

Working with the teacher

Team-teaching

We always say in training that the assistant's job is to get the kid talking, but we are aware that this is not as easy as it sounds. We also want the assistants to use their natural language and to help the pupils to progress in conversational English. When the teacher and the assistant work as a team, in the same room at the same time, it can make it easier for the language to flow. Here is an example of an activity, tried and tested on a class of 1èreL.

Topic : Love and Relationships

The students had worked on different family relationships and the relevant vocabulary. We also had worked on ways of greeting someone, according to the relationship you have with that person. They had worked on intonation and varying the pitch according to who you are speaking to and in which context. We wanted to get the pupils practicing this new vocabulary and to put it into dialogue form. However we didn't want them to write the dialogue. We wanted them to act it out, speaking spontaneously and even improvising, if possible.

We used the introduction to "Love Actually" as a support for our activity. At the start of the film, you see a scene in an airport where different people meet at the Arrivals gate. In 2s, our students had to create a dialogue for their assigned characters, imagining relationships and a narrative around their scene. During the sessions with the assistant, the pupils worked on preparing their scenario and the assistant and the teacher were able to circulate to help where needed, to add ideas, to ask questions and to correct pronunciation and intonation. This took two lessons. On the third lesson, the assistant was present with the teacher as the students acted out their scenes. Together the teacher and the assistant were able to prepare the students and then evaluate their work at the end of the sequence.

http://youtu.be/_tfmqTEBnX4

Another example of a video which lends itself well to such an activity is here:

<http://youtu.be/DKy4utFUN-k>