English for Specific Purposes for Students of Education

Course Material

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2012/2013

Introduction

Selecting the material for the course of *English for Specific Purposes for Students of Education*, I had in mind two main objectives:

- to provide linguistically challenging texts that will foster real development of my students' English language skills and knowledge, and thus prepare them to use English widely as a tool in developing their professional competences;
- to provide texts that will develop my students' critical thinking and reflective abilities, and thus shape the way they think about teaching and learning and about their classroom practices.

The texts cover authentic educational material taken from professional literature and downloaded from Internet sites.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to a few friends of mine, great teachers, teacher trainers and teacher educators from Finland (University of Helsinki), the United States of America (University of Maryland, Baltimore County) and Serbia, for inspiring my professional thinking (hence the choice of course material).

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Jagodina, September 2012

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Language facts

Retrieved from:
http://edl.ecml.at/Home/WhyaEuropeanDayofLanguages/tabid/1763/language/en-GB/Default.aspx

Did you know that...

01 There are between 6000 and 7000 languages in the world - spoken by six billion people divided into 189 independent states.

02 There are about 225 indigenous languages in Europe - roughly 3% of the world's total.

03 Most of the world's languages are spoken in Asia and Africa.

04 At least half of the world's population are bilingual or plurilingual, i.e. they speak two or more languages.

05 In their daily lives Europeans increasingly come across foreign languages. There is a need to generate a greater interest in languages among European citizens.

06 Many languages have 50,000 words or more, but individual speakers normally know and use only a fraction of the total vocabulary: in everyday conversation people use the same few hundred words.

07 Languages are constantly in contact with each other and affect each other in many ways: English borrowed words and expressions from many other languages in the past, European languages are now borrowing many words from English.

08 In its first year a baby utters a wide range of vocal sounds; at around one year the first understandable words are uttered; at around three years complex sentences are formed; at five years a child possesses several thousand words.

09 The mother tongue is usually the language one knows best and uses most. But there can be "perfect bilinguals" who speak two languages equally well. Normally, however, bilinguals display no perfect balance between their two languages.

10 Bilingualism brings with it many benefits: it makes the learning of additional languages easier, enhances the thinking process and fosters contacts with other people and their cultures.

11 Bilingualism and plurilingualism entail economic advantages, too: jobs are more easily available to those who speak several languages, and multilingual companies have a better competitive edge than monolingual ones.

12 Languages are related to each other like the members of a family. Most European languages belong to the large Indo-European family.

13 Most European languages belong to three broad groups: Germanic, Romance and Slavic.

14 The Germanic family of languages includes Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Icelandic, German, Dutch, English and Yiddish, among others.

15 The Romance languages include Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian, among others.

16 The Slavic languages include Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Slovenian, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian, Bulgarian and others.

17 Most European languages use the Latin alphabet. Some Slavic languages use the Cyrillic alphabet. Greek, Armenian, Georgian and Yiddish have their own alphabet.

18 Most countries in Europe have a number of regional or minority languages – some of these have obtained official status.

19 The non-European languages most widely used on European territory are Arabic, Chinese and Hindi, each with its own writing system.

20 Russia (148 million inhabitants) has by far the highest number of languages spoken on its territory: from 130 to 200 depending on the criteria.

21 Due to the influx of migrants and refugees, Europe has become largely multilingual. In London alone some 300 languages are spoken (Arabic, Turkish, Kurdish, Berber, Hindi, Punjabi, etc.).

Why a European Day of Languages?

Why a
European Day
of Languages?

There have never been more opportunities to work or study in a different European country - but lack of language competence prevents many people from taking advantage of them.

Globalisation and patterns of business ownership mean that citizens increasingly need foreign language skills to work effectively within their own countries. English alone is no longer enough.

Europe is rich in languages - there are over 200 European languages and many more spoken by citizens whose family origin is from other continents. This is an important resource to be recognised, used and cherished.

Language learning brings benefits to young and old - you are never too old to learn a language and to enjoy the opportunities it opens up. Even if you only know a few words of the language of the country that you visit (for example on holiday), this enables you to make new friends and contacts.

Learning other peoples' languages is a way of helping us to understand each other better and overcome our cultural differences.

Objectives

Language skills are a necessity and a right for EVERYONE – that is one of the main messages of the European Day of Languages.

The overall objectives are to raise awareness of:

- Europe's rich linguistic diversity, which must be preserved and enhanced;
- the need to diversify the range of languages people learn (to include less widely used languages), which results in plurilingualism;
- the need for people to develop some degree of proficiency in two languages or more to be able to play their full part in democratic citizenship in Europe.

… the Committee of Ministers decided to declare a European Day of Languages to be celebrated on 26th September each year. The Committee recommended that the Day be organised in a decentralised and flexible manner according to the wishes and resources of member states, which would thus enable them to better define their own approaches, and that the Council of Europe propose a common theme each year. The Committee of Ministers invites the European Union to join the Council of Europe in this initiative. It is to be hoped that the Day will be celebrated with the co-operation of all relevant partners.

Decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg (776th meeting – 6 December 2001)

The celebration of linguistic diversity

The human condition

Our planet has over six billion people who speak between 6 000 and 7 000 different languages. A few languages are spoken by hundreds of millions of speakers, such as English or Chinese, but most are spoken by only a few thousand, or just a handful of speakers. In fact, 96% of the world's languages are spoken by just 4% of the people. Europeans often feel their continent to have an exceptional number of languages, especially when compared to North America or Australia. Yet, only 3% of the world's total, some 225 languages, are indigenous to Europe. Most of the world's languages are spoken in a broad area on either side of the Equator - in southeast Asia, India, Africa, and South America. Many Europeans may think that a monolingual way of life is the norm. But between a half and two-thirds of the world's population is bilingual to some degree, and a significant number are plurilingual. Plurilingualism is much more the normal human condition than monolingualism. Diversity of languages and of cultures, as in the case of biodiversity, is increasingly being seen as a good and beautiful thing in itself. Each language has its own way of seeing the world and is the product of its own particular history. All languages have their individual identity and value, and all are equally adequate as modes of expression for the people who use them. We know from comparisons of the rates at which children learn to speak, that no language is intrinsically more difficult than any other language.

The structure of language

Language is an arbitrary system of sounds and symbols which is used for many purposes by a group of people, chiefly to communicate with each other, to express cultural identity, to convey social relationships, and to provide a source of delight (for example, in literature). Languages differ from each other in their sounds, grammar, vocabulary, and patterns of discourse. But all languages are highly complex entities. Languages vary in the number of their vowel and consonant sounds from less than a dozen to over a hundred. European languages tend to have inventories in the middle range – from around 25 such sounds (e.g. Spanish) to over 60 (e.g. Irish). Alphabets reflect these sounds with varying degrees of accuracy: some alphabets (e.g. Welsh) are very regular in the way they symbolise sounds; others (e.g. English) are very irregular. Within grammar, each language comprises several thousand points of word formation and sentence construction. Each language has a huge vocabulary available to meet the needs of its users – in the case of European languages, where scientific and technical vocabulary is very large, this reaches several hundred thousand words and phrases. Individual speakers know and use only a fraction of a language's total vocabulary. The words educated people use – their active vocabulary – can reach some 50,000 words; the words they know but do not use – their passive vocabulary – is somewhat larger. In everyday conversation, people often make use of a small number of words, but with great frequency. It has been estimated that a 21-year-old has already uttered some 50 million words. Living languages and cultures are constantly changing. People influence each other in the way they speak and write. New media, such as the Internet, give languages fresh opportunities to grow. Languages are always in contact with each other, and affect each other in many ways, especially by borrowing words. English, for example, has over the centuries borrowed from over 350 languages, and European languages are all currently borrowing many words from English.

Language acquisition

The task of learning the mother tongue is one which we accomplish essentially in the first five years of life, though certain features of language (such as vocabulary acquisition) continue indefinitely. Language develops through several stages. During the first year the baby makes a wide range of vocalisations, out of which emerge the rhythm and intonation patterns, and then the vowels and consonants. Around one year the first understandable words are uttered. During the second year two-word combinations follow, moving slowly to three- and four-word combinations. Three and four-year-olds use increasingly longer and complex sentences. Vocabulary grows from some 50 active words by 18 months to several thousand words by age five. The mother tongue is usually described as an individual's first learned or primary language. This is the language people know best, the language they use most, or the language with which they most closely identify. With some bilingual people, two languages have been learned so closely together that it is impossible to choose between them, in terms of "first" or "second" languages. With most bilinguals, however, the distinction is clearer, as the learning of a second or third language takes place in school or later in life. There is no absolute age limit beyond which it is impossible to learn another language. Bilingualism is a complex phenomenon. A common myth is that a bilingual person has two equally developed languages; in reality, bilinguals rarely display a balance between their two languages. Another myth is that all bilinguals are the same in their abilities; in reality, they display many kinds of bilingualism. Some sound like native speakers in both their languages; others have a strong foreign accent in one. Some can read well in both languages; others can do so only in one. Some

prefer to write in one language, but can only talk in another. Bilingualism brings all kinds of benefits. Being bilingual can enhance your chances of successfully learning other languages. Somehow, the learning of a third language is facilitated by the learning of a second. Bilinguals may also have some advantages in thinking: there is evidence that they make faster progress than monolinguals in certain areas of early cognitive development and are in many ways more creative in their linguistic skills. Bilinguals have the great advantage of being able to communicate with a wider variety of people. Because bilinguals have the opportunity of experiencing two or more cultures in an intimate way, their ability can lead to more sensitivity in communication and a readiness to overcome cultural barriers and to build cultural bridges. There are also important practical issues: bilinguals have a potential economic advantage because a larger number of jobs becomes available to them. It is also increasingly accepted that multilingual companies have a competitive edge over monolingual ones.

Language families

Languages are related to each other like the members of a family. Most of the languages of Europe can be grouped together, because of their common origins, as a single, large Indo-European language family. The families in Europe with the most member-languages and the most speakers are the Germanic, Romance, and Slavic. The Germanic language family has a northern branch with Danish, Norwegian, Swedish, Icelandic and Faroese, as well as a western branch with German, Dutch, Frisian, English and Yiddish as its members. The Romance language family has as its members Romanian, Italian, Corsican, Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan, Occitan, French, Romansh, Ladin and Sardinian. To the Slavic language family belong languages such as Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Polish, Sorbian, Czech, Slovak, Slovenian, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian and Bulgarian. Within the Celtic family are Irish, Scots Gaelic, Welsh, and Breton, with revival movements under way for Cornish and Manx. To the Baltic family belong Latvian and Lithuanian. Separate families with only one member are Greek, Albanian and Armenian. Basque is an exceptional case, because it does not belong to the Indo-European family and its origins are unknown. Other language families also have members in Europe. In the North we find the Uralic languages: Finnish, Estonian, Hungarian, several Sámi languages, as well as other small languages in the northern parts of the Russian Federation such as Ingrian or Karelian. In the Southeast we find representatives of the Altaic language family, notably Turkish and Azerbaijani. The Caucasian family is spoken in a relatively small and compact area between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea, and comprises also about 40 members, among them Georgian, and Abkhaz. The Afro-Asiatic family includes Maltese, Hebrew and Berber. All these languages use a small number of alphabetic scripts. Most languages use the Roman (or Latin) alphabet. Russian and some other Slavic languages use Cyrillic. Greek, Yiddish, Armenian and Georgian each have their own script. Non- European languages widely used on European territory include Arabic, Chinese and Hindi, each with its own writing system.

The languages of Europe

Estimates vary but there are about 225 spoken indigenous languages. The five languages spoken by most people in Europe are, by number of mother tongue speakers, Russian, German, English, French and Italian. But most European countries operate routinely with several languages. The 49 states parties to the European Cultural Convention have 41 official or national languages and many accord special status to other languages. Most countries have a number of

traditionally spoken minority or regional languages. The Russian Federation has by far the highest number of languages spoken on its territory; the number varies from 130 to 200 depending on the criteria. Some regional and minority languages have obtained official status, for example, Basque, Catalan and Galician in the regions of Spain in which they are spoken. Welsh has protective language rights in the United Kingdom, as does Frisian in the Netherlands and the Sámi languages in Norway, Sweden and Finland. Due to the influx of migrants and refugees from all over the world, Europe has become increasingly multilingual. London, for example, has more than 300 languages spoken as a home language. Most other larger cities, particularly in western Europe, easily have 100-200 languages spoken as mother tongues by their school populations. The most common languages include Arabic, Berber Turkish, Kurdish, Hindi, Punjabi, and Chinese. However, many of these languages are spoken by small minorities, and their future is under threat. Daily, informal, oral interaction between parents and children is crucial to the survival of a language. Experts have estimated that over this century at least half of the world's languages, and perhaps more, will die out. Within two generations all traces of a language can disappear when children are no longer raised in it. The reasons for giving up a language are manifold, and include the physical destruction (through environmental crisis and disease) of a community or its habitat, active antagonism by political groups, and – the commonest cause - economic and cultural domination by more powerful and prestigious languages. But whatever the reason, the result is the same: the loss to humanity of a unique resource. Through the work of the Council of Europe, two important international instruments came into force in 1998. The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages is in force in 22* member states; the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities which includes some provisions for minority languages, is in force in 39* member states. These treaties are important in protecting and promoting the linguistic wealth of Europe. (* ratifications in 2007) At the beginning of the 21st century all European citizens live in a multilingual environment. In their daily lives citizens come across many different languages, for example on a bus or a train, through TV, radio or newspapers, or the ingredients on a product in the supermarket. There is a need to increase popular knowledge and understanding of the diversity of the languages of Europe, and of the factors affecting their maintenance and growth. There is a need to generate a greater interest in and curiosity about languages. There is a need to enhance linguistic tolerance within and between nations. These were just some of the aims of the European Year of Languages 2001 which was organised by the Council of Europe and the European Union. On the eve of the closing event of the Year, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe decided to declare the European Day of Languages to be celebrated on 26th September each year, with similar objectives.

