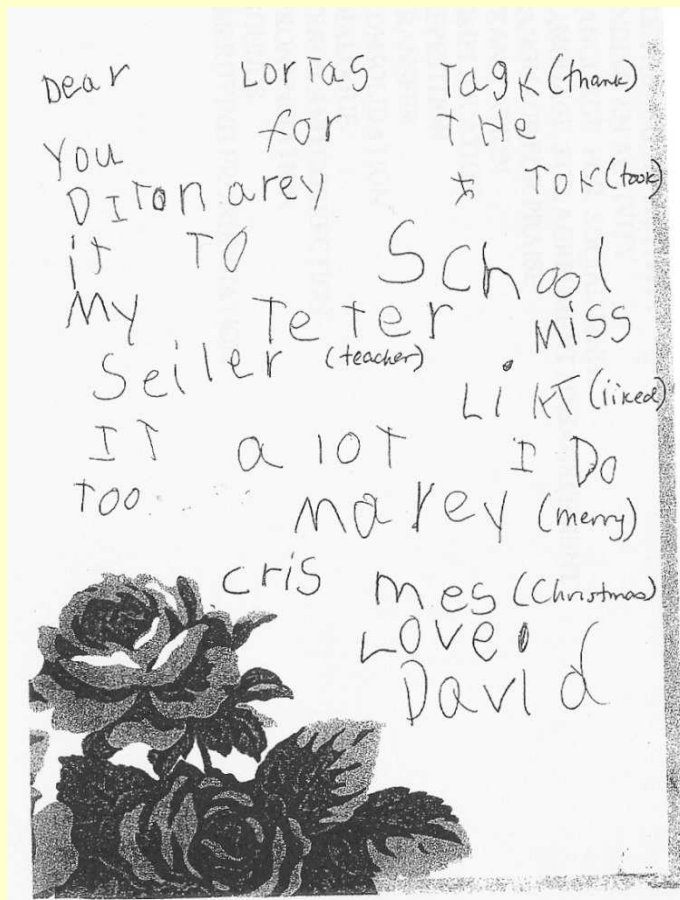
Prof. Lourdes Montoro

#### **Mastering it – P a r t 2**

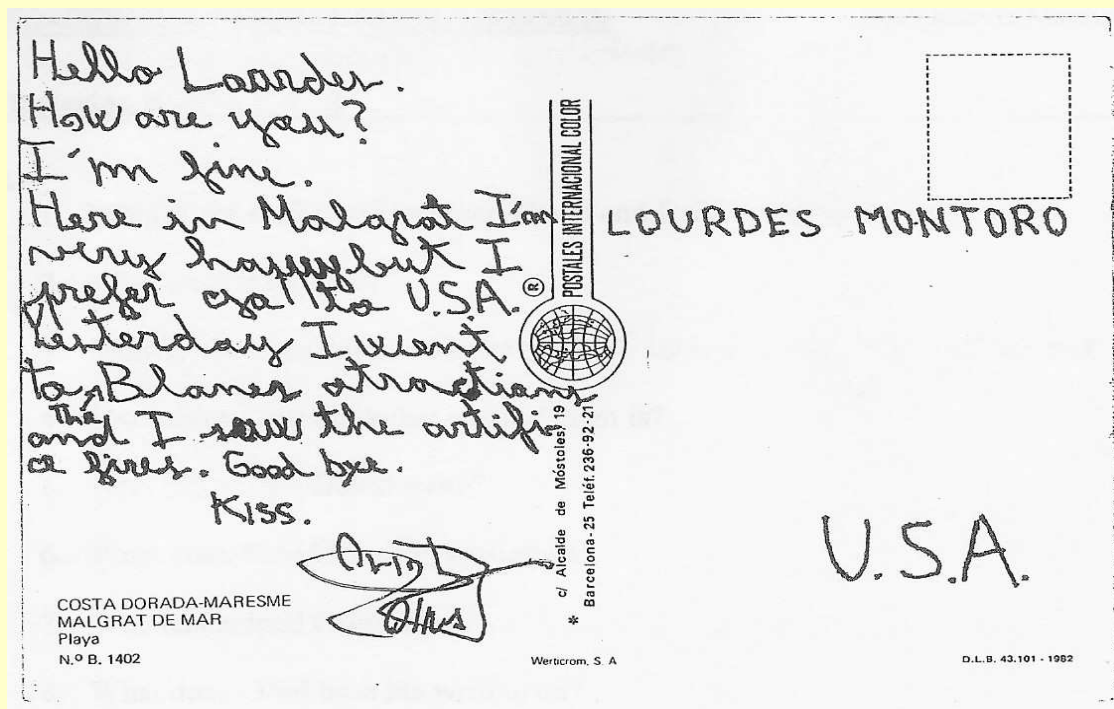
#### **A.**

1. What is the difference between David and Oriol's writing?
2. What does it tell you?
3. What is the connection with the teacher?
4. How old do you think that each of them is?
5. Who has helped David write?
6. What does David base his writing on?
7. Who has helped Oriol write?
8. What does Oriol base his writing on?
9. Free communication is the objective in speaking and writing. Why does it have to be guided first?
10. Free communication is the objective in speaking and writing. Why is it so difficult?

DAVID'S WRITING:



ORIOI'S WRITING:



**B.**

To get acquainted with beginning oral communication, see: Dunn, O. (1990) *Beginning English with Young Children*. Macmillan, pp. 45 to 63. Specific examples provided.

Areas covered

STARTING AN ACTIVITY SUSTAINING AN ACTIVITY ENDING AN ACTIVITY LANGUAGE FOR SOCIALISING LANGUAGE FOR AGREEMENT / DISAGREEMENT LANGUAGE FOR PRAISE / TRANSLATION SIMPLIFICATION	REPETITION TRANSFER CONSOLIDATION DIALOGUE ERROR AND CORRECTION PRONUNCIATION SOUNDS IMPROVING PRONUNCIATION
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The contents in this article can help new and veteran teachers assess where they stand as teachers of English as a foreign language, and specifically the quality and quantity of the exposure to English which their students have. They can value what they have done up to now, and also consider what they would like to do or try to do from now on. Additionally it presents work on classroom English, by means of which, specific tools are provided. They can be implemented as necessary. We cannot forget that we learned our mother tongue by listening to our parents, repeating what we heard, going to school and being taught how to read, to finally learn to write to express what we wanted to convey. The closer EFL learning is to language acquisition, the more natural and vivid both our work, the students', and the joint English class will be.

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<https://www.teachercreated.com/>

The Learning Shop teacher's Catalog

<http://www.learningshop.com>

