Workshops - October 2024

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OVERVIEW
Building collaborative Learning Communities
Working together towards common goals

Warm welcome

➢ The importance of creating Learning Communities in schools/neighbouring schools

➢ Implementing inclusive practices- Creating an environment where all Ss have the opportunity to participate and learn

➢ Use of Language Rooms/ Computer Labs

➢ Peer Observation

➢ Co-teaching

➢ Reflective Teaching

➢ Project 1/Organisation of Debates- Gymnasia - 1st year

➢ Project 2/Organisation of peer-to-peer social-awareness seminars-Lycea

➢ Project 3/ Sharing Best Practices among colleagues- November

➢ Project 4/English Literature week- It will last 7 working days: 21st - 28th March 2025

Learning Communities

▶ The term "learning communities" (LC) is an instructional strategy where people work together towards a common goal (Laufgraben, J. L., & Shapiro, N. S. (2004).

▶ Effective communities are both aspirational and practical.

▶ They enable teachers/students to share results and learn from each other, thereby improving their ability to achieve rapid yet significant progress.

https://www.eenet.org.uk/resources/docs/Index%20English.pdf

▶ The Index for Inclusion is **a set of materials to guide schools through a process of inclusive school development**. It is about building supportive communities.

Learning communities

- How do we create successful collaborative learning communities in our schools or with neighbouring schools?

- 2 minutes to discuss the question with your colleagues

Creating learning communities in schools

- Establishing a shared vision/beliefs /values - will guide your work/increase vulnerability with each other/build trust

- Collaboration/Working together to find solutions

- Working together towards common clear goals - sharing best practices among colleagues

- Reflecting on practices with colleagues- discussing ideas, engaging in non-judgemental dialogue. Setting questions after teaching- How do we respond when Ss don't learn?

- Peer-observation- setting specific goals of observing/ Do the Ss participate in the learning-teaching process? Being a critical friend is of utmost importance

- Co-teaching

- Participating in Erasmus+ projects/e-twinning programmes/ European Day of languages / Europe Day/organising interschool debates/ school activities: treasure hunts/games/ songs/decoration of walls with English proverbs

- Proper coordination time- Sharing views/practices about methodology/use of technology/use of language rooms-computer labs

- Online learning communities/ forums/use of teams to share material

Inclusive classroom practices

- How do you create a safe classroom environment where all Ss are actively involved?

- Two minutes to share views with your colleagues

An inclusive classroom environment

THE TEACHER…

▶ gets to know students' individual backgrounds/skills/knowledge

▶ sets clear goals/rules

▶ creates a classroom where all Ss are valued/feel comfortable of participating in class activities/ Differentiated activities - (Think-Pair-Share/ Pair-Group work)

▶ facilitates student autonomy/independence

▶ communicates high standards for student learning - never underestimates his/her Ss' abilities

▶ shows respect for all questions and comments

An inclusive environment

THE TEACHER…

▶ encourages active participation/ challenges Ss to think deeply/critically

▶ creates an environment in which it is ok to make mistakes

▶ uses constructive feedback with praise/ encourages Ss to reflect on what they've learnt- written reflection - exit slips

▶ encourages Ss to think about/work on the mistakes they've made/ Self-peer-assessment exercises/checklists/ assessment criteria

▶ uses proper summative assessment- T designs clear questions/ Appropriate CEFR Level/ Time/Length/ Grammar - Vocabulary in context/ tasks in real-life/authentic situations/ validity/ reliability/use of assessment criteria for writing

▶ uses formative assessment strategies- self/peer assessment with the use of rubrics-checklists/ project work

Implementing The Cambridge Life Competences

▶ Creative Thinking

▶ Critical Thinking

▶ Learning to Learn

▶ Digital Literacy

▶ Communication

▶ Collaboration

▶ Social responsibilities

▶ Emotional Development

Our Ss should enhance all life competences

The engaging and collaborative nature of the English language classroom is the perfect place to develop and embed these key qualities.

Use of language rooms/computer labs

➢ Ss should become autonomous learners- T is the facilitator in the learning process

➢ Differentiation- Ss choose their CEFR level (A1-C1)/ Skills they want to improve

➢ Ss work on the following suggested websites **on their own**:

➢ www.learnenglishteens.britishcouncil.org skills

➢ https://ed.ted.com/

➢ https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/learning-english/activities-for-learners/b1g055-family-holiday

➢ https://english-e-reader.net/

➢ https://www.merriam-webster.com/games/commonly-confused-quiz-2

➢ Use of online dictionaries- Oxford/Cambridge/Longman/Merriam-Webster/Thesaurus- Ss do research tasks to prepare for a project

➢ Supplementary book material

Ss keep a record in their notebooks

Integrating Listening/Speaking/Reading/Writing skills into our lessons

- ▶ **Listening/viewing** - Reconsidering how often Ss practise listening/viewing in class- **These skills should be enhanced**

- ▶ **Speaking** - How often do you give Ss the opportunity to speak?/ pairs/groups- Do you set clear goals/ time limits? Do you encourage them to speak?/ Do you give them appropriate feedback?