The Place of English

Although English is not the language with the largest number of native language speakers, it has become a **lingua franca**. A lingua franca can be defined as a language widely adopted for communication between two speakers whose native languages are different from each other's and where one or both speakers are using it as a 'second' language. Like Latin in Europe in the Middle Ages, English seems to be one of the main languages of international communication, and even people who are not speakers of English often know words such as *bank, chocolate, computer, hotel, television, taxi, telephone*, *university* and *walkman*. Many of these words have themselves been borrowed by English from other

languages of course (e.g. *chocolate*, *taxi*, etc.), and speakers of Romance languages are likely to have a number of words in common with English.

Whatever the spread of English across the globe and whatever its overlapping with other languages, there has been a debate over the years as to how many people speak English as either a 'first' or a 'second' language. David Crystal (1995 and 1997) takes 75 territories where English 'holds a special place' (territories which include not only Britain, the USA, Australia, Canada, etc. but also places such as Hong Kong, India, Malaysia and Nigeria) and calculates around 377 million first language speakers of English and only 98 million speakers of English as a second language. However, he points out that it would be easy to get nearer a total of 350 million for second language speakers if we were able to calculate how many speakers of English as a second language there were in, say, Canada or Australia, or in countries like Pakistan or Nigeria. It seems to be the case, therefore, that anywhere between 600-700 million people in the world speak English, and of that huge number, a significant minority speak it as a second language.

It is not necessarily the case that English will remain dominant among world languages. However, there is no doubt that it is and will remain a vital linguistic tool for many business people, academics, tourists and citizens of the world who wish to communicate easily across nationalities for the years to come.

(Reference: *The Practice of English Language Teaching*, by Jeremy Harmer, 2003)

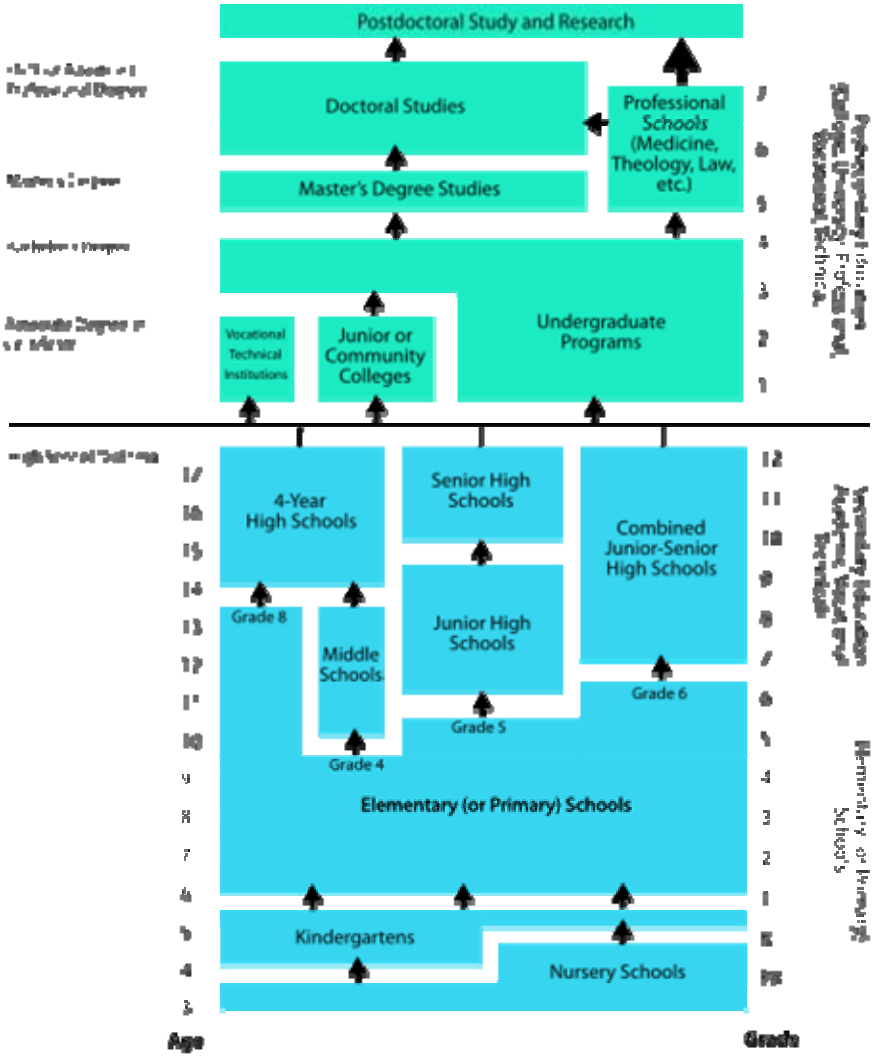
Task: Describe the role of English in the world today.

Education in the United States

Elementary school	
Preschool	4–5
Kindergarten	5–6
1st Grade	6–7
2nd Grade	7–8
3rd Grade	8–9
4th Grade	9–10
5th Grade	10-11
Middle school	
6th Grade	11–12
7th Grade	12–13
8th Grade	13–14
High school	
9th Grade (Freshman)	14-15

10th Grade (Sophomore)	15-16
11th Grade (Junior)	16-17
12th Grade (Senior)	17-18
Post-secondary education	
Tertiary education (College or University)	Ages vary, but often 18–23 (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior years)
Vocational education	Ages vary
Graduate education	Ages vary
Adult education	Ages vary

Task: Create a chart or a grid with facts related to the Serbian system of education.



Introduction to Education in England

Education is important in England. English children are required to attend school until they are 16 years old. Education is free for all children from 5 to 18. About 94 per cent of pupils in the UK receive free education from public funds, while 6 per cent attend independent fee paying schools. All government-run schools, state schools, follow the same *National Curriculum*

The School Year
The school year is 39 weeks long and is divided into six terms:

September to October	February to March
October to December	April to May
January to February	June to July

The main school holidays are:
Christmas- 2 weeks
Spring - 2 weeks
Summer - 6 weeks
Children have a one week holiday at the end of every odd numbered term.

When do kids start school?
In general, children start school on the first day of term after they turn 5. At the age of 11, they move on to regular high schools, known as secondary schools.

When do kids finish school?
English children are required to attend school until they are **16 years old**. At the age of 16, students write an examination called the GCSE (General Certificate of Secondary Education). All students are tested in mathematics, English literature, English composition, chemistry, biology, physics, history or the Classics, one modern language, and one other subject, such as art or computer studies. After completing the GCSE, some students leave school, others go onto technical college, whilst others continue at high school for two more years and take a further set of standardized exams, known as A levels, in three or four subjects. These exams determine whether a student is eligible for university.

Education stages:
Children's education in England is normally divided into two separate stages. They begin with primary education at the age of five and this usually lasts until they are eleven. Then they move to secondary school, there they stay until they reach sixteen, seventeen or eighteen years of age.

What subjects do children learn at school?
All children aged from 5 - 16 are taught the National Curriculum. The main aim of the National Curriculum is to raise standards, making sure all children have a broad and balanced education up to the age of 16 and to ensure that schools in all parts of the country are following the same courses. The National Curriculum specifies what children must study and what they are expected to know at different ages.

The National Curriculum is made up of the following subjects:
English (speaking, listening, reading and writing.),
Mathematics,
Religious Education,
Science Design and Technology,
Information and Communication Technology (Computers),
History,
Geography,
Music,
Art,
Physical Education (PE)
and a modern foreign language e.g. French or German.

(Taken from www.woodlands-junior kent.sch.UK)

Education and training in Finland

The main aim of the Finnish education system is to ensure that the entire population has access to education and training. The principle of lifelong learning, the idea that people are always capable of learning new things at all stages of life, is an important principle for all education provision, from basic schooling to adult education. In 1998, public spending on education accounted for 6.2 per cent of GDP in Finland (against an OECD average of 5.3 per cent). Finnish people have a high standard of education. Young people, in particular, have been rated very highly in international comparisons. The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which evaluates the educational achievement of children of school age in the OECD countries, placed Finland among the top countries in 2001.

Pre-school teaching

The Finnish school system does not have any actual pre-schools, but pre-school teaching is provided at schools and daycare centres. Pre-school teaching means education provided in the year before children start comprehensive school. The aim is to improve children's capacity for learning. In practice, children are taught new facts and new skills through play. There is legislation which requires all municipalities to provide pre-school teaching free of charge to all children aged six, but participation in such teaching is voluntary. Most six-year-olds now go to pre-school.

Comprehensive school

Compulsory education in Finland really starts with comprehensive school, which generally starts in the year children turn seven. Comprehensive school lasts for nine years and ends once a young person has completed the curriculum of the comprehensive school or when ten years have passed since the start of their compulsory education. Children who are permanently resident in Finland - and that includes children of other nationalities - are required by law to complete the curriculum of compulsory education. This can be done by attending comprehensive school or by acquiring the equivalent education by other means. This means that compulsory school attendance does not actually exist in Finland. The principle of compulsory education, however, has been in force for almost as long as Finland has been an independent country; Finland gained its independence in 1917 and general compulsory education came into effect in 1921. The legislation on basic education currently in force dates from 1998.

It is the municipalities' responsibility to arrange basic education. There are about 450 municipalities in Finland, and each of them is responsible for providing education for all their children, or for ensuring that education is available to all children of school age. The law states that basic education is free of charge. This means that, in addition to teaching and school attendance, school books and other materials are also free. School pupils also receive one hot meal a day free of charge. The law also states that basic education must be provided near home. The arrangement and cost of school journeys longer than five kilometres are the responsibility of the municipality.

There is no actual graduation certificate or qualification to be gained upon completing comprehensive school, but once one's compulsory education is over, it

opens the way to all secondary education options, i.e. different types of vocational training or upper secondary school.

There are about 4,000 comprehensive schools in Finland. Every autumn, some 60,000 children start the first grade and in 2002, there were altogether about 580,000 comprehensive school pupils in Finland.

For the first six years of comprehensive school, the children are taught by a class teacher, who generally teaches all or at least most subjects. Then, during the last three years of comprehensive school, the different subjects are taught by specialized subject teachers. It has been made a general aim of basic education in Finland to encourage pupils to become well-adjusted and ethically responsible members of society. Comprehensive school places a special emphasis on teaching pupils the facts and skills they will need later in life as members of society. Pupils suffering from learning disabilities are entitled to special teaching under the law.

The subjects in comprehensive school are the mother tongue (i.e. Finnish or Swedish), the other national language (i.e. Swedish or Finnish), foreign languages, mathematics, physics, chemistry, history, social studies, physical education, music, visual arts, crafts, home economics, religion or ethics, biology, geography and environmental studies. In addition, pupils in the different grades can choose certain special subjects, depending on their own interests. The Finnish education system has achieved very favourable results in international comparisons. For instance, the reading skills of Finnish school pupils are among the best in the world.

The comprehensive school year consists of 190 school days. Finnish schools close in spring at the end of May or beginning of June, when the pupils' summer holiday begins. The school year usually starts again in the middle of August. During the year, there are also certain specific school holidays: an autumn break, Christmas break, and a one-week 'ski holiday' in February/March.

After comprehensive school

After comprehensive school ends, young people face an important choice: whether to continue in general education, i.e. upper secondary school, or to apply for vocational education.

Upper secondary school

Upper secondary school is mainly intended for students aged 16-19. The schools select their own pupils, based on their comprehensive school grades. It takes from two to four years to complete upper secondary school, but the pace of study and the progress made is very individual. Studies are divided into courses, and the choice of courses partly determines the progress that a student makes. Due to the course-based system, there are no year-classes in upper secondary school. The subjects taught include various compulsory studies, advanced studies and practical studies.

Upper secondary school ends with the matriculation exam, which is a nationwide final assessment. The exam comprises four compulsory test subjects: the pupil's mother tongue (Finnish or Swedish), the other national language (Swedish or Finnish), a foreign language and either mathematics or general studies test. In the general studies test, the student may choose the questions to answer from among several subjects: biology, geography, chemistry, physics, history and social

studies, religion, ethics, philosophy or psychology. In addition to these compulsory tests, the student may also take extra subjects. Language tests consist of two parts: listening comprehension and a written test. The structure of the matriculation exam is to be reviewed at some point in the next few years. The exam is drawn up each year by the Matriculation Examination Board, which answers to the Ministry of Education. The Board also grades the tests of all students, using uniform criteria. Matriculation exam graduation parties are held each spring and autumn, when the students who matriculate receive a special white cap as a sign that they have graduated.

Young people who have completed upper secondary school have the option of going on to any form of higher education. In fact, the primary function of upper secondary school studies is to help young people to enter higher education. More than half of each year-class now completes upper secondary school in Finland. Upper secondary school can also be completed later in life, through adult education.

Higher education

Higher education system consists of universities and polytechnics. The Finnish higher education system is made up of two parallel sectors: universities and polytechnics. The universities rely on the connection between research and teaching. Their basic purpose is to perform scientific research and to provide higher education connected with it. Students at universities may take a lower (Bachelor's) or higher (Master's) academic degree and also academic further education, consisting of licentiate and doctoral degree. Universities also arrange further education and open university teaching.

The polytechnics are usually regional higher education institutions which provide instruction in subjects from several sectors, and which emphasize a connection with working life. The degrees they provide are higher education degrees with a professional emphasis. There are universities and polytechnics all over Finland, and the ultimate aim is to ensure that all prospective students have equal opportunities for study, regardless of where they live.

