

Session 4 Instructions

(90 min session)

Aims: To improve trainees' ability to give clear instructions. To show the need to reinforce language with tangible clues to meaning.

Materials: Squares of paper, a selection of greetings cards, card from Sarah Phillips *Young Learners* (OUP) activity 3.1 (you should have a ready made card and photocopies of the mouse), word cards for *draw*, *colour*, *stick* and *cut*, A5 pieces of card, scissors, glue, text from a *Young Learners*' coursebook, Treasure game from Carol Read's *500 Activities for the Primary Classroom*, activity 5.23 worksheets.

1. Knitting or some other complicated skill

Aims: To demonstrate the need for clear instructions

Give out squares of paper to trainees. Tell them they are going to make a fortune teller. Give complicated instructions and don't demonstrate i.e. 'OK, take the paper, fold all the corners to the centre, turn it over, do the same again, then fold it back on itself and put your fingers in the corners etc.'

Feedback: What did you learn about instructions from that? 5 – 10 mins

2. Demonstrating how to make a card

Do this with the card from Sarah Phillips *Young Learners* (OUP) activity 3.1. Tell trainees that you are going to show how you would do this with a group of 8 – 10 year olds.

1 Language presentation 3 mins

Aims: To provide the core language the children need to complete the task.

1. Mime the verbs *draw*, *colour*, *stick* and *cut*. Use the whiteboard and realia to reinforce meaning.
2. Play Simon Says – you say the verbs and the children mime the ones Simon Says.
3. Hold up the word cards, say the word and ask the children to mime and then say the word.
4. Test understanding of the written form. Hold up a word card and do a mime. Is this good? E.g. Hold up *draw* and mime *cut*.

2 Introducing the idea of a greetings card 2 mins

Aims: To give the children a reason for making a card.

1. Get the children sitting on the floor. Show them some cards and ask them when they think they were sent. Ask 'Why do we send cards?' and 'Who do we send them to?' If your lesson is near to e.g. Mother's Day you can use this as a focus.
2. Tell the children that in England children give their parents cards on Mother's / Father's Day and for birthdays. Show them the card you have made and tell them they are going to make a card for their mother / father / friend ...

3 Showing how the card is made

5 – 10 mins

Give a piece of card and a photocopy of the mouse (handout from Sarah Phillips *Young Learners* (OUP) activity 3.1) to each child. Demonstrate and explain that children should colour the picture, cut it out, fold the card in half and glue the picture on the front.

Once they are ready, children can colour and write messages in their cards, e.g. *To Mummy and Daddy / To Granny and Grandad / Love from ...*

Total 20 – 25 mins

3. Post-task reflection

Aims: The trainees will be able to identify key points in ways to give instructions.

Discuss the following questions:

- What helped you to understand what to do?
- What was difficult? Why?
- What was easy? Why?
- How did the teacher convey and check meaning?
- How did the teacher stage instructions?
- What is different about giving instructions to children as opposed to adults?
- Write a list of do's and don'ts for giving instructions to children's classes.

Feedback: show on an OHP or give out handouts with answers.

35 mins

4. Planning instructions

Aims: To give trainees the chance to put what they know into practice. To enable them to try out their instructions to see if they are clear enough.

Divide trainees into two groups and tell them they have 10 minutes to look at an activity and plan how they would give the instructions. At the end of the 10 minutes, they will demonstrate this to the other group.

Group 1

A running dictation with 11 – 12 year olds (use a short text from a Young Learners coursebook)

Group 2

Treasure game from Carol Read's *500 Activities for the Primary Classroom*, activity 5.23

Monitor and guide trainees e.g.:

- Making things easier – providing a grid for the treasure game etc.
- Using mime to reinforce meaning
- How will you show that instruction?
- How will you stop them racing ahead and getting lost / rowdy?
- Speaking at normal speed but emphasising key words
- Having a written text as a more permanent resource to refer to

45 mins

5. Peer teaching

Aims: To give trainees practice of giving instructions and positive / constructive feedback on how they did this.

