

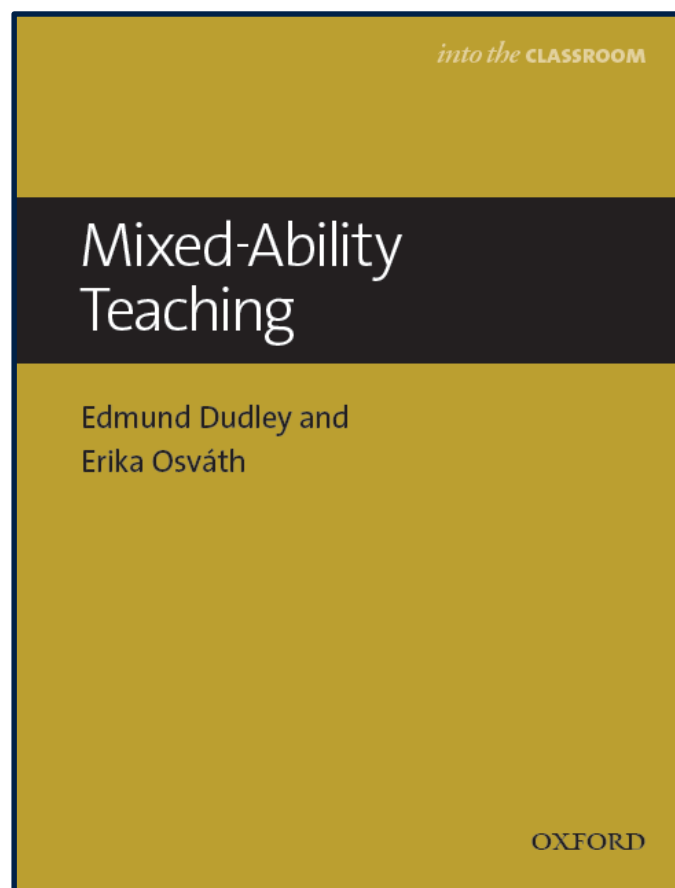
Engaging All Learners in the Mixed-Ability Classroom