# Taking the English World to Class: Prompts and Visual Aids. Two Worksheets

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Dedicated to Meritxell Jordà, Aleix Llop, Ana Miralles, and Domènec Sos, who went from being outstanding EFL students of mine in the 80s to dear friends of mine, who I cherish as family

When we help our students to learn English as a foreign language as close as possible to how they acquired their mother tongue, we encourage them to regularly use English in class. In addition, we also assist them in accomplishing goals and doing things which, when carefully led and supported, they are, definitely, able to accomplish.

Because we want to create an EFL atmosphere which resembles reality to some extent, recreation gets into play. Recreation refers to *“The action or process of creating something again”*, along with *“a re-enactment or simulation of something”* (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/recreation>). Recreation can also have another meaning: *“a means of refreshment or diversion”* (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/recreation>), “diversion” being understood as *“something that diverts or amuses”* (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/diversion>), like a pastime.

As a student myself, I recall learning in class, having fun, and particularly living in full what I was being taught. So far, this is how I have tried to teach. I have always aimed at having EFL students, trainee teachers, or veteran teachers in refresher courses dive into the English language and culture. My goal has been passing to them what I have lived myself and learned about, and to help them learn through their own interests and expertise.

It is important to find room for the students’ own likes and skills, because since students are already keen on them, they can become great EFL teaching and learning opportunities. Additionally they are easy resources for teachers and students to work with. My EFL work in class has included sessions which students learnt to prepare and share with the rest of their classmates. They dealt with electronics, computer science, chemistry, horsebackriding, swimming, gymnastics, make-up, hairdressing, fashion shows, music, bands, solo singers, sports and players, biographies, film stars, English speaking countries, The United States...