Universities

The universities represent the oldest educational tradition in Finland. The first university, The Royal Academy of Turku was founded in 1640. Their operations are still based on academic freedom and individual autonomy. Autonomy means that the universities have considerable freedom and independence in making their own decisions. The universities and their faculties decide on the regulations applying to their degrees and on their own curriculums. They also decide how many students to admit each year to study the various subjects they teach. There are 20 universities in Finland, all of which are owned and largely funded by the Finnish government. University studies are available to all, in principle, as Finnish universities do not charge term fees.

According to the legal definition, it is the purpose of the universities to promote free academic research and scientific and cultural education, and to provide higher education based on research and scholarship. They are required to arrange their operations so as to attain a high international standard of research, education and instruction, whilst abiding by ethical principles and good scientific practice.

The universities choose their students themselves through entrance exams. There are starting places at university for about one third of each age class. The biggest sectors are technology, arts and humanities and the natural sciences. It generally takes three years to complete a lower academic degree (Bachelor's: 120 credits) and about five to six years to complete a higher degree (Master's: 160-180 credits).

In 2000, there were about 150,000 degree students at Finnish universities, including about 3,700 foreign students. The network of Finnish universities covers the entire country, even Lapland. Finland has 10 multidisciplinary universities, 3 technical universities, 3 schools of economics and business administration and 4 arts universities. In addition to these, there is the National Defence College, which lies outside the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and provides higher education in the military and defence sector.

(Retrieved from www.virtualfinland; 2007, Virtual Finland. Produced by: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland Department for Communication and Culture/Unit for Publications and Finland Promotion)

Task: Compare the three systems of education described in the texts with the Serbian system od education.

Basic Principles of Teaching Young Learners

By Joan Kan Shin, 2012 (adapted)

Outline

- The characteristics of young learners
- How children learn

Characteristics of Young Learners

First, let's look at the characteristics of young learners. Actually how a primary school teacher describes his or her students can depend on the day. On a good day he or she might say young learners are fun, social, curious, energetic, and spontaneous. On a bad day she may say they are loud, hyper, can't sit still, too talkative, and easily distracted. These are two different interpretations of the same characteristics of young learners that most teachers and researchers agree upon.

All of these characteristics can make teaching young learners exciting and inspiring; however, the same characteristics can present challenges for teachers who may have anywhere between 15 to 50 students in one classroom.

How do children learn?

There are 3 major educational theorists that will help lay our foundation for teaching young learners.

- Children are active learners and thinkers. (Piaget, 1970)

• First, is Piaget. For Piaget, children are active learners and thinkers. They actively try to make sense of the world and construct knowledge from interacting with the physical environment in developmental stages. They learn by doing, through their own individual actions and exploration. For example a young child does not learn the meaning of a door by listening to a definition of a door or having someone explain the function of a door. A child learns what a door is by opening and closing the door, again and again. They may slam the door in your face and laugh as they learn that the door separates two rooms.

- Children learn through social interaction. (Vygotsky, 1962)
    - For Vygotsky, children learn through social interaction. The child is an active learner and thinker but constructs knowledge from other people, particularly through action with adults or more competent peers. Adults work actively with children in the Zone of Proximal Development or ZPD which is the difference between the child's capacity to solve problems on his own and his capacity to solve them with assistance or scaffolding.
- Children learn effectively through scaffolding by adults. (Bruner, 1983)
    - Bruner also emphasized the importance of the adult's role in a child's learning process. Like Vygotsky, Bruner focuses on the importance of language in a child's cognitive development. He shows how the adult uses "scaffolding" to guide a child's learning.

What is scaffolding?

Before we move on, you may be wondering what "scaffolding" is. Usually the term is used to describe the support structure needed to construct a building. As a teacher, we have to provide this scaffolding to our students in order to help them construct knowledge or learn language effectively. Then they will be able to build their knowledge and skills.

Effective scaffolding

According to studies conducted by Bruner, parents who scaffolded a child's learning effectively did the following:

- They created interest in the task. The underlying assumption here is that the task is indeed interesting. It is always important to prepare activities that are fun, interesting, and relevant to your young learners.

- They broke the task down into smaller steps and simplified it. It is important to set your learners up for success. Try to break your activities down into smaller steps.

- They kept the child "on task" towards completing the task by reminding the child of what the purpose or goal was. The expression "on task" is often used by U.S. teachers to indicate that a learner is engaged in a particular activity and working productively toward accomplishing the task. In this case, there is another assumption that we are making - that there is indeed a purpose or goal in the task. If your activity does not have a real purpose,

then your young learners will have a hard time understanding why they are doing the activity in the first place.

- They modeled the task or demonstrated an idealized version of the task. Always remember to model the task and show students what your expectations are. Particularly with language learning, if students are not given proper models to follow, it is not reasonable to expect them to perform at the desired level. In addition to giving clear models, it is important to consider that students learn in different ways; therefore, your modeling should reflect what you know about your learners and the various ways that they can accomplish a particular task. This means considering and incorporating different learning styles and multiple intelligences into instruction to help students who learn differently learn successfully. You will learn more about different learning styles, like visual, auditory, and kinesthetic, and Gardner's multiple intelligences in a future unit.

- They controlled the child's frustration during the task. Sometimes young learners can get frustrated with a task. The first step is to alleviate a student's frustration by taking a closer look at what is upsetting the child. Don't automatically assume that the child has a problem. Your first thought should be that the task might be too difficult. See if other students are having the same issue. Then review your planning and see where your scaffolding may need to be altered. This probably means you did not break down the tasks into small enough steps. Or maybe you haven't catered to all of students' learning styles or intelligences. However, it may not be possible to change the activity at the moment, so the teacher needs know how to alleviate frustration on the spot. Young learners usually respond well to attention, encouragement, and praise.

Learner Characteristics

Learner characteristics are differences between learners which influence their attitude to learning a language and how they learn it. These differences influence how they respond to different teaching styles and approaches in the classroom, and how successful they are at learning a language. The differences include a learner's motivation, personality, language level, learning style, learning strategies, age and past language learning experience.
Can you think of how the ways in which you like to learn, how you have learnt in the past and your age might influence how you prefer to learn a language?

Learning styles
Learning styles are the ways in which a learner naturally prefers to take in, process and remember information and skills. Our learning style influences how we like to learn and how we learn. Experts have suggested several different ways of classifying learning styles. They relate to the physical sense we prefer to use to learn, our way of interacting with other people and our style of thinking. Here are some commonly mentioned learning styles; match them with the right descriptions:

visual	the learner learns best through working alone

auditory	the learner learns best when able to respond immediately
kinaesthetic	the learner learns best when given time to consider choices
group	the learner learns best through seeing
individual	the learner learns best through working with others
reflective	the learner learns best through hearing
impulsive	the learner learns best through using the body

You can see from these descriptions how learners with different learning styles learn in different ways, and need to be taught in different ways. We must remember though, that learners may not fall exactly into one category of learning style, that different cultures may use some learning styles more than others and that learners may change or develop their learning styles.

Maturity

Maturity involves becoming grown up physically, mentally and emotionally. Children, teenagers and adults have different learning characteristics and therefore learn in different ways. Here are some of the main differences in maturity that influence language learning:

Children	Teenagers	Adults
Need to move	Starting to keep still for longer periods but still need to move	Able to keep still for longer periods
Can concentrate for shorter periods	Concentration developing	Can concentrate for longer periods
Learn through experience	Beginning to learn in abstract ways, i.e. through thinking, as well as experiencing	Learn in more abstract ways
Are not very able to control and plan their own behaviour	Beginning to control and plan their own behaviour	Usually able to control and plan their own behaviour
Are not afraid of making mistakes or taking risks	May worry about what others think of them or take risks	Not so willing to make mistakes
Are not aware of themselves and/or their actions	Sometimes uncomfortably aware ofthemselves and/or their actions	Aware of themselves and/or their actions
Pay attention to meaning in language	Pay attention to meaning and increasingly to form	Pay attention to form and meaning in language
Have limited experience of life	Beginning to increase their experience of life	Have experience of life

Of course, every learner is different, so someone may not fit exactly into these descriptions. They are generalizations that show likely, but not fixed, characteristics. But from looking at these differences we can see that each age group needs to be taught in different ways.

Reference: Spratt, Mary et al. (2005): *The Teaching Knowledge Test Cours*e. Cambridge: CUP.

Task: Describe children as learners.

How to be a boring teacher

By Luke Prodromou; in Guru, A. (1999). *A Complete Guide to BTM* Boring University Press.

When I started out to teach English as a foreign language, I fell under the influence of a remarkable teacher. Before sitting at his feet I had read all his books and they made a deep impression on me. They shaped the way I saw not only English language teaching, but life itself. Imagine my excitement when I discovered that my guru was coming to town to give the opening plenary at our annual conference of English teachers. I secured a place in the front row of the huge auditorium and watched spellbound as my hero stepped onto the podium. He took one sapient look at the audience, invitations to parties becoming few and far between? Do you wish you too were an exciting, scintillating, magnetic teacher, whom students worship and give Christmas presents to? If you answered 'yes' to all of these questions then you will not need to attend the following crash course in How to be a Boring Teacher.

- **Let students do nothing**

That's right. Do all the work yourself. Take the register yourself. Explain what you did the previous lesson yourself. Read out the text from the coursebook yourself. Read out the comprehension questions from the book yourself.

- **Teach the book**

Start from page one and go straight through to the last page of the textbook. Lesson after lesson. Unit after unit. Do not by any means introduce any extraneous material into the lesson. Remember: the textbook is your Bible. It is not to be tampered with, questioned or rewritten. It is complete and self-contained, in no need of supplementation. After all, what kind of religious freak would write his or her own Bible? Textbook writers are omniscient; they know everything. You are benighted; you know nothing (Socrates). And your students don't know nothing neither (Bob Dylan).

- **Be right all the time**

Armed with the infallible textbook, there is no excuse for not being right all the time. You have all the answers and you correct all the mistakes. Let no-one infringe on your right to be right. Remember the aim of all good teaching was and is to demonstrate to the learner what he or she does *not* know. To confront them, as it were, with deserts of ignorance. This will produce in them a thirst for knowledge, which only you can quench (with the help of a good teacher's book which gives all the correct answers so you don't have to think too hard). Your power lies in your possession of the right answer, and its revelation to erring students. Be a TEFL fundamentalist and you will never go wrong. A word of advice: when students commit errors or make mistakes, jump on them (the mistakes, not the students).

- **Assume students know nothing**

Explain everything in full laborious detail. Do not assume the students have done any English before, or have heard of English grammar. Do not by any means draw on their experience of life, their knowledge of the world or other school subjects. Your students are a blank sheet of paper, or as Locke said, 'tabula rasa'. You're a

full vessel, they are empty vessels. This explains why you may find them a bit noisy at times; the emptier your students are, the more noise they will make. This is known as having a discipline problem. It is nothing to be alarmed about. All boring teachers have one; so ensure you have stern disciplinary measures in reserve. Do not let yourself be deceived into indulging in permissive modern methods such as eliciting. Rest assured that in some teaching contexts eliciting in class is frowned upon as time- wasting and even immoral. When beginning a new listening or reading text, go straight into it. Do not shillyshally around asking students what they might or might not know about the subject they are going to listen to or read. Do not procrastinate. Remember the English proverb: he or she who hesitates is lost. So get on with it.

o **Sit still**

Before you can achieve any of the above basic principles of BTM you need to appreciate the importance of body language, so make yourself comfortable at your desk at the front of the class and stay put. This is called 'ensconcing yourself' and it is quite easy to learn. Do not stand up if you can possibly avoid it. And do not fidget. Your place is in your chair, not wandering aimlessly round the room, standing in this corner or that.

Students should know where to find you when they want to speak (to each other - or cheat in a test). You shouldn't be popping up unpredictably in odd places in the classroom. Some very unconventional teachers have been known to stand at the back of the room where all they can see is the back of students' heads. In some extreme cases, they have even been known to stand on the desk itself. Such behaviour reminds one of the worst excesses of the French Revolution (Wilde).

• Be predictable

It emerges naturally from what has been said above that you should in all things, wherever possible, try and be predictable. You should have a fixed routine for doing everything so students know exactly what is coming. Your lesson should have a beginning, a middle and an end, in that order, not as in some new-fangled methods beginning with the end and going backwards. Always begin with 'Presentation': always follow this with 'Practice' and always finish with 'Production'. That is why the letters 'PPP' appear in that order! Stick to PPP and you will never come unstuck.

- **Speak in a monotone**

You should not vary the pitch in your voice if you can possibly help it. You should try to achieve the most tedious monotone your vocal cords are capable of producing. Say everything in the same dull way. Do not distinguish between explanations and questions, instructions and asides, the beginning or the end of your discourse, the serious bits and the funny bits, the important and the trivial (not that you will have many funny or trivial bits). All of your utterances, whatever their function, must sound the same. God gave you one voice - you should not make yourself another *(Hamlet).*

- **Make sure students are idle**

Whatever else you do, watch your timing. Do not expect that students might finish an exercise at different times and do not have any activities in reserve for early finishers. Early finishers, like the mixed-ability ideology which has given rise to this pernicious concept, is a figment of teacher trainers' vivid imagination. They too have to make a living. All classes are of the same level and all students work at the same pace, in the same way. If by any chance some learners do finish a task early do not burden them with extra exercises or tasks. Give them a chance to relax and see what's going on outside the window or in the room next door. Do not be a tyrant: students should be left alone now and then so they can chat idly to their neighbour, preferably in their own language. This is the time for the mother tongue, rather than during the lesson *per se.* After all, why should students have to speak a foreign language all the time? Remember, they have a language and culture of their own, which can help fill any unexpected gaps in the lesson. So: hands off those early finishers; hands off the mother tongue.