Edmund Dudley

English Teachers' Day, Luxembourg

13 October 2016

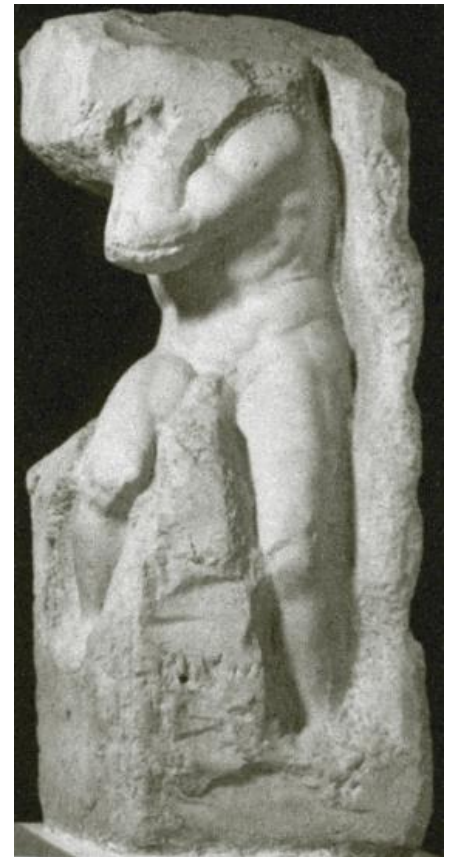




In this session

Preparing for a class and managing the classroom

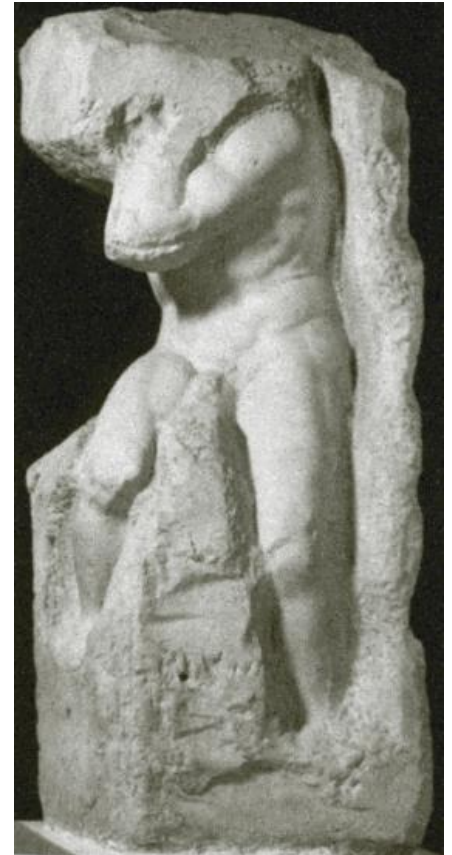
- What do we mean by *mixed ability*?
- Identifying variables and setting goals
- Handling materials and activities
- Approaches to differentiation
- Groups and roles:
a positive learning environment
- A whole-person approach



In this session

Preparing for a class and managing the classroom

- **What do we mean by *mixed ability*?**
- Identifying variables and setting goals
- Handling materials and activities
- Approaches to differentiation
- Groups and roles:
a positive learning environment
- A whole-person approach



What do we mean by *mixed-ability*?

Every learner has an individual range of levels.
Every class is a mixed-level class.

Scrivener (1994/2005:69)

What do we mean by *mixed ability*?

Differences between learners

Here are four ways that learners in the same class can differ:

- language-learning ability
- language knowledge
- learning style
- attitude to the language

Is that all?

Can you think of any others?

What do we mean by *mixed ability*?

Differences between learners

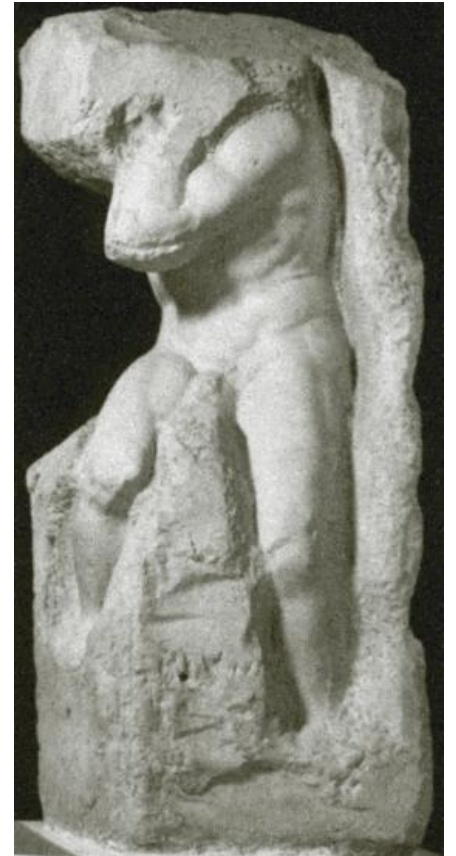
- language-learning ability
- language knowledge
- learning style
- attitude to the language
- cultural background
- mother tongue
- intelligence
- world knowledge
- learning experience
- knowledge of other languages
- age or maturity
- gender
- personality
- confidence
- motivation
- interests
- independence
- self-discipline
- educational level

Ur (1996:304)

What do we mean by *mixed ability*?

“Every block of stone has a statue inside it and it is the task of the sculptor to discover it.”