No matter what topic we chose, I have always seen class sessions as hand-on blended fantasy and reality learning and teaching workshops. From my view, you name it, they name it, I name it, and that all equals to: It is possible!. It all requires a lot of previous preparation, and full students’ and teacher’s participation. When that happens, class sessions are run smoothly for both parts, and enjoyment together with numerous teaching and learning memorable instances happen.

I have taught all EFL levels and ages, from elementary school to college. As years have passed I have kept viewing classes as happening in fabulous non-stop labs, whether they take place in our classroom, or elsewhere, for example, on different school premises: the library, the self-access center, the hall, the lab itself, the cafeteria, the kitchen, the auditorium, the gym, the pool, the basketball court, the dining room, the yard, the garden...

We have also followed lesson plans which have taken place in field trips. We have gone to train stations, tourist offices, consulates, tea rooms, cinemas, theaters, museums, supermarkets, dubbing studios, libraries, archives, and even the beach!. I was also fortunate to start, and lead an English Club for several years, which students could sign up for and get extra credits for it as well.

We used no textbook, but simply lived the class in English, and reinforced the common sessions through lots of activities: my students learnt to cook to have pancake breakfasts, they invited American guests, they designed and created games which helped them practise grammar items of their choice (*parcheesi, tic-tac-toe, word searches...*), also played with English games of mine (*Spill and spell, Clue...*), presented their favorite songs and bands, interviewed teachers, wrote for the school magazine...

Additionally, for six years, I had the honor to invite 12<sup>th</sup> grade students to participate in a theatre club which I came up with after having them present short scripts in the previous year. During 12<sup>th</sup> grade, we volunteered to rehearse plays in our free time. We adapted the scripts. There would be premieres where we invited EFL elementary school, junior high and high school teachers. Some of them would “hire us” to perform in their schools, or they brought their students to our auditorium. Some schools saw us perform year after year.

We also had the chance to perform in childhood and youth fairs such as “Festival de la infància I la Joventut”, we went to Catalunya Radio station to be interviewed, some newspapers published our work, we had sponsors, families were involved in the sewing of outfits, we designed our prompts, some students remained in the group to help the next 12<sup>th</sup> graders get started... The school support was fundamental to keep it all going. With the money that we collected, we all went on Easter trips to Austria, Belgium, France, Ireland, Switzerland...

Besides learning English, and performing works, like Hans Christian Andersen’s *The King’s New Clothes*, or Oscar Wilde’s *The Canterville Ghost*, I wanted students to learn to earn the money to pay for their own travelling tickets and youth hostel stays. It all worked, and their parents had to only grant their children official permission to go on the trips, and help them financially with the main meals. Of course, they were very happy to do so. We took trains and buses, we flew to some destinations too.... It was lots of fun for us all.

To top it off, the theatre group, by the way, called “La tribu” was also invited to perform in the annual Barcelona EFL Teacher training venue. They did not only perform there, but also accompanied me in the didactic workshops which I presented on their behalf and mine. Those EFL presentations also turned into articles which acknowledged all the schools participation in our teaching and learning project. It also included sending our script to the hosting EFL teachers and schools, so that they could work on it with their students, before the performance was to take place. We also passed them follow-up work after the performance, so that they could continue working on it after they watched the play, once back into their classrooms.

Of course, there is no need to do all that I have referred to, especially because it seems that our main goal as human beings is to be who we are, or, in other words, as some quotes which I use in class state: “*Be yourself; everyone else is already taken*” (Oscar Wilde); “*Always be a first-rate version of yourself and not a second-rate version of someone else*” (Judy Garland); and last but not least, “*Be yourself, but always your better self*” (Karl Maeser).

Needless to say, this applies to our teaching. This article is meant for teachers' reflection, and further work and implementation as it may fit the different teaching circumstances. Simply using prompts along with visual aids can very much help the recreation of life in the EFL class. The **two worksheets** which follow contain a review of materials which I have worked with in my teaching career.