- **Lose your students**

This strategy does not refer to the annual trip to Britain to see the sights, Big Ben, Madame Tussauds, and whatnot. The truly boring teacher never agrees to trips of any kind, long or short. The boring teacher's private life is his or her own - he or she should not be expected to squander it in the company of students, who no doubt have their own private lives. No. Losing your students means making sure students do not know what it is you're talking about. In no circumstances should you pause to check that they are still with you. If they have not understood, that is their problem, not yours. Do not speak slowly to ensure all students are following: if they can't stand the heat, they should get out of the kitchen (George Bush).

- **Keep talking**

Related to the previous point is the very important principle of keeping the flow of teacher talk going non-stop. If you are not fluent, who is? And how on earth are students going to develop fluency if they do not have a good model to imitate? Remember, as Pavlov said, *'Imitation is the mother of learning.'* and as Skinner added, *'Parrots learn best'.* So keep talking and never be at a loss for words.

Three Kinds of Teacher

There are three broadly different categories of teacher. Label the following descriptions using the following headings: Enabler, Explainer or Involver.

1. _____

Many teachers know their subject matter very well, but have limited knowledge of teaching methodology. This kind of teacher relies mainly on 'explaining' or 'lecturing' as a way of conveying information to the students. Done with style or enthusiasm or wit or imagination this teacher's lessons can be very entertaining, interesting and informative. The students are listening, perhaps occasionally answering questions and perhaps making notes, but are mostly not being personally involved or challenged. The learners often get practice by doing individual exercises after one phase of the lecture has finished.

2. _____

This teacher also knows the subject matter that is being dealt with. However, she is also familiar with teaching methodology: she is able to use appropriate teaching and organizational procedures and techniques to help her students learn about the subject matter. 'Teacher explanations' may be one of these techniques, but in her case it is only one option among many that she has at her disposal. This teacher is trying to involve the students actively and puts a great deal of effort into finding appropriate and interesting activities that will do this, while still retaining clear control over the classroom and what happens in it.

3. _____

Essentially teaching is about working with other human beings. This teacher knows about a subject matter and about methodology, but also has an awareness of how individuals and groups are thinking and feeling within her class. She actively responds to this in her planning and working methods and in building effective working relationships and a good classroom atmosphere. Her own personality and attitude are an active encouragement to learning.

This kind of teacher is confident enough to share control with the learners, or to hand it over entirely to them. Decisions made in her classroom may often be shared or negotiated. In many cases she takes her lead from the students, seeing herself as someone whose job is to create the conditions that enable the students

to learn for themselves. Sometimes this will involve her in less traditional 'teaching'; she may become a 'guide' or a 'counsellor' or a 'resource of information when needed'. Sometimes, when the class is working well under its own steam, when a lot of autonomous learning is going on, she may be hardly visible.

These three descriptions of teachers are, of course, very broadly painted. There is no way to categorize all teaching under three headings; many teachers will find elements of each category that are true for them, or that they move between categories depending on the day and the class and the aims of a lesson. However, this simple categorization may help you to reflect on what kind of teaching you have mostly experienced in your life so far and may also help you to clarify what kind of teacher you see yourself as being now or in the future. On teacher training courses I have come across many participants whose initial image of a teacher is based on the 'explainer' but who are keen to move to becoming an 'involver'.

In the following list we have noted a number of factors in a teacher that might positively affect the learning atmosphere in a classroom.
The effective teacher …

- Really listens to his students
- Shows respect
- Gives clear, positive feedback
- Has a good sense of humour
- Is patient
- Knows his subject
- Inspires confidence
- Trusts people
- Empathizes with students' problems
- Is well-organized
- Paces lessons well
- Does not complicate things unnecessarily
- Is enthusiastic and inspires enthusiasm
- Can be authoritative without being distant
- Is honest
- Is approachable.

Carl Rogers, an American Psychologist, suggested that there are three core teacher characteristics that help to create an effective learning environment. These are

RESPECT = a positive and non judgmental regard for another person

EMPATHY = being able to see things from the other person's perspective, as if looking through their eyes, and

AUTHENTICITY = being oneself without hiding behind job titles, roles or masks.

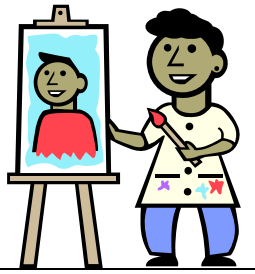
Carl Rogers considered that, out of these three teacher characteristics, authenticity was the most important. To be yourself. Not to play the role of a teacher – but to take the risk of being vulnerable and human and honest.

In order to improve the quality of our own relationship in the classroom we do not need to learn new techniques; we need to look closely at what we really want for our students, how we really feel about them. It is our attitude and intentions rather than our methodology that we may need to work on.

Reference: Jim Scrivener (1994). *Learning Teaching* . Oxford: Heinemann.

Task: What makes an effective teacher?

Doing Science in Different Ways



Decision Making	Let children make more decisions about their investigations. Let them choose what they would like to find out, or how they will carry out their tests or even choose their own equipment. Mistakes are really important. Let them make them!
Cross Curricular links	Make as many as possible in as many subjects as possible, but especially in Literacy/Numeracy and ICT. You can't beat great planning and teaching to ensure fantastic learning!
VAK	Help children by catering for all preferred learning styles. Make lessons or Booster groups appeal to all by providing visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning opportunities.
Investigations	Don't underestimate the importance of investigating. <u>At least</u> half of your Science work should be practical. Try to include examples of all kinds of Investigations - fair testing, surveys, reference, observation, problem solving and classification. Ensure you cover all aspects of carrying out investigations – planning, predicting, questioning, recording and interpreting results/data and evaluating/analysing. Use real life scenarios, cross curricular links and fun to make the lessons memorable.
Emails	Set up a fictional character for the children to email explaining a scientific concept
Advertisements	Get children to create advertisements related to any science topic
Newspaper articles	Children can write newspaper articles claiming new inventions/discoveries.
Poems	Poems and poetry can be used as a great starting point for a topic or to reinforce understanding and skills
Post-it Planners	Use post it planners to teach children the skills of fair testing and to ensure children can make their own judgements and decisions
Sequenced sentences	Make jumbled up sentence cards – can children un-jumble them?
Science fiction stories	Children love writing science fiction, especially based upon the Earth, Sun and Moon
Cartoons	Some children find it helps them to draw cartoons in order to help them remember scientific concepts
Drama	Acting out concepts such as the flow of electricity can really help

	children remember
Displays	Get the children involved in making their own classroom displays. Always ensure you have the associated vocabulary displayed for each topic you teach as well as the usual Sc1 vocabulary.
Graphs	Don't forget to use lots of graphing – drawing and interpreting. Even in KS1 the children can cope with using graphs especially if they are exciting like human graphs or whole class graphs.
Instructions	Ask children to write sets of instructions – this is ideal for many areas of Science
Leaflets	Making leaflets really helps children to demonstrate their own knowledge and gives their written work a purpose
Glossaries	Get children to create their own glossaries throughout a year or even over the whole of a key stage. They can write their own definitions to help them remember those tricky scientific words
Diagrams	Ask children to draw diagrams to show their understanding or if they find recording in writing tricky.
Posters	Posters are a great way for children to share their knowledge and understanding of a topic – can be a really useful assessment tool.
Photographs	Take lots of photographs of the children doing practical science – it will really help them to remember what they did and what they found out.
Bullet points	Record important information using note-taking techniques
Collage	Make collage to demonstrate aspects of science. In fact any aspect of art work can be a great way for children to express their understanding.
Talk partners	Talking and explaining things to each other is one of the best ways of improving understanding and retention rate. 80% of what we teach another person is retained up to two weeks later!
Talk groups	As above – it's good to talk! Especially for children for whom English is an additional language.
Human graphs	Get the children to make human graphs – ask your Science coordinator to show you how!
Brainstorms	Brilliant for start of topic and to add to at the end. Super way of remembering things and assessing understanding
Class Book	Make a class book full of photos, large pieces of work, posters, leaflets, word banks, etc.
Letters	Write letters to children to ask them to solve scientific problems Get them to write their results/recommendations back as a letter
Reports	Report writing is the perfect way of recording science. Also a fun idea is get children to write reports on different aspects of science so you can check their understanding.
Look, cover, write check	This technique is good for spellings, diagrams, flow charts, lists of facts and a whole lot more. Give children scientific words to learn and test them on their spelling AND understanding by just giving them the definition during the test.
Stories	Use fact to write fiction, or simply just have science based writing ideas.
Labels/Cards	Get children to write facts to remember on labels or cards – these are great used in plenaries as a way of the children testing each other

Sequenced pictures	Get children to sequence pictures related to a science topic
Models	Can children construct scientific models, e.g to show the concept of gravity, or the position of the Earth, Sun and Moon
Video	Get children to video their practical work or to make videos about a particular scientific concept.
Problem solving activities	Get children thinking and working scientifically by solving problems – how can we make a set of flashing lights? How can we make a pair of boots that can grip on slippy srfaces
Powerpoint presentations	Children love making Powerpoint presentations and these can be used as an invaluable way of recording science
Games	Make science fun by getting children to design and make their own games, e.g. magnetic fishing games or electronics games such as “Operation” or “Steady Hand” games
Interviews	Use hot-seating and other interviewing techniques to extract information.
Tables	Do plenty of work using tables – they are a really important skill for the children. Children can complete tables in KS1 and construct/design their own in Key Stage 2
Flow charts	Show the relationship between things using flow charts.
Lists	Lists can be a really useful tool for recording information or even for writing lists of instructions for carrying out experiemnts
Painting	Can children use artistic interpretation to show their understanding of science?
Music	Can children compose science songs to help them remember facts and figures? Try some of the websites to see existing science songs
Circuit diagrams	Don’t forget to do lots of analysing circuit diagrams and getting children to record their own especially in KS2.
Concept cartoons	Brilliant to instil discussion and improve thinking skills.
Concept maps	Great to use to channel thinking and to remember facts and relationships
Concept sentences	Again a great resource to instil discussion about particular science concepts. Concept sentence/cartoons can be purchased on CD from TTS-Group using ELCs. See your Science or ICT coordinator
Board games	Get the children to design and make their own games based on different topics – then the other children can play them
Domino games	Domino games and Who am I games are easy to make or even download from the Internet. Children can even make their own for others to play as a revision tool.
Comprehension Activities	Use scientific texts to compose comprehension questions
Guided Reading	Use scientific texts during Literacy, especially during Guided reading.
Research	Use books, leaflets and more importantly the internet to do research on specific topics.
Jigsaws	Get children to list things on a sheet of paper in a two columned table, cut the paper up, jumble it, then sort it out.
Exam	Ensure children have seen and had a go at some SATs questions,

Techniques	especially in upper KS2. What's really useful is to use TestBase or old SATs papers to find questions related to the topic you are doing and work through these as starter/plenary activities.
ICT	There are some brilliant websites out there utilising virtual science, such as BBC Revise wise, BBC Science clips or LGFL Virtual Experiments. Your Science Coordinator should have a list of useful websites to help with all aspects of science
Deliberate mistakes	Children love it when the teacher gets it wrong! Deliberate mistakes in science texts or with experiments really gets the children thinking.
Confusing equipment	Try to let children choose and use their own equipment. Put out some red herrings for them to make their choices from, You never know what use a feather boa might have!
10 Minute Science Blast	Use something like the 6 Minute science books to give your class an extra blast of Science. Do a demo/quick experiment to get the discussion flowing!

Task: Choose five effective ways of teaching science and describe them.

Computer-assisted learning

Computers in the classroom have provided learners and their teachers with fast and easy ways of accessing information, communicating electronically with others, and producing high quality written work and graphics. Computers can also deliver instructional programs covering virtually any area of the curriculum and geared to any age or ability level. Computer software for educational purposes includes not only 'drill and practice' programs (used mainly in tutorial or remedial contexts for building students' skills in areas such as phonics, reading, arithmetic, or spelling) but also interactive instructional programs presenting factual information, simulations and role-play, problem-solving activities, video clips, and of course computer games. Computers and their associated software present great opportunities for motivating students, encouraging independent learning, and for improving the quality of educational programs. The use of ICT continues to growrapidly in schools, with increasing numbers of students also having access to a personal computer at home.

Findings from research into the effectiveness of CAL have generally been positive (e.g., Linden et al., 2003; McInerney & McInerney, 2005). Some studies suggest, however, that learning via a computer does not necessarily produce significantly higher achievement in students than can be produced with good quality teaching by more conventional methods. For example, a study involving more than 9000 students from the 1st, 4th and 6th grades in US schools found no significant advantage in using computer software for reading and mathematics (NCEE, 2007). As Ormrod (2000, p. 553) wisely comments:

A computer can help our students achieve at higher levels only when it provides instruction that we cannot offer as easily or effectively by other means. There is little to be gained when a student is merely reading information on a computer screen instead of reading it in a textbook.

Advantages of CAL

◗ Teaching of science, social studies, mathematics, environmental education, health and the arts can be enhanced by documentaries or simulation programs and by giving access to Internet resources.

◗ Programs can stimulate inductive learning through presenting complex and interactive problems.

◗ With instructional programs, students make active responses and they are 'in charge' of the learning situation.

◗ Working at a computer is motivating, challenging, but non-threatening.

◗ Students are helped to move toward greater independence in learning.