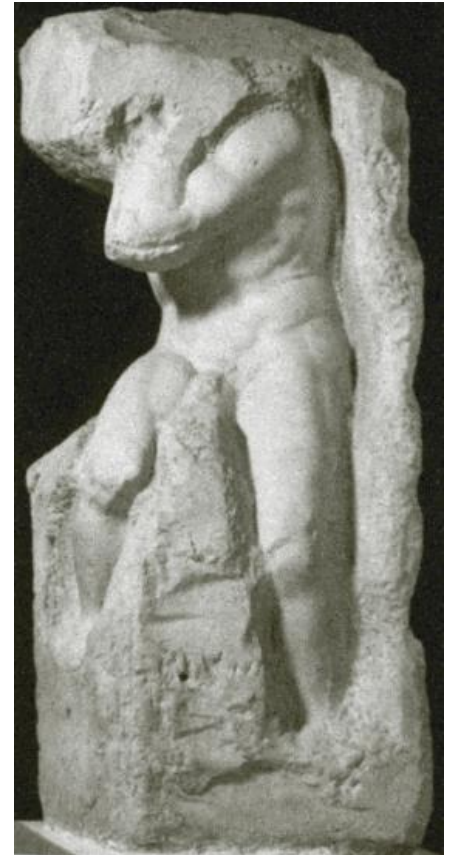
- Michelangelo



In this session

Preparing for a class and managing the classroom

- What do we mean by *mixed ability*?
- **Identifying variables and setting goals**
- Handling materials and activities
- Approaches to differentiation
- Groups and roles:
a positive learning environment
- A whole-person approach




Collecting data

Placement tests only tell one part of the story.
We also need to ask:

- Why are the students learning English?
- What specifically do they need to learn?
- What is their attitude towards learning the language?
- How do they feel about being a member of this group?
- What are their interests outside school?

Collecting data

Questionnaires, surveys and worksheets

Try this 

About me

Create a gap-fill text for students to complete about themselves. See the example below. The content and language level can be tailored to suit your students.

About me

My name is _____ and I'm from _____.

I live in _____, and in my free time I usually

_____. I want to learn English because

_____. I think I know a lot about _____.

I'm good at _____. I can _____. I don't

know much about _____ but I'd like to know more. I can't

_____ but I'd like to learn how.

People often say that I'm _____, _____, and _____

In the future, I'd like to _____ because

_____.

into the CLASSROOM

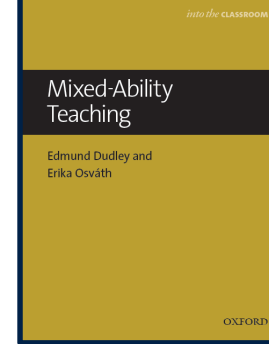
Mixed-Ability
Teaching

Edmund Dudley and
Erika Osváth

OXFORD

Collecting data

Predict and observe



Try this **Teacher predictions**

Invite a colleague to observe one or more of your classes. Choose two students that you would like to focus on. Write some notes about each student.

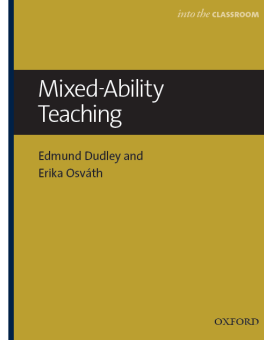
Think about:

- attitude towards learning
- personal traits and characteristics.

Make predictions about how you think each student will respond to the activities you have planned. Write simple sentences, as in Table 1.1.

Collecting data

Predict and observe



Maria

- 1 I think she'll talk in L1 to her neighbours during the first activity.

Observer's comments:

- 2 I think she'll be cheerful and enthusiastic about volunteering for the speaking task.

Observer's comments:

Daniel

- 1 I think he'll copy the answers to the first activity from Luis.

Observer's comments:

- 2 I think he'll be shy and will not volunteer for the speaking task.