These worksheets were created for EFL teaching methods courses which I taught for undergraduates at the Teacher Training School at the University of Barcelona. These worksheets were later used in refresher courses for both new and veteran teachers as well. They will be described in detail next. These worksheets were titled as follows

<b>A/ Prompts: prompt bins, boxes, cabinets...</b>
<b>B/ Visual aids. A selection</b>

#### **A/ PROMPTS: PROMPT BINS, BOXES, CABINETS...**

This worksheet starts with a short reference to who the **prompter** is in the theatre, and the kind of task which is performed: reminding. Along with visual aids prompts can help recreate reality in the EFL classroom. This worksheet also points to the need to have a **systematic storage system** for the different things which we can end up using.

Trainee student teachers were told the **purpose** which the objects which they were to observe had fulfilled. They were also encouraged to **take their own prompts to class**, and to **share** them all with their classmates. Their specific task consisted of **checking all the materials** which were being presented, taking both **general and specific notes** which would be commented in class, asking me if they needed **further information**, and thinking about their **own ways to use the material**.

The worksheet was divided into **three sections**: firstly, **miscellaneous items in prompt box**; secondly, **door, walls, corners, windows, ceiling and windows décor**; and last but not least, **catalogs on educational materials**, and **lists with U.S. and carnival party decoration references**.

The number and variety of **miscellaneous items within a prompt box** included: an academic cap, tassel and diplomas; all-occasion bags; stuffed animals such as a bear family, a bunny, a cow, a dog, a flamingo, a mouse, a pig; and an apple-shaped board. They could be used for numerous purposes: graduation ceremonies; class presentations, and storytelling. The thematic board could be used as an individual board, group board or teacher's board, as well as for games, and announcements.

The box also contained a basketball hoop; fake US bills and coins; a bingo game; blindfolds; a bubble maker; a fake cell phone; and dice: These prompts could be used for sports, and cross-curricular lessons; shopping exchanges, to practise numbers; to trust partners, work on values, apply one's senses when following directions; or simply for play time and cross-curricular lessons; simulating calls; playing games, and the games corner.

There was also a disco-like mirror ball; a mini double-decker; a simulated first-aid kit; and miniature grocery packages, which could come in handy for class party time, to have a class candy jar to which every classmate could contribute to, and take candy from (besides being a a British culture icon); simulations, and cross-curricular lessons.

Students could also take a look at a Halloween banner; imitation kitchen utensils; magnetic poetry pieces; and miscellaneous items which had been part of a class on the senses (a bubble gum wrap, cotton, toothpaste, and a mini trumpet). They had been very useful in introducing Halloween, cooking cross-curricular lessons, writing workshops and the lessons on the senses which allowed for team work through booths to practise questions such as: “*What does it sound, smell, or feel like?*”, and the corresponding answers.

The prompt box also presented *Lady Anne* paper dress-me doll; plastic eggshells; a fluffy puppet dog; a US puzzle; a sand clock; a white board; and, last but not least, a Xmas tablecloth, banner, border, snowman, hot-air balloon, hat, and bows. They had been very practical when dealing with clothes, Easter, storytelling, the games corner, and cross-curricular lessons; and the Xmas holiday season. Having two handy ready-to-use boards (another one was the above-mentioned apple-shaped one) adds autonomy to groups, teams, pairs and individuals in the classrooms.

The second section offered the students the chance to look into **class décor** which could be used **on doors, walls, corners, windows, ceiling and windows**. Students could look at invitation party signs, a Halloween plastic door cove, a Halloween *Beware Warning* sign, Santa’s parking space sign, an Easter gate, Easter wall décor, an Easter hot-air balloon, a Summer welcoming sun, and Thanksgiving, Christmas and Valentine clings.

Finally the third section was used to ask students if they were familiar with catalogs on **educational materials, and lists on the U.S. and a Carnival party one**. After that, Students were reminded to bring to class any prompt which they found interesting to share with their classmates.

## **T A S K**

### **PROMPTS**

Prof. Lourdes Montoro

### **Prompt bins, boxes, cabinets...**

In theater, the prompter is the person who assists actors and actresses on stage. He/she provides them with lines that immediately precede the next words which they may have forgotten. So, a prompt is a reminder or a cue for some speech and action too.

