



Unusual Talents

Focus: Giving teachers a learners' eye view

Materials needed: A talent for a skill and associated equipment



Use the QR code to find out more and see more cards in the NILE A-Z training activity series!

Aims

- To encourage teachers to consider how it feels to be a learner again
- To discuss learning attitudes and experiences

Procedure

1. You need to identify someone with an unusual skill or talent which you can use as the basis for an intensive teaching / learning experience. This could be, for example, juggling, origami, playing the spoons, or beatboxing. It could be your own talent, one of the trainees, or an invited guest. NB. If it involves equipment, you need to have enough for each trainee to do it themselves afterwards.
2. Give a brief demonstration of the skill performed expertly.
3. Invite trainees to go through a learning sequence with the new skill. With juggling, for example, this might involve practising with one ball, then two, and for the fast learners, moving up to three balls. Give them time to practise at each stage, and individual space and encouragement.
4. After the trainees have had time to experience the learning of the skill, and you have identified anyone with an affinity for it, or a fast progression, invite trainees to join you in a circle and spend a minute or two reflecting on the experience, (e.g. how they felt about being a learner, about the stages, about their own progress, about the demands of performing in front of peers, etc.).
5. Draw out contrasts between faster learners and those who struggled, and invite reflections on why this might be the case.
6. Invite reflections on these questions and invite trainees to draw parallels with language learning and teacher roles. Encourage trainees to discuss alternative ways of approaching the learning experience, and whether they'd be motivated to continue learning on their own.

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