

Session 1 Young Learners are Different

(90 min session)

Aims: To develop awareness of how and why YLs are different to adult learners.

Materials: Card, Cuisenaire rods, Name poem from *Young Learners* activity 4.5 (Sarah Phillips, OUP RBT) ***Trainees need to bring along their YL coursebooks.*** You will need adult equivalents and sets of 6 pieces of card

Handouts: Summary of icebreakers, coursebooks, YLs are different

1. Introduction

Aims: Getting to know the group. NB Do these activities as this will form the basis of the subsequent discussion.

Do the following activities with the trainees. tell them they are going to do two activities that could be used at the start of a course. After, they will talk about how it felt to do the activities

1 Cuisenaire rods – People important to me.

5 mins

Tell the trainees you are going to talk about the people who are important to you. Choose and show a Cuisenaire rod and tell the trainees who this represents. Encourage the trainees to also ask questions about the person. Continue this process, with different Cuisenaire rods, for every other person you speak about.

2 Name poems (from *Young Learners*, Phillips 4.5 (see note above))

10 mins

Demonstrate this task with your name. Write your name in capital letters with each letter in a vertical line. Then suggest (or elicit) words or short phrases that describe you for each letter of your name. The trainees then do this for their own name then share them either as a Show and tell, or in small groups.

Total: 15 mins

2. Discussion

Aims: To identify how appropriate these activities are for different age groups

Write up on the board or dictate the following questions:

1. How did you feel as an adult doing these activities?
2. How would children aged 6, 9 and 12 respond to doing these activities?
3. What problems might occur?
4. What skills do the activities involve?

Allow trainees 5 mins to discuss, and another 5 mins to give feedback (Give out summary).

10 mins

3. What are the differences between Young Learners and Adults?

Aims: To develop trainees' awareness of why YLs differ.

Tell trainees to think about their YL classes so far and how they are different to the students they taught on their CELTA course / the adult learners they teach. Put on some music and get them to free-write all the differences they can think of. Then get trainees to work in groups of three or four to pool all their ideas. Give each group six pieces of card and tell them to write a different example on each.

For example, 'It takes them ages to turn to the correct page.'

10 mins

3b. What are the differences between Young Learners and Adults?

Demonstrate task. Take one piece of card. Read out what it says about YL behaviour. Brainstorm one or two reasons for this, e.g. They are smaller and are less adept physically, They weren't listening so they don't know which page to turn to. Tell trainees to work in groups and write reasons on the reverse side of the cards. Set a time limit: 5-6 mins. Monitor closely at this stage to be sure trainees are on the right lines.

10 mins

Feedback – milling

Aims: To share ideas about underlying reasons for YL differences in a learner-focused way.

Demo task Stand up, take a card and show it to someone else who reads the side that says 'YLs are different because ...' the person they show it to should offer a reason why. Then read what it says on the other side. Tell trainees the aim of the activity is to collect as many examples of differences and reasons in the next ten minutes.

10 mins

Round-up

Aims: To check learning. To demonstrate a game framework for feedback.

Take in the cards. Tell trainees you will read out either a difference or the reason – They have to guess what is on the other side. Play the game.

At the end, discuss the use of this milling activity as a task with children. It is best done with older children or young teens. Trainees might structure this activity so that pupils can only hear the information on the other side of the card if they ask in English. In this way, pupils help to police each other on the use of L1. The game at the end means that there is a reason for feedback and it allows the teacher to check any potential misunderstandings.

5 mins (Total: 60 mins)

4. What are the differences between Young Learners and Adults?

Aims: To examine why coursebooks are different in light of the 'Why YLs are different' theory. To provide some coping strategies.

Tell trainees to get out one of their YL coursebooks and sit with people using the same book. (You could do this by moving them in the way you move a group of 9 year olds about.) Tell trainees to look at their chosen book and an equivalent adult coursebook, and then brainstorm all the differences they can find. Draw a grid on the board:

Differences between YLs book / adults book	Why this is different	What to do about it

Tell trainees to think back to when they discussed why YLs are different and to apply this to differences in coursebooks for children and for adults. For example, there is a lot more writing in *Global* than in *Bugs World*. Next, tell trainees to pool problems they have with their YL coursebook, e.g. The children become unruly when they make things, such as a spinner. 10 mins

Next, join trainees in groups so they are talking about 2 books. Allow them 5 minutes to share ideas for dealing with the differences. Monitor and help out with ideas. 5 mins.

Group feedback on top tips for using YL books: Give out the handout. Trainees read this then ask any questions they have about the handout. Ask trainees to write in three things they have learnt in this session. 5 mins

5. What you can and can't transfer from the CELTA

Aims: To enable trainees to understand which activities you can and can't do with children's classes.