Prompts are in the same line as visual aids. They will help you take reality to your classroom, and simulate situations in a more fun and direct way. Eventually, you will have a large collection of them, and you should think of a system to start storing them, so that they are ready when you need them next. You may use boxes, bins, trays, drawers, cabinets...

Today you will analyze a series of objects which are meant to prompt students to live their classes as authentically as possible, as well as to motivate them for their next English session, to inspire them to bring their own prompts later, and above all, to get the most of their English learning cooperative environment.

This is what you need to do:

1. CHECK THAT YOU HAVE SEEN ALL THE MATERIALS ENCLOSED BELOW (✓)
2. TAKE GENERAL NOTES
3. TAKE SPECIFIC NOTES. REFER TO THEIR POSSIBLE OBJECTIVE, CLASS PROCEDURE...
4. ASK YOUR TEACHER FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHILE IN SESSION
5. THINK HOW YOU COULD USE SOME OF THEM IN CLASS

A/ The areas which the prompt box covers are as follows:

**Academic cap, tassel and diplomas (Graduation...)**

**All-occasion bags (Presentation...)**

**Animal toys: bear family, bunny, cow, dog, flamingo, mouse, pig... (Storytelling, animals, cross-curricular lessons...)**

**Apple-shaped board (Games, announcements; individual board, group board, teacher's board...)**

**Basketball hoop (Sports, cross-curricular lessons...)**

**Bills and coins (Shopping...)**

**Bingo (Numbers...)**

**Blindfolds (Directions, values and attitudes, the senses..)**

**Bubble maker (Play time, cross-curricular lessons...)**

**Cell phone (Calling a friend...)**

**Dice (Games corner...)**



**Disco mirror ball (Party time...)**

**Double-decker (Candy jar - values and attitudes, British culture, cross-curricular lessons...)**

**First-aid kit (Simulation, cross-curricular lessons...)**

**Grocery shopping (Shopping...)**

**Halloween banner (Festival...)**

**Kitchen utensils (Cooking, cross-curricular lessons...)**

**Magnetic poetry (Writing workshop...)**

**Miscellaneous (The senses: bubble wrap, cotton, toothpaste, trumpet...)**

**Lady Anne paper dress me doll (Clothes...)**

**Plastic eggshells (Festival...)**

**Puppet dog (Storyteller...)**

**Puzzle (Games Corner, cross-curricular lessons...)**

**Sand clock (Games corner, cross-curricular lessons, tasks...)**

**White board (Games, announcements; individual board, team board, teacher's board...)**

Xmas tablecloth, banner, border, snowman, hot-air balloon, hat, bows.. (Festival...)

B/ You can also have your door, walls, corners, windows, ceiling and windows taken care of with certain prompts. Please check:

**DOOR**

Invitation party sign

Halloween plastic cover sign

**WALLS AND CORNER**

Halloween *Beware Warning* sign

Santa's parking space sign

Easter gate

Easter wall decor

**CEILING**

Easter hot-air balloon

Summer welcoming sun

**WINDOWS**

Thanksgiving, Christmas and Valentine clings

C/ Are you acquainted with the 2 Educational materials catalogs, and the U.S. and the Carnival, party and decoration one?

**Note:**

If you have some prompts which you find interesting to share with your partners, please contact me, and bring them in next day. Thanks for your cooperation.

**B/ VISUAL AIDS**

This worksheet begins with a **definition** of what visual aids are, what they may include, and a **reminder** of what they can do for the EFL class: **bringing the English world to class**. It also counts on a provoking definition by Dr. Ronald Burman, my former professor of English, at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, who taught us that learning a language from a book was academic and lifeless, unless it was **spoken, acted, thought and felt**, which, once more, takes us back to **how we learnt our mother tongue**.

Student teachers in my class were presented with a **series of envelopes**, and **several tasks** to carry out: they had to check all the materials inside; take general notes; take specific notes and point to their possible objectives, contents, procedure, and presentation format; ask me for further information whenever necessary; and think about ways how the materials could be implemented.