◗ Immediate corrective feedback is provided in most tutorial-type programs.

◗ Learning can be achieved at an appropriate pace for the student.

◗ Software can be matched to a student's ability level and is therefore one way of individualising learning.

◗ CAL is a private method of responding, and students can self-correct mistakes.

◗ Word-processing facilitates the production of high quality, well-presented assignments. Most students enjoy working at the computer more than using textbooks and print resources.

Disadvantages associated with CAL

◗ Some teachers lack confidence or expertise in integrating ICT into the curriculum.

◗ There may be a shortage of computers in the school, with computers only available in a computer lab at limited times each week.

◗ Technical failures can occur.

◗ CAL places additional demands on teachers' planning and preparation time.

◗ Some published software, supposedly for educational purposes, turns out to be entertaining but low in educational value.

◗ Students with literacy problems have difficulty comprehending verbal information on the screen.

◗ A few students do not like to learn by ICT methods and prefer group interactions with peers and the teacher.

Reference: Westwood, Peter (2008). *What teachers need to know about teaching methods.* Camberwell: ACER Press.

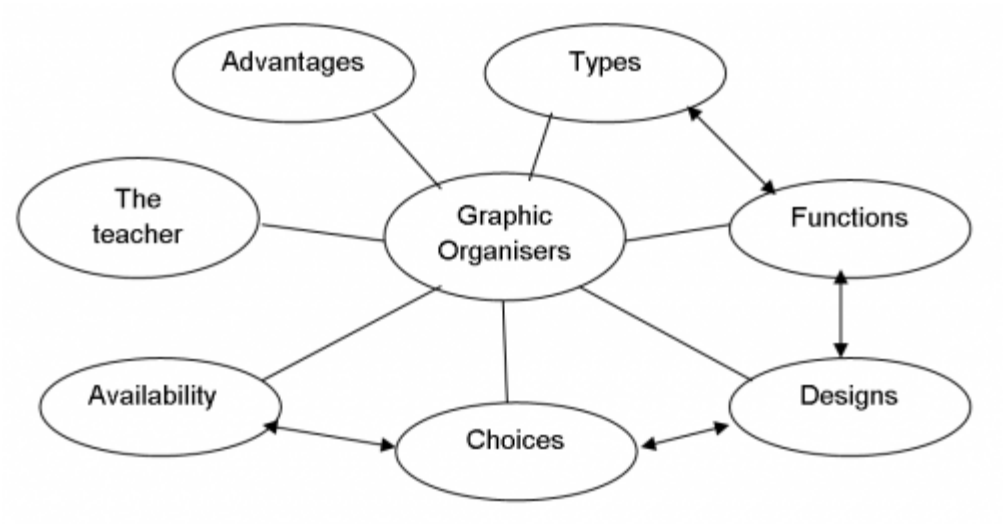
Graphic Organisers

Written by Steve Darn (2012), Freelance Trainer, Izmir, Turkey
Retrieved from: TeachingEnglish

Visual representations of information are by no means an innovation in education. The use of graphs and charts to represent statistical information and time-lines showing the sequence of historical events have long been accepted tools, while in language teaching, the mind map is already a common aid to brainstorming a topic.

However, with the realisation that all learners are, to some extent, visual learners, the focus on process rather than product, and with increasing emphasis on

developing organisational and thinking skills alongside language skills, visual tools such as graphic organisers are being increasingly employed.



Advantages

A graphic organiser (also known as a concept map, mind map or relationship chart) is usually a one-page form with blank areas for learners to complete with ideas and information which are connected in some way. Some organisers are very specific; others are versatile. Often, the information on a graphic organiser could just as easily be written on a form or list, but the organiser offers certain advantages:

- Graphic organisers provide the learner with a different way of seeing and thinking about information.
- Language barriers (words, grammar) are removed, so that learners can focus on the connections between information.
- The visual display conveys complex information in a simple-to-understand manner. Showing (as opposed to telling) how information is structured is a way of facilitating understanding. In most cases, dual-presentation (visual representation plus is more successful than either approach alone, regardless of whether the student is a visual or auditory learner.
- Analytical, critical, planning and creative thinking skills are developed. To create the map, the learner has to identify the relationships between items, examine the meanings attached to them, and prioritise the information and decide where each item should be placed on the map. Students are more likely to become strategic learners.
- A lot of information can be converted into a structured, easy-to-read, graphic display. A large amount of information can be displayed to provide the "big picture" of a topic.
- Changes can easily be made to allow learners to take different perspectives and clarify their thoughts. Organisers are easy to edit, revise, and add to.
- Creating the map helps the learner to generate ideas and see the possibilities associated with a topic as the map grows.
- Graphic organisers have multiple uses. They can be used to structure writing projects, summarise reading texts, organise and store vocabulary, and help in problem solving, decision making, studying, planning research and brainstorming.
- Subject-matter is comprehended faster and more efficiently. Because the demands of processing the language are reduced, content can be considered at more sophisticated levels.
- While organisers often represent an individual's arrangement of information, they can also be used at group or class levels. A class flow-chart of the storyline of a class reader may help all the students to follow the plot.

- Since most graphic organisers use short words or phrases, and sometimes drawings, they can be used with all levels and with young and less-able learners.
- The teacher is given a record of the learner's thinking process. Graphic organisers can be used to assess students' knowledge and understand of the content, thinking skills and creativity.

Types and functions

Graphic organisers can be classified either in terms of their design or their function. Functionally, graphic organisers can be grouped into two categories: those that depict basic information structures (whole-to-part, cause/effect, etc.) and those that serve specialised needs (project planning, goal setting). For the language classroom, the most common functions are:

- Describing
- Comparing and contrasting
- Classifying
- Sequencing
- Cause and effect
- Decision making

There are a wide variety of designs for depicting the same basic information structures, but all serving the same basic purpose of visually revealing to learners how the information is structured. Some common designs include:
Clock, Cluster/Word Web, Describing Wheel, E-Chart, Fact and Opinion, Five W's Chart, Flow Chart, Four-Column Chart, Goal-Reasons Web, Hierarchy chart, Idea Wheel, KWL/KWHL Chart, Ladder, Observation Chart, Persuasion Map, Planning Chart, Progress Report, Sequence Chart, Spider Map, Step-by-Step Chart, Story Map, T-Chart, Time Line, Tree Chart, Venn Diagram.

Choosing an organizer

Choosing the appropriate organiser involves consideration of function, purpose, the nature of the material/information, the classroom activity and personal preference. Some initial questions to consider are:

- Is only one topic involved, or are there many?
- Is it a complex topic?
- Is the information linear or cyclical?
- Are there similarities and differences, pros and cons?
- Is time involved?Are there hierarchical levels?

Six common designs and their functions are :

- spider - adding more details to a single topic
- fishbone - cause-and-effect factors associated with a complex topic
- cluster - a network of ideas based on a stimulus
- cycle - recurring cycle of events, with no beginning and no end,
- continuum - topic with a definite beginning and end and a sequence in between.
- Venn diagram - similarities and differences

There is a very useful flowchart of how to choose a graphic organiser on the Enchanted Learning website:
http://www.enchantedlearning.com/graphicorganizers/flowchart/

The teacher's role

Learners need to be trained to use graphic organisers and it is the teacher's job to introduce them gradually and systematically, beginning with simple mind maps to brainstorm topics and KWL charts to provide a purpose for reading a text.

What I **K**now about	What I **W**ant to find out	What I **L**earnt about .....

KWL chart

Other typical uses include planning writing (the map or chart may be included in a portfolio), recording vocabulary thematically or in lexical sets, following the characters or story in a narrative and breaking down the content of a text.
Responsibility for graphic organisers can gradually be turned over to the learners. Typically, this happens in stages:

- The teacher constructs the graphic organiser, provides students with a copy, and tells them how and when to complete it.
- The teacher and students co-construct graphic organisers showing important ideas as the content is explored.
- Teams of students construct graphic organisers cooperatively with the teacher acting as a guide.
- The students construct graphic organisers independently.

In the early stages, it is a good idea for the teacher to keep a selection of organisers at hand so that learners have a choice and can experiment with a wider range of designs.
Graphic organisers are as useful for teachers as they are for learners. They are a valuable tool in lesson planning, syllabus design, report writing and research as well as providing an insight into the individual learner's thought processes and learning style.

A graphic organiser generator is available on the Teachnology website:
http://www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/graphic_org/

Task: List the benefits of using graphic organizers in teaching.

Gifted students

According to Silverman (2007, n.p.), 'Children in the top and bottom three percent of the population have atypical development patterns and require differentiated instruction'. Children in the bottom 3 per cent are those with severe disabilities. Their needs will be discussed later under the section on special schools. The top 3 per cent are those students with very high IQ (above 130) and who often possess special abilities or talents.

Debate has continued for many years on the best teaching methods to use with children of high ability in order to ensure that they develop their full potential and at the same time remain happy and socially well adjusted. Provision ranges from special schools and special classes for gifted and talented students through to placement in regular classes with modifications made to curriculum and instruction (Kondor, 2007). After-hours clubs and tutorial groups are sometimes used to encourage gifted students to pursue subjects of great interest to them. Even special thematic summer camps (e.g., introducing fieldwork in astronomy, geology, local history, etc.) are sometimes organised for gifted students to give them new experiences and fresh challenges.

The vast majority of gifted children remain in regular classes, so the onus is on all classroom teachers to meet their needs. The obvious problem is that if the student of

high ability is not suitably challenged by, and interested in, the subject matter being taught he or she will become bored and will lose motivation. The fact that gifted children often tend to be far ahead of their peers in their understanding and their rate of learning presents a major challenge for any teacher.

Inquiry and problem-based learning methods are highly suitable for gifted students, although some students may first need direct teaching of the researching skills that are required for independent learning under these methods. With problem-based methods, in addition to the usual step-by-step and brainstorming approaches to investigation, *synectics* offers an additional way to encourage their creative thinking. Synectics is a process in which divergent ideas are brought together and, where possible, connections are established. In operation, it involves students thinking of unconventional solutions to a given problem. For example: 'How could we get bees to produce honey directly in a jar instead of in a honeycomb in the hive?' Students are encouraged to think in terms of analogies; for example, 'It's like when an animal is tricked into a trap by putting bait inside. The bees could be tricked into the jar'. Students use information they already possess, transform it, and test it against a new situation. Regardless of the actual strategies used to solve problems, the problem-based inquiry approach has much to offer in the education of students of high ability.

Regular class teachers can use the following inclusive strategies when presenting lessons:

◗Set high expectations for gifted students. Don't encourage underachievement.

◗ Use differentiated questioning that involves an adequate amount of higher level thinking.

◗ Allow gifted students to discuss and demonstrate to others their ways of tackling various tasks.

◗ Plan deskwork assignments that contain a good mix of activities at various levels of complexity. Allow choice.

◗ Always have some interesting supplementary activities related to the lesson objectives available for students who finish their work quickly. Not just 'busy work'.

◗ Make good use of the special interests of gifted students; share these and value them in the class.

◗ Organise peer tutoring so that gifted students can work with and assist others.

◗ Use flexible grouping so that students of differing abilities can work together sometimes.

Reference: Westwood, Peter (2008). *What teachers need to know about teaching methods.* Camberwell: ACER Press.

Special Educational Needs

For many years there was much discussion about whether children with special needs should receive the same curricular experiences as other children. Some commentators thought that these children needed a completely different curriculum - one concentrating on basic skills - while others suggested that the content should be the same, but that it should be made easier to digest; it should be diluted.

'Children with special needs' is a huge catch-all category which comprises those with physical disabilities, those with learning difficulties, those with sensory disabilities and

those with emotional problems. These children's needs differ enormously. Some will require a carefully managed and adapted curriculum in which it is certain that they will not continually be faced with failure, while others will be able to engage in experiences which differ little from those of the majority of the class, perhaps only needing additional equipment which will help them to see or hear.

In other words, the current opinion is that there is not a specific group of children who have special needs. It is the job of the teacher to identify each child's needs and to attempt to meet them. Some children's needs will be more pressing or more difficult to meet than others. It should then be clear that if a group of children with special needs is not a static group but rather a fluid group comprising different children at different times, it is doubly important to think of these children all receiving the same curriculum, namely, all children should be fully and comprehensively included in the complete activity of the school. No children will be excluded because of their special needs.
It is important to consider what assessment means in the context of special educational needs. Good special needs assessment and teaching is simply good practice for all children. There are no special methods or procedures which have been shown to be of special value to children who have special needs.

It is also important to consider how class organization can help in the delivery of the curriculum for all children. In particular, it is important to consider how additional people can be employed in the classroom and the judicious use of group work and peer tutoring, such that expertise in the classroom is used effectively.

(Taken from "*Implementing the Primary Curriculum*" by Gary Thomas)

Learning to Learn

'Learning to learn' is one of the most important objectives for all learning teaching contexts for all ages. In our fast moving world, it is simply impossible for learners to acquire all the knowledge and skills they need while they are at school. It is the school's responsibility to teach learners how to learn, i.e. to equip them with strategies that they can use outside school. This process needs to start as early as possible, preferably at the beginning of schooling. Various aspects of 'learning to learn' can be introduced into the day-to-day practice of any language classroom without changing many of the usual classroom practices. Most of the suggested techniques and ideas can be adapted to all types of contexts and can work in large classes as well as mixed ability classes.

What is 'learning to learn'?

The overall aim of incorporating some kind of 'learning to learn' is to begin to raise children's awareness of the various factors that influence their language learning and to give them some time and space to start to think for themselves. 'Learning to learn' is a broad concept which can encompass a great variety of different activities, tasks, or discussions between children and the teacher. Some teachers might be working in contexts where 'learning to learn' is explicitly incorporated into the curriculum guidelines and both the national curriculum and the recommended coursebook contain specific advice on the techniques and activities used and the rationale behind them. Others might not have such explicit guidelines to work from but would be free to use their own ideas.