Observer's comments:

Collecting data

Benefits of *predict and observe*



Trying not to *pigeonhole*



Promoting peer collaboration

Setting appropriate goals

Class goals and personal goals

Class goals		Personal goals
Language-learning goals		
Attitude goals		

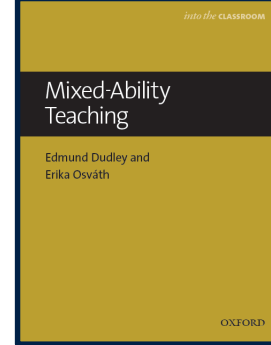
Setting appropriate goals

Class goals and personal goals - examples

Class goals		Personal goals
Language-learning goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete a group project assignment for every unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep a notebook for new words and review it after each lesson
Attitude goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer to help others whenever we can 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive on time for class

Setting appropriate goals

Goal points



Try this

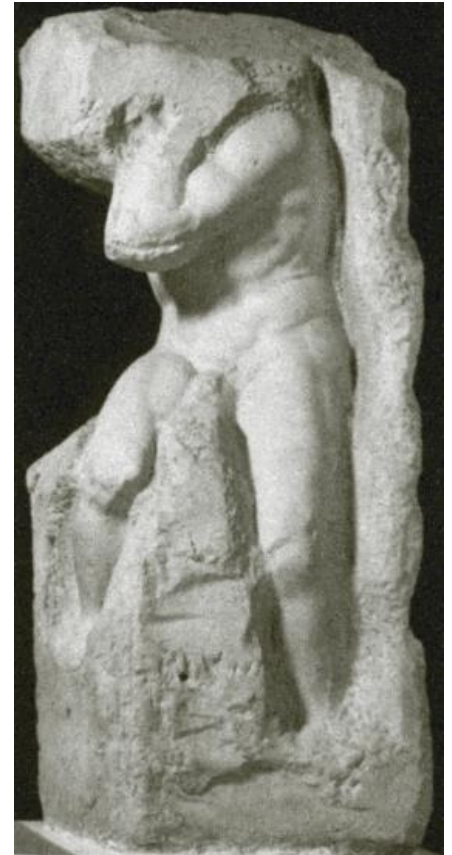
Goal points

Acknowledge the importance of goal setting by allocating students points when individual and group goals have been achieved. Keep a running score of the points awarded. When students have collected an agreed number of points, they can be awarded a top grade. Alternatively, points awarded for goal achievement can be incorporated into formal assessment, for example by including a goal-achievement component in continuous assessment. (See Part 7 for more information on assessing mixed-ability groups.)

In this session

Preparing for a class and managing the classroom

- What do we mean by *mixed ability*?
- Identifying variables and setting goals
- **Handling materials and activities**
- Approaches to differentiation
- Groups and roles:
a positive learning environment
- A whole-person approach



- Where do you think this is?
- How sure are you (1-5)?

- 1: We have no idea. Let's say...
- 2: Our guess is that it's...
- 3: It looks a bit like... / It might be...
- 4: We're pretty sure it's...
- 5: That's definitely...



Montreal



Predict the answers:

1. There is a lot of _____ in Montreal in the winter.
2. There are _____ between important buildings in the city.
3. _____ people use the underground every day.

Underground Montreal

The people of Montreal like being different. In other big Canadian cities, like Toronto and Vancouver, the first