- ▶ **Reading**- Pre-while-post exercises (Pre-teaching vocabulary)

- ▶ **Writing** - Give Ss the Assessment criteria / Do Ss reflect on their mistakes?

    Practical techniques / ideas for correcting

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/professional-development/teachers/assessing-learning/articles/error-correction

Think-Pair-Share cooperative learning activity- to be practised every lesson

Pre-teaching vocabulary

▶ "When teachers pre-teach vocabulary, they introduce unfamiliar terms to students before they begin to read the text, and **students have a heightened awareness of the vocabulary** that they will encounter while reading." (Miller and Veatch, 2011, p.19)

▶ Pre-teaching vocabulary reduces the number of unfamiliar words the students will encounter in the text and **boosts vocabulary acquisition**. (Adolescent Literacy, 2007, p. 16)

▶ https://www.ouryellowbench.com/post/creative-ways-to-pre-teach-vocabulary-for-language-learners

▶ Interactive Word walls/ Include word - visual representations - sounds

▶ Infographics - visual representations of information or data, e.g. a chart or diagram (to cater for all Ss' needs)

"a good infographic is worth a thousand words"

▶ Autonomous learning - Ss look words up in an online dictionary- Language Rooms/Computer Labs

Peer Observation is a ...

▶ way to obtain information on student's knowledge/performance

▶ tool to provide constructive feedback on teaching practices

▶ means to develop your expertise and your own role as a teacher and manner of teaching/ New insights into aspects of teaching

Agreeing on the format of the observations

▶ Both teachers should agree on the focus of the observation in advance

▶ **Ts identify 2 objectives to be observed**. For example: Participation of Ss in the teaching-learning process/ Implementation of the strategy THINK-PAIR-SHARE- How Ss interact- How it works

Development Cycle

▶ Planning beforehand - Both Teachers work together

▶ Observation process

▶ Feedback and reflection- Teachers to move forward

▶ Both teachers teach with a new perspective/ Teachers feel more confident

Follow-up

▶ The observer and the observed should meet soon after the observation

▶ The focus should be on identifying the strengths of the teaching observed as well as the sharing of practical ideas as to how the teaching might be improved

Being a critical friend

▶ Establishing a climate of non-judgmental professional interest/friendly relationship is of great importance for both teachers

▶ A stronger sense of reflection on our practice

Why Co-Teaching?

Enhancement of Professional development

▶ Newly-appointed teachers work together with more experienced teachers

▶ 2 experienced teachers collaborate to teach in the same class

▶ Provides for more flexibility and innovation in the EFL classroom.

▶ **Improves learning opportunities for students, including students with disabilities or special educational needs.**

Co-Teaching

- Ts teach in the same class

- Ts implement different skills(Listening/viewing/Speaking/Reading/Writing) in a 40/45-minute lesson

- Ts divide teaching instruction. They decide beforehand who is going to teach what

- It requires both teachers to have compatible personality and teaching styles- Ts should click

- When two teachers really jell and they both know the subject well,

  team teaching is something to behold

One Teaches - One Assists

▶ One Teacher keeps primary responsibility for teaching

▶ The other teacher circulates through the classroom providing assistance to all Ss

Co-teaching-Students' perspectives

▶ Improves students' understanding of their lessons

▶ Co-teachers become better caretakers of students' needs than single teachers

▶ Lessons become more motivating/interesting as there is more interaction in class

Reflective Teaching

When teachers engage in reflective teaching, they…

- evaluate their own teaching practice
- consider student feedback
- make revisions to improve student learning

REFLECTIVE TEACHING…

- helps teacher's professional development and continuous improvement over time
- **leads to the improvement of Ss' learning outcomes**

4 projects for 2024-2025

➢ **Project 1**: Organisation of inter-school debates- Gymnasia - 1st year

➢ **Project 2**: Organisation of Peer-to-Peer Social Awareness Seminars - Lycea

➢ **Project 3**: Sharing Best Practices among colleagues - Teachers share their work in a day-event-November

➢ **Project 4**: English Literature week-It will last 7 working days: 21st - 28th March 2025. Schools can create their own activities

Exit card

- What do you take away from today's workshop?

- Other issues concerning us as professional teachers

- Suggestions for future workshops

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