Before they do this activity, tell the trainees to 'get into character' and act like the age group and language level.

Feedback

What did you learn?

What difficulties had you successfully anticipated with the task?

What difficulties had you not anticipated?

What else can you now add to your list of do's and don'ts?

60 mins

6. Peer / self observation – optional task

Aims: To enable trainees to reflect on their teaching and find current strengths and areas for improvement.

Video / audio record yourself or ask someone to watch you and write notes on:

1. What words / expressions do you use? Is this language that the children can easily understand?
2. How simple are your instructions?
3. How do you reinforce meaning non-verbally?
4. What visual help do you give?
5. What do you do to check meaning?
6. Is this successful? Why (not)?
7. Look at the plan. What difficulties with the tasks had you anticipated?
8. Is the planned response appropriate?
9. What problems arose as you were teaching the lesson?
10. How can you deal with them?
11. Can you use these strategies another time in a similar lesson?
12. Write things that are good about the teacher's instructions.

13. Write two bits of advice for the teacher to help him / her improve instructions.

7. Homework – preparation for the next session

Give out a blank lesson plan grid and explain that preparation for the next sessions involves this:

Trainees write a plan using the grid form for one of their children's classes. They should leave the after lesson comments column blank and leave enough space to write in a comment for each stage. They should do this soon after the lesson but not straight away. It doesn't have to be much – 2 pages is enough.

Suggest things like:

'It took ages to start the lesson as lots of them were late.'

'They loved making the fortune tellers – though it took far longer than I had planned.'

Instructions - Handout 1

Watch the teacher demonstrate how to make something. Discuss the following questions and make notes:

- What helped you to understand what to do?
- What was difficult? Why?
- What was easy? Why?
- How did the teacher convey and check meaning?
- How did the teacher stage instructions?
- What is different about giving instructions to young learners as opposed to adult learners?
- Write a list of Do's and Don'ts for giving instructions to children's classes.

Do	Don't
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Instructions – Answer key

Watch the teacher demonstrate how to make something. Discuss the following questions and make notes:

- What helped you to understand what to do?

The teacher showed us, repeated key words, spoke slowly but naturally, mimed and gave lots of practice of recognising the new vocabulary.

- What was difficult? Why?

Not understanding every word – this felt a bit strange. It was hard to pick out individual words when in sentences.

- What was easy? Why?

Pointing to picture cards. Listen and say if the mime was of the correct word. Doing the activity step by step with the teacher.

- How did the teacher convey and check meaning?

Mime, visuals, pausing and lots of repetition.

- How did the teacher stage instructions?

The teacher started with words and their spoken form, then moved on to the written form. The teacher mimed the process and spoke.

- What is different about giving instructions to young learners as opposed to adult learners?

You need to be so much clearer and check that they are with you all the way through the process. You need to effectively gain and hold their attention.

- Write a list of Do's and Don'ts for giving instructions to children's classes.

Do

Plan how you are going to

give your instructions

Use mime and pictures to

convey meaning

Speak slowly, emphasising key words

Give praise for following instructions

Don't

Give a lot of instructions

all in one go

Give only spoken instructions

Speak unnaturally

Get angry when the children

need more help to understand

Peer / self observation task - Handout 2

Video / audio record yourself or ask someone to watch you and write notes on:

1. What words do you use? Is this language that the children can easily understand?

2. How simple are your instructions?

3. How do you reinforce meaning non-verbally?

4. What visual help do you give?

5. What do you do to check meaning?

6. Is this successful? Why (not)?

7. Look at the plan. What difficulties with the tasks had you anticipated?

8. Is the planned response appropriate?

9. What problems arose as you were teaching the lesson?

10. How can you deal with them?

11. Can you use these strategies another time in a similar lesson?

12. Write things that are good about the teacher's instructions.

13. Write two bits of advice for the teacher to help him / her improve instructions.

Class:

Length of lesson:

Materials / Coursebook reference:

Aims:

Stage and aims	Focus	Procedure	Time	Comments by the teacher after the lesson