What types of strategies can be developed?

1 Social and affective strategies: to raise awareness about how learners' own emotional states and feelings as well as those of others can influence their learning.

Activities in the classroom can include teacher-led discussions, usually in the mother tongue, about the social aspects of learning, such as the importance of listening to each other, turn taking in games, or controlling shyness and fear of speaking out in front of others. As part of developing awareness about affective factors, teachers can give plenty of praise and positive feedback to children to raise their self-esteem and self-confidence as well as boost their motivation.

2 Strategies related to raising awareness about what language learning is: to cover general understanding about language learning. In terms of understanding what language learning means, teachers might discuss with children how long it takes to learn a language, why it is important to practise, or why we all make mistakes.

3 Metacognitive strategies: to introduce and develop the ongoing process of reflection through planning, monitoring, and evaluating language learning. Activities in the classroom can include encouraging children to think about what they did well and why, and what they enjoyed and why. At later stages, children can be prompted to think about the reasons for doing various activities and tasks and about lessons that can be learnt from each learning experience.

4 Direct or cognitive strategies: to develop children's ability to deal with linguistic information in an effective way, i.e. to organize, categorize, or memorize linguistic information. Activities in the classroom can include training strategies such as how to remember a list of words, how to guess the meaning of unknown words in a text, or how to link unrelated language to aid memory.

Reference: Pinter, Annamaria (2007). *Teaching Young Language Learners*. Oxford: OUP.

Task: How can teachers meet the needs of gifted students and of students with special educational needs?

How Big Is ***a Foot?***

Taught by Bonnie Tank and Lynne Zolli

In the book How *Big Is a Foot?* Rolf Myller tells the story of a King who wanted to give his Queen a very special birthday present. This amusing and ingenious story presents a dilemma that engages children in thinking about measurement, ratio, and proportion. Bonnie Tank read the book to a second-grade class in Jefferson School in San Francisco, and Lynne Zolli introduced it to her third graders.

When the Queen's birthday approached, the King had a problem: What could he give to someone who had everything? He was pleased when he thought of having a bed made for her. At that time, beds hadn't yet been invented, so the Queen certainly didn't have one already.

To figure how big the bed should be, the King asked the Queen to put on her new pajamas and lie down on the floor. Using his paces, he measured and found that the bed must be six feet long and three feet wide to be big enough to fit the Queen (including her crown, which the Queen sometimes liked to wear to bed).

The apprentice who made the bed, however, was a good deal smaller than the King. He carefully measured six of his feet for the length and three of his feet for the width and built a beautiful bed, but it was too short. The King was so angry that he had the apprentice thrown into jail.

Sitting in the jail cell, the apprentice thought and thought and finally realized what the problem was. He came up with a solution and made a new bed. It was the right size for the Queen and was ready just in time for her birthday The King was so pleased that he released the apprentice from jail and made him a royal prince.

- Bonnie didn't read the entire story to the class but stopped once the apprentice went to jail. She talked with the children about the apprentice's problem and had them offer their suggestions. Bonnie then asked that they each write a letter to the apprentice and offer him advice. Their letters revealed different approaches to the problem.
- Leslie explained what the apprentice should have done. She wrote: *Why was the bed so small? The king was very mad. Apprentice feet were very small! You should have measure with a ruler.*
- Brandon put the responsibility on the King. He wrote: *I no why your in jail. Because your foot is to small. The bed is to small. The king should have measured with your foot.*
- In his letter Dominic also included advice about what the King should do. He wrote: *I think I know how to get you out of jail. Your feet are smaller than the king's feet. So tell the king that you messed up on the bed. And please could I have another chance at the bed. And ask him when you make it he has to measure the wood so it will be the right size.*
- *Max gave the apprentice specific advice about how to address the King. He wrote:* The bed whes *[was]* too small because yor feet *are to small and the kings feet are bigger then yhour feet. Soew the idea is you ask the jaler to let you tik* [talk] *to the king and you can tell the king avry thing I told you. just sae I have too yose yor feet.*
- Jennifer gave a mathematical solution that maintained the correct proportion between the length and the width. She wrote: *I am sorry that you are in jail, I think you sould make a new bed. The bed sould be ten feet long and five feet wide.*

The third graders included some different suggestions in their letters.

- Bolan, for example, wrote: *The bed was to small because your feet were to small for the queen. You can ask the king for one more chance. But this time ask the king to use his feet.* Bolan included a drawing to .illustrate the comparison between six of the king's feet and six of the apprentice's feet. He also included a postscript: *PS. if this doesn't work have a nice time in the big house.*
- *In his letter, Jon gave advice and revealed his interest in Roman numerals. He wrote: Show your king the difference in size. Now have your king step in paint and make a rectangle VI feet long and III feet wide. Now build the bed that size.*

Several of the children suggested the apprentice use a ruler. Matthew, for example, wrote: I am very sorry that you are in jail. The reason why the bed was too small was because your feet are too small and thats why it was too small. You can get a ruler at the nearst drugstore and measure it. He drew a picture of a ruler.

- *Eric wrote: I think I can help you get out of jail if you invent a ruler. You ask for some wood that is 12 inch tall. And that will be a ruler.*

Instead of offering advice, Wanda explained the problem and concentrated her effort on her illustration. She wrote: Your foot is to small to do like the king. And the kings foot is to big and your foot is to small to do it. That is your prublems.

The book can be used to introduce the importance of standard units to communicate about measurements

Pedagogical skills of effective teachers

There are five areas in which skilled teachers display their expertise. These areas include presenting and explaining subject matter and ideas, questioning students during lesson time, giving feedback, strategy training and adapting or differentiating instruction.

Presenting and explaining

Presenting information to children, giving explanations, and answering students' questions are three of the main activities in which teachers engage(Eggen & Kauchak, 2004). Clarity in teaching is often the main quality that sets highly effective teachers apart from less effective colleagues. Expert teachers who obtain consistently good results from students are reported to incorporate the following features within their lessons (Bush & Kincer, 1993):

- efficient initial presentation of new work
- clear and precise instructions
- a greater variety of ways of explaining topics.

Effective classroom teaching, as with formal lecturing, requires *clarity* in the teacher's presentations. Poor explanations usually get students utterly confused and therefore create learning problems. This lack of clarity may be due to a failure to communicate effectively at the students' language and ability level, using complex terminology, failing to draw analogies or give examples to which students can relate, giving instructions out of sequence, inadequate use of visual support material, presenting too much information at one time, not making relationships clear, and failing to check for understanding.

Sotto (1994) believes that a teacher's clarity when instructing and explaining relies on:

- knowing the subject matter extremely well
- appreciating the subject matter from the perspective of a novice learning it for the first time
- identifying key ideas to emphasise in what is being taught
- explaining things in simple terms.

Explaining need not (and should not) be a one-way process. A good explanation requires questions directed to the students to ensure that what is being said is making sense; and students should be encouraged to ask the teacher questions during and after an explanation. Perhaps the least helpful question for a teacher to ask (but one that is frequently heard) is 'Do you understand that?' Very few students, especially those who lack confidence and those not doing well, are going to confess in front of the entire class that they don't understand.

Questioning

Questioning students is an essential part of effective instruction, and plays an important role in promoting learning in both teacher-directed and student-centred approaches. Research has indicated that the teachers of classes showing the highest achievement levels are found to ask many questions during their lessons, with very few questions yielding incorrect responses, or no response at all from the students (Brophy & Good, 1986).

Questioning is used to:

- facilitate students' participation and communication during the lesson
- focus attention on key aspects of a topic
- evaluate students' understanding

stimulate particular types of thinking
review essential content
control the group of students and hold attention.

Some questions can be simple and direct (sometimes called lower-order questions) focusing on facts and principles, while others can be higher-order questions that require reflection, critical thinking and reasoning (Ormrod, 2000). Depending on the nature of the subject matter and the age and ability of the students, the balance between lower- and higher-order questions can be adjusted. It has been demonstrated that children with poor learning skills seem to benefit from instruction that includes a high percentage of simple direct questions, focusing on the core content of the lesson. It is as if answering these questions helps firm up a student's grasp of the topic. If students are struggling to assimilate basic facts, then it is usually necessary to ask more questions from the lower-order category.

An important aspect of questioning is 'wait-time'. Teachers often ask between three and five questions a minute during presentations and discussions, but they allow only a second or so for a child to respond before asking someone else, or providing the answer themselves. When teachers deliberately extend wait time to 3 seconds or more when they ask a question, *and* after a student's response, more students will offer an answerthe length of their responses increase, contributions from students of lower ability increase, and the number of questions asked by students increases (Rowe, 1986).

Some common errors in questioning include:

asking too many difficult or poorly expressed questions
continuing to ask questions even though students have indicated lack of knowledge on the topic
taking answers only from students who volunteer
failing to provide corrective feedback on incorrect or inappropriate responses.

In an early review of research, Good (1981) suggested that teachers' questioning was one factor that could cause passivity in lower-ability students. This occurs for two reasons: firstly, teachers in regular classes tend to call on lower-ability students less often; secondly they do not wait as long for lower-ability students to answer. They are also less likely to spend time encouraging these students to think more deeply and to elaborate on any answers they do give. Those comments would seem to apply equally in our classrooms today.

Giving feedback

Another essential teaching function is the giving of feedback to students. Constructive comment from a teacher motivates students and informs them of how they are progressing and what they may need to focus on. The most useful feedback comes immediately after a student has made a response or has completed a task. It should come in the form of *descriptive praise* if the student's work is good. Descriptive praise not only says 'well done' but also specifies why the praise is given. For example: 'Well done, Fiona. You measured the amount of flour exactly as the recipe states'. 'That is good work, Mark. I can see that you have already gone back and checked the spelling'. On the other hand, if a student's response is incorrect the teacher should provide immediate correction to help remove the misconception and to supply accurate information.

Written feedback on students' class work and homework assignments also serves a useful purpose if it is descriptive. Brief comments such as 'Satisfactory' or 'You could have included more detail' are not helpful, and are largely ignored by students.

Often, corrective feedback will require that the teacher explain again something that has already been taught. When this is necessary it is useful if the teacher first asks the student to explain or demonstrate what he or she already knows about the topic or

process; re-teaching can then focus on the precise point of confusion. For example, in mathematics, if a student is having difficulty dividing 303 by 7, the teacher asks the student to begin working on the problem and to 'think aloud' at each step as the teacher watches. At the precise point of difficulty the teacher can provide the corrective feedback. This is much more effective than re-teaching the whole process from the beginning, because often the student still does not recognise the error.

When feedback is given, it should be delivered in a positive emotional tone, not with annoyance or frustration (Kauchak & Eggen, 2007). Students need to feel safe in asking for assistance.

Strategy training

Perhaps the most important discovery to be made since research moved beyond the simple process–product studies is that it isn't only what the teacher does that is important; students themselves must become more efficient in their approach to learning. Effective instruction must therefore include an element of teaching students how to learn. One of the ways in which all learners can become more successful – and failure rates can be reduced – is to teach students the most effective ways of approaching the various tasks they are required to attempt in the classroom. Time is devoted to thinking about the actual *processes* involved in completing classroom tasks, as well as having regard for the quality of the product. '*How* do we do this?' is as important as 'How did it turn out?' This is of particular importance for students with learning difficulties who often lack effective cognitive strategies.

In strategy training, students are explicitly taught, via clear modelling, demonstration and 'thinking aloud' by the teacher, precisely how to approach a particular task or problem. In the typical classroom these tasks might include, for example, finding the meaning of an unfamiliar word in the textbook, writing a summary of the key points from a video, planning and composing ideas for a piece of writing, solving a mathematics word problem, or researching a topic for a special project. The teacher might use the overhead projector to demonstrate the writing of a summary – first highlighting key points in the text, numbering the points in a suitable sequence, drafting the first version on the screen, then editing and revising the final version – all the time 'thinking aloud' and making decisions.

Adapting and differentiating instruction

The final component of effective teaching to be considered here is responding to differences among students. Adaptive instruction is defined as instruction geared to the characteristics and needs of individual students. The term 'differentiation' is now used in many countries to convey this idea of adapting instruction to match differences in students' abilities (Cusumano & Muller, 2007; Good & Brophy, 2008). The most manageable form of differentiation usually involves teaching the same curriculum topic to all students but tailoring the resources, the learning activities, and the amount of teacher-support to the differing capabilities of individual students. Wherever possible, studying the same topic by different paths and in different ways is regarded as preferable to any ambitious attempt to individualise instruction, set up alternative courses, or stream students by ability.

Classroom observation has revealed that effective teachers already do much to adapt the processes of instruction while lessons are in progress (Chan et al., 2002; Scott et al., 1998). For example, the following tactics are observed during lessons when teachers are sensitive to differences among learners. The teacher:

- varies the method as necessary during the lesson, from teacher-directed to student-centred, according to students' abilities and needs
- simplifies and restates instructions for some students

sets shorter-term goals for some students
monitors the work of some students more closely than others
re-teaches certain students when necessary, or provides an additional demonstration
accepts different quantities and qualities of bookwork
provides more (or less) assistance to students as they work
gives more descriptive praise to certain students
praises some students more frequently than others
rewards different students in different ways
asks questions at different degrees of complexity, according to students' ability
encourages peer assistance
selects or creates alternative resource materials.

Reference: Westwood, Peter (2008). *What teachers need to know about teaching methods.* Camberwell: ACER Press.

Task: Choose one skill of effective teachers and describe its benefits.