Seven areas were covered: **Classroom language, corners, culture, festivals, project work, acting out, miscellaneous**, and a final reference to **publishing houses** and visual materials which they can provide us with. **Classroom language** was presented through maps, posters, signs. **Corners** included work related to speaking, reading and games. Speaking showed work which had been done through flashcards with prompts, laminated roleplays, situation tags, topic tags and laminated wh-questions. The reading corner involved blurb cards which I had used to present books in class, laminated reading cards, realia such as *Disney World* brochures, riddles which had been part of a calendar, and content –based teaching realia

**Games** consisted of flashcards, students' invented games, textbook board games, and real games such as: *Spill and Spell, Sentence Cube Game, Password...* **Culture** covered materials which I had used to create a **British theme park**: map, guessing game, flashcards...; and to celebrate an **American week** at school during a cultural week. The latter included cultural flashcards, holiday cards, videos.... Finally there was an envelope where tourist information on Catalonia was stored.

**Festivals** covered works which I had done on **Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's and Easter**. In the Halloween envelope there were Halloween colored sheets, flashcards, and the *Halloween Chamber of Horror* sound effects. Thanksgiving was also presented through its correspondent colored sheets, flashcards, a menu and invitations. The Christmas envelope counted on Xmas colored sheets, a Xmas story, a sing-along video, snow flakes window decorations – which students and I had cut out -, name tags... About Valentine's they could learn through Valentine's colored sheets, flashcards, hearts... And last but not least, there was the Easter envelope, which counted on Easter colored sheets, flashcards..., as well as class-made arts and crafts (butterflies, flowers, wooden gate....), and realia.

The **Project work** envelopes presented previous works of mine on **magazines, radio programs, karaoke, cooking contests, and graduation**. The magazine envelope presented sample student-created magazines, along with a teachers-in-training magazine, which had been done in previous workshops. The radio programs one contained flashcards, tapes, a microphone, a radio, a program script, stickers, a contract, and certificates of appreciation. For karaoke, there were flashcards, musical notes, records, banners and hippy-like daisies. To encourage cooking contests, trainee students could look at samples of an apron, a hat, a jury tag, and a cookbook. To implement a graduation ceremony at the end of the school year, students could check quotes, flashcards, and the classic *Pomp and Circumstance* background music.

With regards to **Acting out**, there were envelopes on **four classic roleplays based on the restaurant, the past, directions and fashion shows; didactic plays, a pajama class, and an ice cream parlor**. There were flashcards for the restaurant, videos on "La Tribu" theatre group along with scripts, and follow-up didactic work. For the pajama class, there was a language-in-context worksheet together with a *Fairy Tales* video, and *The World Sings Goodnight* (an International lullabies audio) which I had used in class. The ice-cream parlor envelope included samples of the invitation, the certificate, a cookbook, advertising, a song, a vocabulary exercise, tongue twisters, flashcards and readings.

The **Miscellaneous section** was divided into **adapted materials** and **publishing houses**. The former included flashcards about the weather, prepositions, actions, among others; the latter contained flashcards related to colors, animals, food, clothes, body parts, toys, family, classroom items, transportation, and household items.

## T A S K

### VISUAL AIDS

Prof. Lourdes Montoro

#### A selection

In *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (2000), Houghton Mifflin Company, visual aid is defined as “an instructional aid, such as a poster, scale model, or videotape, that presents information visually”. Visuals may include pictures, cards, charts, posters, flashcards, banners, and all kinds of prompts. Visual aids will help you bring the outside world into the classroom, and make your students feel at ease in “their new English world”.

As Dr. Ronald Burman (Professor Emeritus, University of Wisconsin-la Crosse) states: *“Learning a language from a book is academic and lifeless. Read the book before class but put it aside in class, and then speak, act, think, and feel in the language. Children learn their initial language without books; that must tell us something about language acquisition”*.

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You are presented with a series of envelopes. These are your tasks:

1. CHECK THAT YOU HAVE SEEN ALL THE MATERIALS ENCLOSED BELOW (✓)
2. TAKE GENERAL NOTES
3. TAKE SPECIFIC NOTES. REFER TO THEIR OBJECTIVE, CONTENTS, PROCEDURE, PRESENTATION FORMAT...
4. ASK YOUR TEACHER FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION WHILE IN SESSION
5. THINK HOW YOU COULD APPLY SOME OF THE IDEAS TO YOUR CLASSES

The areas which are covered are as follows:

### **C L A S S R O O M   L A N G U A G E**

Envelope – Maps, posters, signs...

