

'Memories' EAL Intervention

Background / aims :

Working on the premise that the multi sensory approach to teaching and learning demonstrated in good primary practice would not only aid some pupils with transition, but also benefit EAL pupils whose Literacy needs were difficult to meet within the KS3 curriculum, an intervention was set up running for the duration of a half term. The aims were to increase EAL pupils speaking and listening skills, provide a scaffold into writing and produce individual books based on their personal life stories and memories.



What happened:

Working in a team teaching manner a diverse range of interactive activities was used to support learning. Dual planning focussed on ways to develop vocabulary and comprehension, organisation and sequencing of ideas, increase oral confidence and competence. After each session AfL was used to inform the subsequent session. The weekly two hour sessions gave scope for a variety of learning styles to be explored. Each session focused on a different type of memory e.g. earliest, sad, moving home etc. Mother tongue was a high priority and some oral work and parts of the writing were recorded in home languages.

Students were well motivated and enjoyed supporting each other using the small group learning situation profitably.

An outside visit was arranged towards the end of the half term enabling the students to experience and include a recent 'shared' memory into their writing.



Impact / outcomes:

The opportunity of working so closely and co-operatively with each other developed the students active listening and increased their verbal confidence to express ideas and organise thoughts. In addition teachers noted this had a positive impact upon their behaviour, as all students made valuable contributions.

Writing skills developed and pupil independence increased significantly as the context had a resonance and purposeful meaning to them. They were proud of the written outcome of their books and enjoyed seeing them publicly displayed in the school library. *'The sessions activated confidence and self esteem in all the students, they had a genuine sense of personal achievement once they completed their books.'* EAL Teacher

The students' improved attitude to learning engendered by the more personalised approach, enabled the teachers to target specific literacy needs.

Teachers valued the opportunity to observe and experience the different teaching and learning styles and the scheme of work and resources have been shared and used within the EAL department.

Support from parents was evidenced. Objects and photographs were brought in from home and each week the students related traditional stories and memories they had discussed with their parents.



Considerations:

The series of sessions could be easily adapted to meet other criteria and genres, such as an intergenerational letter writing project, and is flexible enough to accommodate a range of literacy objectives.

The generic oral and written activities could be incorporated into other curriculum areas.

An early identification and selection of the target group needs to be made prioritising EAL, literacy, and emotional needs.