



"We make learning special"

Teaching English to Young Learners

This course is aimed at practitioners as well as academic managers in the young learner field. The term 'young learners' should be taken to cover the 6 - 13 age range. There will also be a *Teaching English to Very Young Learners* (3-6 age range) component.

Objectives

The course aims to develop and extend teachers' awareness of the principles and practice of teaching English to young/very young learners.

Content

The course will examine and explore the following areas:

- Theories of young/very young learner cognitive development and first language learning; differences between young learners and very young learners;
- A range of approaches for teaching English as a second or foreign language to young/very young learners and how such approaches may be realised in the classroom; the role of play and importance of receptive language in teaching very young learners;
- Materials for teaching English to young/very young learners, both the evaluation of published materials and design and creation of teacher-made materials;
- Assessment of young/very young learners;
- Initial syllabus and course design;
- Classroom observation as a means of revealing and informing practice;
- Insights into cultural and intercultural issues

Methodology

NILE courses are taught in a range of ways but the underlying principle is that all courses should be taught using methodology that course participants can adapt and emulate for themselves on returning to their classrooms. Sessions are built in to each course to allow course participants to reflect on the way that they have been taught and review the suitability of the strategies and techniques for their own circumstances. With a course on Teaching Young Learners the 'loop input' approach will obviously not apply to some of the approaches adopted.

Preparation and follow-up

All course participants are issued with a pre-course questionnaire to be returned prior to the course. This is to ensure that the areas of most significance to participants within the general course area are covered. In addition, participants are sent an indicative reading list covering some of the topics to be dealt with on the course. Participants are also asked to bring along to the course information and materials relating to any project they are involved in or have recently completed, which could benefit from supportive critical comment during the course.

Towards the end of the course there is a "where next" session with the group as a whole, or with individuals. This session is used to review the concepts and practices dealt with on the course and to see how they will apply to the participants' work place on their return. Open-ended follow-up consultation is available to all course participants after the course, via email/internet access.

Timetable

All courses are held between the hours of 9 am and 5.30 pm. The working day normally starts at 9.15 am and ends at 3.30 or 5.15pm. All courses last for a minimum of 25 hours per week.

In addition to the main course team, courses often have one or more visiting guest speakers. These are usually well known figures from the world of EFL/ESL who have published and lectured widely. Occasionally they are people who are well-versed in the changing face of Britain and the role of English in the world-wide community.

Since NILE's courses are for serving teachers or teachers in training, these sessions with visiting speakers, along with the extra curricular programme, represent an ideal opportunity for course participants to mix socially and professionally with teachers from a wide variety of different countries and contexts.

All of NILE's courses for teachers include a significant English language improvement element dealing with a variety of aspects of the English language.