lan

Fre

the

ven

thr

Wh

cer

link ten tra

shops, 200

hotels, two

500

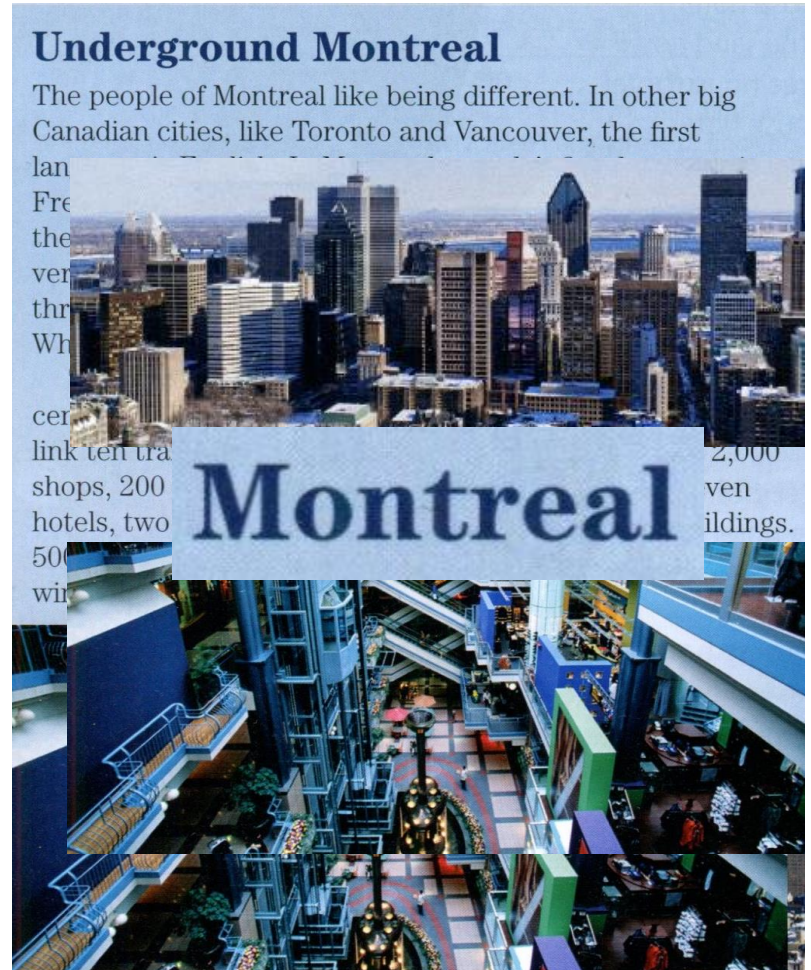
wir

Montreal

2,000

ven

ildings.



12 **SPEAKING** Work in pairs. Plan a Music Camp. Discuss the questions. Tell the class about your Music Camp.

- When / Where is the camp?
- What instruments are there?
- Has the Music Camp got a band, a choir or an orchestra?
- What styles of music do you play?
- What is your final performance?





- 1** Read the text about the new sports and answer the questions.
 - 1 Which sport is a team game?
 - 2 Which sport do you play in a park or on a special course?
 - 3 Which sport do you think is the most interesting?

- 2** Invent a new hybrid sport. Follow the steps in the project checklist.

Hybrid sports

Take two sports and put them together. What have you got? A new sport! There are a lot of these new sports – or 'hybrid sports' – around the world. For example, if you're into football, why don't you try one of these?

Footvolley

Octavio de Moraes invented footvolley in 1965. He wanted to play football with his friends on Copacabana beach, but in Brazil there was a rule: no football games on the beach. So Octavio and his friends invented a new game: footvolley.

It's similar to beach volleyball, but you play it with a football and you can't use your hands! There are normally two players on a team.



PROJECT CHECKLIST

- 1** Choose two sports in the box.