### **C O R N E R S**

#### SPEAKING

Envelope 1 – Flashcards with prompts, laminated roleplays, situation tags...

Envelope 2 – Flashcards, topic tags, laminated WH-Questions...

#### READING

Envelope – Blurb cards to choose books, laminated reading tasks cards, *Disney World* brochures, riddles on calendar, content-based teaching realia...

**GAMES**

Envelope 1 – Flashcards

Envelope 2 – Students' invented games

Envelope 3 - Miscellaneous textbook board games. Teacher will also bring real games to class:  
*Spill and Spell, Sentence Cube Game, Password...*

**C U L T U R E**

**BRITISH THEME PARK**

Envelope - Map, guessing game, flashcards...

**AMERICAN WEEK (Cultural week)**

Envelope 1 – Scenery flashcards

Envelope 2 - Holiday cards, video...

**CATALONIA**

Envelope 1 – Tourist information

Envelope 2 - Tourist information

**F E S T I V A L S**

**HALLOWEEN**

Envelope – Halloween colors, flashcards, *Halloween Chamber of Horror* sound effects (ask teacher for it)...

**THANKSGIVING**

Envelope – Thanksgiving colors, flashcards, menu, invitations, article...

**CHRISTMAS**

Envelope 1 – Xmas colors, Xmas story, sing-along video...

Envelope 2 – Snow flakes, decorations, name tags...

**VALENTINE'S**

Envelope – Valentine's colors, flashcards, hearts...

**EASTER**

Envelope 1 - Easter colors, flashcards...

Envelope 2 – Arts and crafts (butterflies, flowers....), realia...

**P R O J E C T   W O R K**

**MAGAZINE**

Envelope – Sample magazines, teachers' work in teacher training courses, article...

**RADIO PROGRAM**

Envelope – Flashcards, tapes, microphone, radio, program script, stickers, contract, certificate of appreciation, article...

**KARAOKE**

Envelope - Flashcards, musical notes, records, banners, daisies...

**COOKING CONTEST (Cultural week)**

Envelope – Apron, hat, jury tag, cookbook, article...

**GRADUATION (End-of-year)**

Envelope – Quotes, flashcards, *Pomp and Circumstance* music (ask teacher for it)...

**ACTING OUT**

**RESTAURANT, YESTERDAY, DIRECTIONS & FASHION SHOW**

Envelope – Flashcards, article...

**DIDACTIC PLAYS**

Envelope – «La Tribu» theater group video (multilevel work), scripts, follow-up didactic work article...

**PAJAMA CLASS (Carnival)**

Envelope – Language-in-context worksheet, *Fairy Tales* video, *The World Sings Goodnight* – International lullabies (ask teacher for it)...

**ICE-CREAM PARLOR (End-of-year)**

Envelope – Invitation, certificate, cookbook, advertising, song, vocabulary exercise, tongue twisters, flashcards, readings...

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**ADAPTED MATERIALS**

Envelope – Flashcards: weather, prepositions, actions...

**PUBLISHING HOUSES**

Envelope - Flashcards: colors, animals, food, clothes, body parts, toys, family, classroom items, transportation, household...

**Note:**

If you have some visuals which you find interesting to share with your partners, please contact me, and bring them in next day. Thanks for your cooperation.

This worksheet on **Visual aids**, unlike the previous one on **Prompts**, when referring to each section also lists items, which are worth commenting now. Sometimes trainee students also found previous articles of mine in the envelopes and/or invitations to borrow materials. Those students interested in doing so, needed to remain in the classroom after class and sign up for that in a corresponding teacher-students worksheet. Materials were to be returned in the next session.

Both the **Visual aids** and the **Prompts** worksheets deliberately share the same ending: students were invited to take their own materials to class and share them. There was another student-to student worksheet ready for their own loans, and the same timing was applied. When we proceed in class as we do outside, we live in the foreign language what is being taught and learnt in class. We all help in approaching EFL teaching and learning to language acquisition, and most important, we wish to do it, because we all have the same goal as EFL teachers and learners: to communicate our life contents in English.