Group Dynamics

Traditionally, all classroom work was done using two basic forms of classroom dynamics.

- The teacher addressed the whole group, who responded in unison or one by one. This is known as 'frontal' teaching.
- The students were set work to do alone, usually on reading or writing tasks.

With only these two dynamics the time involved in active communication is extremely limited and sometimes non-existent. It is, perhaps, an attractive method for the teacher because discipline in the classroom is very easy and the students are quiet! However, if students are to learn to speak English, you will have to accept a certain amount of noise in the classroom.

Newer approaches to teaching languages offer us different possibilities of classroom dynamics which make class activities much more communicative and efficient.

Different group dynamics are particularly appropriate for certain tasks. Try to vary the dynamics that you use in each lesson to make your classes more lively.

The advantages of using different dynamics

- You will be able to provide your students with additional speaking time.
- We should never underestimate the value of the 'student teacher'. By allowing your students to work in pairs or small groups they develop their skills for passing information to each other. Weaker students benefit from the learning strategies being passed on by their peers and stronger students reinforce their learning by being placed in the position of having to explain language.
- When you first start teaching the younger primary students you will often find that their attitude to learning is highly egocentric and they are constantly demanding your individual attention. Pair or small groupwork makes students co-operate with each other and become more independent of the teacher.
- By organising the class into small groups or pairs you will be able to spend some time working individually with students who are having difficulties, either on their own or in small special groups.
- If your class has mixed abilities or mixed ages you will be able to set different groups different tasks, according to their abilities and ages.

• Younger students often need to move around physically during a lesson. If you try to make a group of eight year olds sit perfectly still in the same position throughout the lesson, you will almost certainly begin to experience discipline problems. By dividing your lessons into different group dynamics you allow for this need to stand up and move about.

These are the most useful dynamics that you can try in your lessons.

Teacher to whole group

Useful for: presentation activities where the focus is on the teacher and the students are usually quiet.

Advantage: easy discipline.

Disadvantage: students' participation is limited to choral response or individually answering a direct question from the teacher.

Small groups

Useful for: communication activities, acting and project work. Walk around the classroom intervening occasionally in the groupwork.

Advantages: increased co-operation between students; more student autonomy.

Disadvantage: increased noise levels; you may need to exercise your authority to settle disputes between students.

Pairwork

Useful for: guided dialogues and roleplay. Set the task and then walk around checking and correcting. If it is difficult to walk around the classroom, arrange the pairs in such a way that you can supervise them from two or three points.

Advantage: all students get the opportunity to speak in class.

Disadvantage: not possible to check and correct all the mistakes.

Individual work

Useful for: writing exercises in the activity book where each student works alone. It should be preceded by some form of presentation to the whole class. Walk around correcting the students' work as they progress through the exercise.

Advantages: allows some quiet thinking time; changes pace and calms children down.

Disadvantages: more of a possibility that students might do a whole exercise incorrectly. Supervise the first part of the exercise qUickly to avoid this. Students will not all work at the same pace. Always have some activities ready for the students who finish first.

Teacher to individual students

Useful for: checking the progress of a particular student.

Advantages: gives you the chance to get to know students; increases student's sense of belonging.

Disadvantages: too much teacher to individual work will become very boring for the rest of the class. Combine this with individual work so that while the class is working quietly on an activity you can attend to an individual student.

Small group to small group

Useful for: if the class have been working on an activity in small groups, they can be asked to contrast their work with another group.

Advantage: increases student autonomy.

Disadvantage: as the size of the groups gets bigger, so the noise level and the number of disputes increase!

Pair to pair

Useful for: personalised activities where the students can compare and contrast their ideas with those of another pair.

Advantages and disadvantages: as above.

Reference: House, S. (1997). *An Introduction to Teaching English to Children.*

Cooperative Learning

In contrast to cooperative situations, competitive situations are ones in which students work against each other to achieve a goal that only one or a few can attain. In competition there is a negative interdependence among goal achievements; students perceive that they can obtain their goals if and only if the other students in the class fail to obtain their goals. In individual learning situations students work alone to accomplish goals unrelated to those of classmates and are evaluated on a criterion-references basis. Students' goal achievements are independent; students perceive that the achievement of their learning goals is unrelated to what other students do. The result is to focus on self-interest and personal success and ignore as irrelevant the successes and failures of others.

Cooperation is working together to accomplish shared goals. Within cooperative activities individuals seek outcomes that are beneficial to themselves and beneficial to all other group members. Cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. The idea is simple. Class members are organized into small groups after receiving instruction from the teacher. They then work through the assignment until all group members successfully understand and complete it. Cooperative efforts result in participants striving for mutual benefit so that all group members gain from each other's efforts (*Your success benefits me and my success benefits you*), recognizing that all group members share a common fate (*We all sink or swim together here*), knowing that one's performance is mutually caused by oneself and one's colleagues (*We cannot do it without you*), and feeling proud and jointly celebrating when a group member is recognized for achievement (*We all congratulate you on your accomplishment!*).

In cooperative learning situations there is a positive interdependence among students' goal attainments; students perceive that they can reach their learning goals if and only if the other students in the learning group also reach their goals. A team member's success in creating a multi-media presentation on saving the environment, for example, depends on both individual effort and the efforts of other group members who contribute needed knowledge, skills, and resources. No one group member will possess all of the information, skills, or resources necessary for the highest possible quality presentation.

(Taken from C*ooperative Learning.htm)*

Task: How can groupwork be used for cooperative learning?

Discipline

This is an extremely contentious area and you will probably find as many different opinions as to how to discipline students as there are teachers in the world! Ultimately you will have to decide on your own disciplinary rules for your classes. There are many different reasons why we experience discipline problems in our classrooms. The following is a basic guide for classroom management, detecting problems and applying remedies.

Noise
Do not expect primary school students to work in silence. It is normal for children to laugh and talk to each other while they are doing an activity. They want to know what their partner has done and, especially, who has finished first!

Movement
Children need to move around. The school day is long and we cannot reasonably expect them to sit at desks all day. Try to include at least one moving activity in each lesson. Let them stand up or clap and act to songs and rhymes.

Flexibility
Be prepared to change the order of your activities in your lesson plan to take into account the mood of your students. If they seem unruly at the beginning of the lesson, start off with a physical activity. If they get restless halfway through the lesson, stop what you are doing and get them moving.

Consistency
Be consistent. If your students know what you expect of them it will be easier for them to behave appropriately. This can be hard because as teachers we also have our good days and bad days. Do not expect students to be good always. Those of us who have children of our own know that their behaviour varies from day to day.

Fairness
Do not label children as 'difficult' just because they, or their brothers and sisters, have a history of disruptive behaviour. Try to show them that you have no preconceived ideas about them. If you allow children to think that you expect them to be naughty, you will, almost certainly, not be disappointed!

Positive reinforcement
Always emphasise and reinforce the good things that students do. Children love public encouragement, so make sure that the other students hear you praising and appreciating someone's work or conduct. Remember that all students need this praise, even the ones who do not always demand your approval. Never humiliate or use your advantages of age and experience to belittle a student no matter what they have done. Serious violations of the rules should always be dealt with privately.

Problems and remedies

PROBLEMS	REMEDIES
Boredom Disruptive behaviour is often a symptom of boredom.	The classwork may be too easy for the student(s). Try offering more of a challenge. The c1asswork may be too routine. Try more variety.
Passivity This may also be a symptom of boredom. On the other hand the student may feel out of his/her depth.	Try as above or spend some time with the individual student to help with specific problems. Try giving him/her responsibilities within the classroom, like helping other students.
Aggressive behaviour	Try involving the students in activities which help him/her to integrate into a

A student may be physically or verbally aggressive towards his/her classmates or even the teacher. This is usually a symptom of distress. The student may feel isolated by his/her classmates.	group. The student may be reproducing behavioural patterns learned at home. Check with other members of staff or the school psychologist. Aggressive behaviour can be a momentary reaction to a distressing situation like the loss of a member of the family. Try speaking to the student privately.
Stealing It is not uncommon for students to borrow things from their friends without asking. They often fail to identify this as stealing.	When you start the school year, make it clear that this kind of behaviour is not acceptable. Ask students to write their names clearly on all their things and spend time at the end of each lesson giving things back and putting things away. Discourage students from bringing expensive, tempting items to school. If necessary, send a letter to the parents at the beginning of the school year with a simple list of school materials. Ask them not to give their children a lot of money to bring to school.
Lying Young children often have a flexible idea of what is true and what is not. Do not confuse lying with fantasy. Lying is a deliberate manipulation of the facts in order to avoid responsibility or hurt another person. The rest is fantasy and is a natural feature of child behaviour.	If a student lies when asked if they are responsible for something, they may be doing this out of fear. Make sure that your relationship with your students is not based on fear.
Bullying Bullying is a form of aggressive behaviour which is often not immediately noticeable in the victims because they may well hide the truth from you for fear of being ignored by their classmates.	Bullying must be dealt with at once; it is harmful to both the victim and the bully. Observe the interaction between members of the class during groupwork and, if possible, in the playground. Look out for students picking on physical differences, such as a child wearing glasses or an obese child. Try groupwork and pairwork to encourage co-operation among the students. Deal with any severe cases with the help of other members of staff and/or the school psychologist.

(Taken from *An Introduction to Teaching English to Children* by S. House, 1997: 48-49)

Elementary Classroom Management Survival Tips

by Stull, E.C. (1997)

1. Make two sets of name tags – one for the child's table space or desk, and one for the child to wear around the neck to special classes.
2. Hang name tags on a hook by the door.
3. Make name labels and tape them over coat hooks and/or cubbies.
4. Have a Weekly Room Helper's Chart. Put children in charge of jobs such as:
    - straightening the books (librarian)
    - cleaning the sink (plumber)
    - answering the knock at the door (host/hostess)
    - leading the salute to the flag and the song (director)
    - taking notes to office or another teacher (messenger)
    - cleaning up special Center areas (science director, writing director, math director, and so on)
    - helpers with snack time (health officers)
    - cleaning up the floor – all children should do this at the end of the session (room inspector)
    - general teacher's helper (teacher assistant)
5. Assign two general house-keepers the task of straightening the area where jackets, boots, hats, and mittens are kept. This area should be straightened everyday to keep it looking presentable.
6. Build “clean up time” into the schedule at the end of the day. Don't close the day on the run.
7. Always evaluate the day with the children before they go home. Praise them for jobs well done and mention things that will need to be worked on tomorrow.
8. Establish a routine. Children thrive on a schedule.
9. Don't speak when children aren't listening and ready. Wait.
10. Establish a signal for getting the group's attention:
    - turn off the lights
    - clap a pattern with your hands
    - say “Freeze!” and everyone halts right where they are, like a statue. Then say “Melt!” when you are ready for them to move again.
11. Practice number ten above, in the beginning, even when children are doing well, just so they get the idea of how to respond to your signals. Then praise them.
12. Establish and discuss room rules and consequences of misbehavior.
13. Post room rules and consequences of misbehavior.
14. Keep a large, clear, see-through plastic jug on a table or countertop. When students are being good workers, drop a nut (walnut) or (chestnut) or little pebble inside with much ceremony and praise. When the jug is filled, it's time for a treat (food, extra playtime, an extra story, a game). Then empty the jug and begin again.
15. Special food treats like cookies, popcorn, or small candies work well for rewarding modified behavior.
16. Have children practice walking in the classroom – two at a time while the rest observe. This way, they learn the appropriate speed for indoor walking.
17. Convey the message that the teacher is the line-leader down the hall. That way the teacher controls the speed of the line and can stop at any time.
18. Practice walking in the hall. Keep stopping and starting until everyone in the class gets the message that this is a quiet activity.

19. Select a different student each class to be the teacher's partner as line leader. Be sure to hold hands.
20. Establish good listening habits for story time. Sometimes we read and listen, and sometimes we read and discuss, but we always listen.
21. Send a child to a nearby seat (behind the audience) during story time if he or she cannot conform to listening standards. That way, the child is away from the group but can still hear the story.
22. Don't give the child more work as punishment, and don't take away the child's play time as punishment. Work with your rules and consequences instead.
23. Invite a good student-citizen to sit at the teacher's desk during snack time or work time, for instance. The especially rewards a good citizen.
24. At the end of work time, place a stuffed toy at the table that had the best workers. The stuffed toy chose to sit there, of course.
25. Give a bookmark as a special reward to good workers.
26. Give a special certificate to good workers.
27. Open up Centers gradually, one by one, until students know what is expect- ed of them there.
28. If Center behavior consistently deteriorates (blocks are knocked down deliberately, water is splashed, and so on), put a “CLOSED” sign in the area for a few days, and talk about desired behaviors.
29. Keep the lights off and heads down for a rest when noise level is too high. Tell them, "Noisy boys and girls are tired boys and girls, and your noise is telling me that you're tired and need a nap. So OK, that's what we'll do."
30. Speak with a soft voice and children will usually respond in kind. However, pretend to take a very loud voice out of your pocket and use it, and then put it back-with a dra- matic flair. Children don't like the loud voice, and you can assure them that you don't either, so you want to keep it in the pocket with their help.
31. Use puppets to help with classroom management. Puppets can whisper in the teacher's ear, and they can write messages to the class.
32. Compliment leadership in students. "Oh, I like the way Antonio is ready!" will cause everyone to turn to look at the ready student and to get ready also.
33. Use the same standards for everyone – no favorites!
34. Over-plan for the day. (If you find that you have time on your hands, you will need to work on additional circle time activities, learning games, or alphabet and number activities.)
35. Have a little broom and dustpan handy for clean-up.
36. Use your eyes--look directly at children when speaking to them. Use the "eyes in the back of your head" to ward off potential problems.
37. Use nonverbal communication to send positive and negative messages to the students (smile, wink, nod, give a thumb's up, raise an eyebrow, put a finger to your lips for quiet, and so on).
38. Remember, the role of the teacher is to lead. Children follow the leader. If the teacher does not step forward as a strong leader, the children will follow the one who does – and unfortunately, that can be a noisy child who is acting out.
39. Keep kitty litter under the sink, and sprinkle it generously if a child has an upset stomach and gets sick. Call the custodian for clean-up.
40. Communicate with a child behaving outside acceptable boundaries. Often a child who is acting out may be doing it because she or he does not know the behavioral boundaries. Take that child aside and make sure he or she understands the common rules. Reassure the child that you know she or he can do well.
41. Find something to like and enjoy about each child, and praise it.
42. Tell children when they're doing well. Tell them when they've done well. Tell them if they're not living up to the expectations set forth in the classroom or building goals.
43. Employ The Magic Touch – touch children, hold their hand or smiling at them.