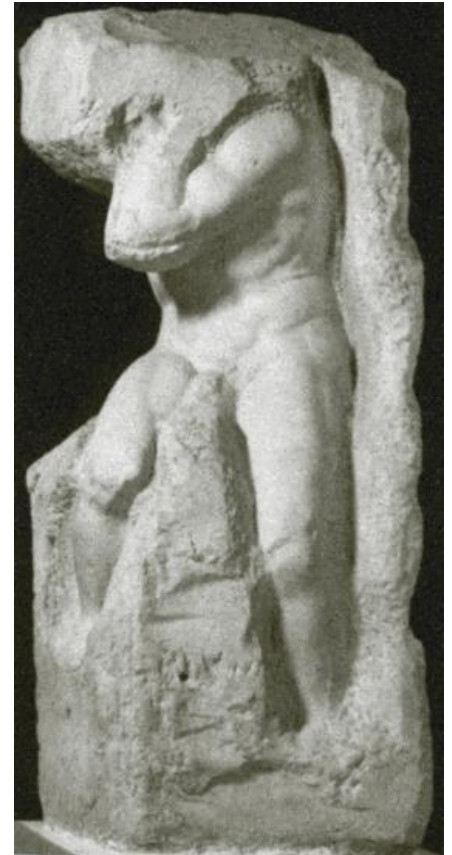
cycling football basketball
 tennis swimming
- 2** Think of a name for your new hybrid sport.
- 3** Write about your sport. Include:
 - the name of the sport
 - which two sports it is a hybrid of
 - what you need
 - where you play it
 - rules: what you can and can't do
 - why you think it's a great sport
- 4** Draw a picture of your sport or use a computer to make one.
- 5** Present your new hybrid sport to your class.
- 6** Collect all the ideas for the new hybrid sports and make a class poster.



In this session

Preparing for a class and managing the classroom

- What do we mean by *mixed ability*?
- Identifying variables and setting goals
- Handling materials and activities
- **Approaches to differentiation**
- Groups and roles:
a positive learning environment
- A whole-person approach



Differentiated learning

3 ways to differentiate

- Differentiating the input
- Differentiating the process
- Differentiating the output

Differentiated learning

Differentiating the input



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Spend! Spend! Spend!

How often do you go food shopping? If you don't go very often, you probably have no idea of the techniques supermarkets use to make consumers spend their money. Read on to find out more.

1

Do you know why supermarkets give people something to put their shopping in? It's so that they can buy more things. It also means that shoppers have their hands free to take things off the shelves. People usually don't realize how much they are buying when they use a basket or a supermarket trolley.



78 Cumulative review Units 1–6 Literature insight 3 Workbook page 96

Differentiated learning

Differentiating the input

Blue group:

Pick the correct answer from two options provided (a/b)

- 1 Shoppers with trolleys buy more because
 - a they don't have to carry things.
 - b they can see what they are buying.

Differentiated learning

Differentiating the input

Green group:

Match the questions and correct answers

- 2 Stores have everyday items at the back so that people
- 3 To find the healthy products on a shelf
- 4 Stores often play music

you have to look up.

so that shoppers stay longer.
have to spend longer inside.

Differentiated learning

Differentiating the input

Yellow group:

Questions only: Find the answers yourself

5 Shoppers buy sweets at the checkout because

Differentiated learning

Differentiating the process

Barmbrack

1. What is it?
2. Which country is it from?
3. When do people eat it?
4. What does it mean if you find a bean inside your slice?



Differentiated learning

Differentiating the process



Differentiated learning

Differentiating the process



Read the text and find the answers



People in Ireland like eating this special fruit cake at Halloween. Traditionally, there are a few surprises inside the cake. A ring in your slice of cake means true love next year, but a bean means a future without money.

Differentiated learning

Differentiating the process



Read the text and find the answers



Information gap task in pairs



People in Ireland like eating this special fruit cake at Halloween.

A ring in your slice of cake means true love next year,



Traditionally, there are a few surprises inside the cake.

but a bean means a future without money.

Differentiated learning

Differentiating the process



Read the text and find the answers



Information gap task in pairs



Guess, research and compare in groups



Differentiated learning

Differentiating the process

Barmbrack

1. What is it?
2. Which country is it from?
3. When do people eat it?
4. What does it mean if you find a bean inside your slice?



Differentiated learning

Differentiating the output

- Provide options
- Allow students to choose a task
- Use open-ended prompts



Differentiating materials and activities

You have 30 seconds.

→ Write as many different fruits as you can!

What are the strengths of this activity?

- Everyone gets a chance to contribute
- Stronger students do not dominate
- Students need to listen to one other
- Students can learn from one other



Differentiated learning

Differentiating the output



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

- **Go to the fruits and vegetables section of a market or supermarket near your home. Choose one of the following tasks:**

a.) Write down as many of the fruits and vegetables as you can in English. You can use your phone to take photographs of the display and finish the task at home.