Write up two headings on the board, or have them on cards which you stick to opposite sides of the room:

You can so this with YLs

You can't do this with YLs

Read out the following activities and ask trainees to either jump or run to the right side of the board or the room. 10 mins (90 total)

You can do this with YLs	You can't do this with YLs
Use routines such as writing the day and weather at the start of class	Always start with a lively warmer
Contextualise	Ask 'Do you understand?'
Get pupils to say the word before they read it	Tell children to choose a partner from anyone in the class
Be friendly (but firm) and gain good rapport	Carry out an information gap activity without giving a clear demonstration of what to do
Check instructions	Expect children to be able to pronounce a word after seeing and not hearing the word
Personalise	Be their friend – they need rules and limits

Summary of discussion about ice-breakers

Handout 1

Using Cuisenaire rods

Potential problems – some older children might feel self-conscious. There might be something in their family that they don't want to talk about.

Skills practised – spoken fluency, describing people, use of present tenses, free task so learners can do it at their language level.

Likely response of the different age groups

6 year olds – they may want to play with them as if they are Lego. They might want to put them in their mouths or up their noses.

9 year olds – they might use the rods as 'puppets', they might also throw them, take each other's rods and get upset. They will need a *structured* demonstration and possibly a checklist of information to ask for and give.

12 year olds – rods appeal to tactile learners, they may help to provide a focus, potentially disruptive pupils or groups could start to throw them about.

Summary – who it is /isn't good for
Good for 9 – 12/13 year olds and adults.

Name poems

Potential problems – children who have not got good handwriting may get easily demotivated.

Skills practised – spelling, syntax, written form at word, sentence and text level.

Likely response of the different age groups

6 year olds – they will need clear prompts to help them brainstorm individual words before progressing to the text writing. With well-behaved classes and a very clear demonstration you could use this activity with this age group.

9 year olds – personal interest in the topic, structured task so it is easy to understand what to do, concrete product! They may get frustrated if they find the mechanics of writing difficult.

12 year olds – they will want to use more adventurous language and will like the element of problem-solving.

Summary – who it is /isn't good for
Nice activity for older children and young teens. Elementary level plus. It feels good for learners of Elementary+ who have limited language – they can produce a text from what they know. Problem-solving appeals to our need for challenge.

Children are different because ...

Handout 2

Young Learners are different because ...

- They can't sit still for long.
- They take a long time to write things like the date.
- They make a lot of noise.
- They don't say when they don't understand.
- They are little!
- They can't concentrate for long.
- They talk a lot in L1.
- They ask for help a lot.

This is because ...

They are less coordinated physically and they **need** to move.

Motor coordination is still developing.

Children like doing this.

They think it will reflect badly on them.

They are still growing.

Their memory and attention spans are still developing.

They often need to communicate something beyond their level.

They need reassurance and guidance.

Teenagers are different because ...

- They are often sulky.
- They love talking in L1 to their friends.
- They ignore the teacher.
- They don't want grammar but they don't want lots of games.
- They are unenthusiastic.
- They don't like lots of running games.

This is because ...

This is because of the way they feel. It isn't personal.

They want to chat. However, they shouldn't be doing this all the time.

They need less reassurance. They want to show their 'adulthood'

Grammar = hard work, games = children. Try using less gamey activities

It isn't 'cool' to be teen. Teenagers show their appreciation in far more covert ways than children or adults.

They are growing and have less energy. They want to do more mature activities.

YLs are different: coursebooks

Handout 3

Differences	Why	What to do about it
1. YL coursebooks often have a story theme or lots of different stories related to the topics in them.	Children like stories. This helps to contextualise language.	Exploit storytelling.
2. YL coursebooks often have a group of characters who appear throughout the book.	Children need lots of repetition and recycling so the familiar faces help provide continuity.	Use the characters to review and present language. However, base some of your lessons on other contexts to stop them getting bored of Sam, Katie and co.
3. YL coursebooks have lots of pictures and not much text. How do you get a lesson from so little?	Children need the colour and limited visual information, particularly the younger ones and lower levels.	Use task types that can be transferred to stretch the children and help your planning, e.g. Look for a minute and close your book and remember. True/False quiz about the text/story. Older learners can write questions for each other.
4. Books for older children are sometimes heavy on grammar	A lot of coursebooks for this age group are 'kiddified' versions of adult books. This is more common with some secondary books.	Go at the pace of your class – If you think they can't learn past continuous in one lesson, break it up and recycle. Don't be afraid to exploit the topic for other language areas too.
5. Some books have lots of grammar boxes or tables at the end of units.	The coursebook writers have probably done this to highlight the language area of the unit.	Use the listening, reading and stories to give exposure to the key language areas. Grammar raps can be used to highlight and practise grammar. Go to a workshop about children and grammar or read up on this topic.
6. There aren't many activities for language practice.	Children usually learn better when actively involved, not sitting and looking at a book passively.	Use the Teacher's book for alternative ideas.
7.		
8.		