44. Keep in mind that your elementary students are “works in progress.” They're depending on YOU. Have a kind heart and a firm will. Develop patience. Never hold a grudge! Each day is a new day!

    Excerpted from *Kindergarten Teacher's Survival Guide*.

Task: Select the three favourite tips and explain why you think they could be beneficial for a primary classroom.

Dictionary of Educational Jargon

Retrieved from: http://www.teachervision.fen.com/pro-dev/new-teacher/48466.html

If you are confused about all the different terms you have come across while preparing for a teaching job, this glossary will help you understand the jargon of your new profession.

A

ability grouping Placing students into groups based solely on their achievement on a test.

academic standards Statements that provide a clear description of the knowledge and skills students should be developing through instruction.

accommodation A device, material, or support process that will enable a student to accomplish a task more efficiently.

ADHD Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. This is a condition in which an individual has difficulty sustaining attention, focusing on information, and frequently demonstrates hyperactive behavior.

analysis A level of questioning in which students break down something into its component parts.

anecdotal records Narrative descriptions of student behavior or performance.

anticipation guide A teaching strategy that encourages students to use their background knowledge about a topic before reading about that topic.

application A level of questioning in which students take information and apply it to a new situation.

assessment Gathering information about the level of performance of individual students.

attitudinal assessment Determining the attitudinal or emotional growth of your students.

B

benchmarks See performance standards.

bilingual An individual's ability to speak his or her native language as well as an additional language fluently.

block scheduling Longer academic periods (primarily at the high school level) that allow students to pursue a subject in more depth. Periods may range from 70 to 140 minutes in length.

bodily-kinesthetic intelligence This intelligence focuses on physical activities; eye/hand coordination; and the ability to move around through dance, plays, or role-playing activities.

brainstorming Generating lots of ideas from many individuals.

buzz session A temporary group of students formed to discuss a specific topic.

C

CD-ROM A computer disc of digitized sounds, activities, and/or pictures.

charter school A school operated as a for-profit enterprise.

closure The final instructional activity in a lesson plan.

comprehension The way in which ideas are organized into categories.

constructivism The way knowledge is created in the mind of a learner.

content courses Teacher preparation courses that focus on the specific content of factual information about a subject (chemistry, social studies, algebra). College students in secondary teacher education programs most often take these courses.

cooperative learning Placing students into small groups and having them work together toward a common goal.

copyright The registration with the Library of Congress that protects a book or other printed material from unfair and/or unauthorized duplication.

creative thinking Generating new ways of looking at a situation.

criterion check A point in any lesson at which the teacher stops and checks to see if students understand the material up to that point.

critical thinking The ability to analyze information.

D

deductive thinking Going from the general to the specific. See also inductive thinking.

dehydration A reduction of water content.

differentiated instruction Providing instruction according to the different ability levels in a classroom.

dimensions of learning The five basic elements of any teaching/learning situation: confidence and independence, knowledge and understanding, skills and strategies, use of prior and emerging experience, and critical reflection.

disruptive behavior Any behavior that interferes with or impedes a teacher's ability to teach and students' abilities to learn.

E

educational technology Any instructional aid or media teachers use to support the teaching and learning process.

elaboration The expansion of an idea or thought.

elementary teachers Teachers who teach preschool up through grade 6.

evaluation A method of determining if students learned what they were taught. It is usually conducted at the end of a lesson.

extrinsic motivation When an individual is motivated by outside factors or other people (as opposed to being motivated from within).

F

flexibility The skill of drawing relationships between seemingly unrelated ideas (How are a brick and a book similar?).

fluency The ability to create a lot of ideas.

formative evaluation Evaluation that takes place between the introduction of material and its conclusion.

free lunch A student's meal which is completely subsidized by government funds.

G

gifted students Students who demonstrate high levels of imagination, curiosity, and intelligence.

graphic organizer A chart, outline, or web of ideas or concepts visually organized into groups or categories.

H

heterogeneous groups Groups of students of mixed abilities.

high-stakes testing When students take standardized tests, the results of which are rewarded in some way (graduation, for example).

homeroom The classroom a secondary student attends in the morning (or at the end of the day). Attendance is taken, announcements are made, and forms are completed in this room.

hypothesis An assumption, interpretation, or guess based on currently available information.

I

IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. This is the name given in 1990 to what was formerly known as Public Law 94-142 (the Education for All Handicapped Children Act).

IEP A document that outlines specific learning objectives for a student and how those objectives will be carried out.

inclusion Involving all students in the educational setting that best meets their needs.

inductive thinking Going from the specific to the general. See also deductive thinking.

in-service teacher An individual who has been hired by a district and is actively teaching.

intelligence The ability to use knowledge.

intermediate teachers Teachers who teach forth, fifth, and sixth grade.

interpersonal intelligence The ability to work effectively with other people.

intrapersonal intelligence The ability to understand one's own emotions, goals, and intentions.

intrinsic motivation Motivation that comes from within the individual.

K

knowledge The facts and data of a subject.

L

laws of learning Basic laws or rules by and through which learning occurs.

learning center A self-contained section of the classroom in which students engage in independent activities.

learning disabled students Those students who demonstrate a significant discrepancy between academic achievement and intellectual abilities in one or more areas.

lecture Sharing information with students verbally.

lesson plan An outline of goals and objectives, activities designed to help students achieve those goals, and objectives and ways to assess whether students have actually reached those goals and objectives.

listserv A list of e-mail addresses maintained by a group or organization. E-mail can be sent electronically to everyone on the list by any member of the list.

locus of control The degree to which individuals perceive they are in control. There are two types: external (people motivated by others) and internal (people motivated from within).

logical-mathematical intelligence The ability to reason deductively or inductively and to recognize and manipulate abstract patterns and relationships.

M

manipulatives Physical materials such as cubes, blocks, or balls that model mathematical concepts.

memory The way we recall previously learned or previously experienced information.

mental imagery Creating pictures or images in one's own mind.

mentor An experienced teacher who assists a new colleague.

methodology The way(s) in which information is shared with students.

methods courses Teacher preparation courses that focus on the methods, ways, procedures, or strategies of teaching (the “how-to's” of teaching).

modification Changes in the instruction, course content, or outcomes for special needs students.

motivation An emotion or psychological need that incites a person to do something.

motivational opening An initial activity or motivational devise in a lesson designed to get students' attention or tap into their background knowledge.

MP3 Moving Picture Experts Group Audio Layer 3. This is an audio compression technology that provides high-quality sound in a very limited space.

multimedia A combination of technologies to create an instructional program or experience for students.

multiple intelligences A theory that postulates that human beings have eight separate intelligences (rather than a single IQ score) that determine how they learn.

musical-rhythmic intelligence Sensitivity to the pitch, timbre, and rhythm of sounds and the elements of music.

N

naturalistic intelligence The ability of individuals to recognize plants and animal lives and to have an appreciation for nature.

neural forest The connections that occur between brain cells. The more connections, the thicker the neural forest; the thicker the neural forest, the more we know about a specific topic.

neuron A brain cell.

O

objective A statement that describes what students will be able to do upon completion of an instructional experience.

originality The creation of singular and unique ideas.

P

parent-teacher conference A face-to-face meeting between a teacher and one or both parents (or guardians) of a student to discuss the student's academic performance and any concerns either party might have.

performance The ability to effectively use new information in a productive manner.

performance assessment When students demonstrate their mastery of material through a “hands-on activity” (assembling an electrical circuit, for example).

performance standards Statements that describe what it will take for a student to demonstrate mastery of a standard.

phonemic awareness A recognition that spoken words are composed of several individual sounds.

planning time Time during the day when a teacher does not have students and can plan lessons and other activities.

portfolio assessment A collection of materials designed to demonstrate progress over time.

praise Verbal comments that recognize individual students.

prediction An educated guess about something that may happen in the future.

prior knowledge The knowledge a learner already has about a topic or subject. It is the past knowledge a learner brings to a new learning situation.

probing A series of teacher statements or questions that encourage students to elaborate on their answers to previous questions.

problem-solving The ability to identify and solve problems by applying appropriate skills systematically.

process evaluation The way students go about learning. It may or may not be related to what they learned.

product evaluation A formal test that occurs at the end of a lesson or lessons.

project assessment When students design a project that illustrates a specific principle (science fair projects, for example).

prompting Assisting students in thinking beyond their response to a question.

R

realia Three-dimensional objects used for instruction.

reduced lunch A meal that is partially subsidized by government funds.

remediation A teacher comment that helps students reach a more accurate or higher-level response.

round robin A small group setting in which each student shares information.

routines Ways of managing the classroom; an established set of expectations.

rubric A document that describes varying levels of performance (from high to low) for a specific assignment.

rule of two-thirds In a traditional classroom, $^{2}{}_{3}$ of class time is taken up by talking, $^{2}{}_{3}$ of that time is taken up by teacher talk, and $^{2}{}_{3}$ of the teacher talk is telling or disciplining.

S

search engine A computer program designed to find websites based on keywords you enter.

second language learners Students whose primary language is not English. They are learning English as their second language.

secondary teachers Those teachers who teach in grades 7 through 12 (in most states).

section 504 A civil rights law that requires that institutions not discriminate against people with disabilities.

simulation An activity in which students are given real-life problem-solving situations. The emphasis is on student decision-making.

specials Classes usually designated as nonacademic. They typically include art class, P.E., library time, and music class.

standards A description of what students should know or be able to do.

standards-based teaching When teachers use activities and lessons to ensure that students master a predetermined set of requirements or standards.

stimulus An event that causes something else to happen or take place.

stress What people experience when a situation challenges their ability to effectively cope.

summative evaluation Evaluation that occurs at the end of a unit of study.

synapse The place where electrical and chemical connections are made between one brain cell and another.

synthesis The combination of knowledge elements that form a new whole.

systems analysis Analyzing the parts of a system and the manner in which they interact.

T

task orientation The degree to which a teacher provides learning opportunities (as opposed to dealing with management issues) for students.

taxonomy An orderly classification of items according to various levels (low to high, small to large).

teacher burnout The time in a teacher's life when the demands and expectations of the job exceed one's perceived ability to accomplish them.

teacher's guide A supplement to a textbook which includes a collection of teaching materials, lessons, ideas, and activities to help you teach the subject.

textbook A collection of the knowledge, concepts, and principles of a selected topic or course.

V

verbal-linguistic intelligence The ability to use and produce language effectively.

visual-spatial intelligence The ability to create visual images in the form of drawings, designs, maps, puzzles, mazes, and other creative items.

W

wait time The time between the asking of a question and the solicitation of a response.

Key Terms

Curriculum We take this to mean all the organised experiences that schools provide to help children learn and develop. It includes the subjects taught as well as the teaching they receive; the school environment and other activities that take place outside of the classroom.

Diversity This term means the variations and differences found among any group of children or adults.

Inclusion Children who are perceived 'different' because of their impairment, ethnic background, language, poverty, etc. are often excluded from or marginalised in society and local communities. Their inclusion means changing the attitudes and practices of individuals, organisations and associations so that they can fully and equally participate in and contribute to the life of their community and culture. An inclusive society is one in which difference is respected and valued, and where discrimination and prejudice is actively combated in policies and practices.

Open learning This refers to schools, centres of learning and educational systems that are open to ALL children. For this to happen, teachers, schools and systems may need to change so that they can better accommodate the diversity of needs that pupils have and that they are *included* in all aspects of school-life. It also means a process of' indentifying any barriers within and around the school that hinder learning, and reducing or removing these barriers.

Integration Used mainly when children with disabilities attend ordinary schools that have made few if any changes to accommodate the pupil. Rather the pupil is expected to adapt to the present arrangements.

Ordinary schools These include pre-school, primary and secondary schools. As a group they are also referred to as mainstream or regular schools to distinguish them from special schools (see below).

School culture The traditions, beliefs and working practices of a school are covered by this term.Other terms include school ethos or the values of the school.

Special needs This is a general and rather controversial term for children who need some form of extra help and assistance. It is not possible to give a precise definition as their needs can vary so much.

Special schools These schools are usually for children who have a particular impairment or disability. For example, in many countries there are schools solely for deaf children; those with visual impairments or those with intellectual disability.

Special units / ***special classes*** An ordinary school may set aside a number of classrooms especially for children with special needs.

Special teachers We use this term to refer to teachers who work in special schools or in ordinary schools with particular responsibilities for children with 'special needs'. These teachers usually have obtained some extra training.

Teaching strategies Actions that teachers can take when presenting lessons or interacting with children to assist their learning.

(Taken from UNESCO (2001) *Understanding and Responding to Children's Needs in Inclusive Classrooms, a Guide for Teachers*
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