Differentiated learning

Differentiating the output



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

- **Go to the fruits and vegetables section of a market or supermarket near your home. Choose one of the following tasks:**

b.) Which fruit/vegetable is

- the most expensive
- the cheapest
- the most delicious
- the most beautiful
- the heaviest
- the longest
- the ugliest
- not from your country

Differentiated learning

Differentiating the output



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

- **Go to the fruits and vegetables section of a market or supermarket near your home. Choose one of the following tasks:**
 - c.) Interview the person selling the fruits and vegetables – or the people buying them. Use your phone to record the interview. Translate the questions and answers into English.

Differentiated learning

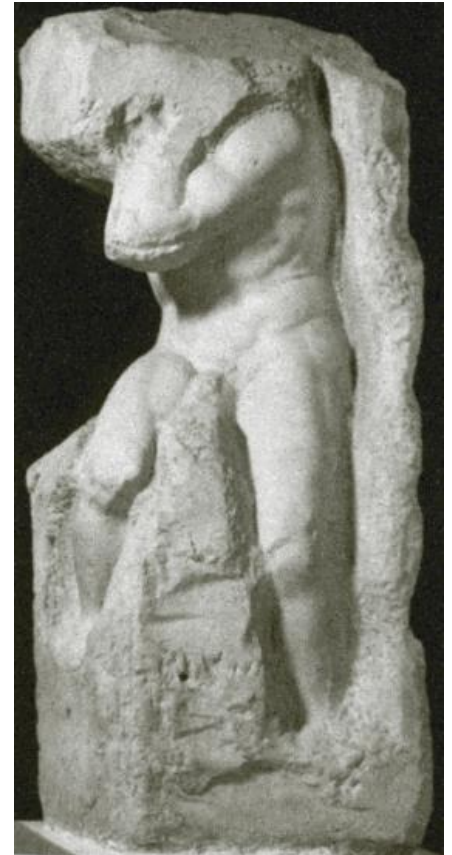
FAQs

- Doesn't it take loads of time to prepare differentiated activities?
- Does it matter which part of the lesson we use differentiated activities in?
- Won't students feel that differentiation = discrimination?

In this session

Preparing for a class and managing the classroom

- What do we mean by *mixed ability*?
- Identifying variables and setting goals
- Handling materials and activities
- Approaches to differentiation
- **Groups and roles:
a positive learning environment**
- A whole-person approach



Grouping learners within lessons

What criteria should we use?

Some
possibilities:

same level together

different levels
together

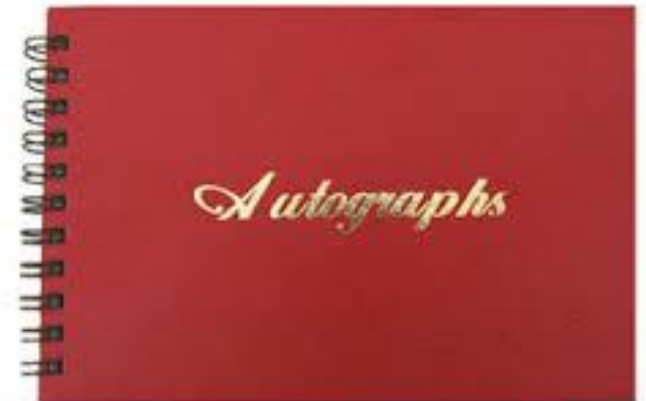
choice of topic

at random

Grouping learners within lessons

What techniques can we use?

- Post-it notes
- Grab the end of the string
- Lining up



Classroom management and classroom roles

- Learner roles
- Teacher roles
- Creating a positive learning environment



Learner roles

Day-to-day involvement in...

- ...decision-making
- ...supporting the teacher
- ...providing expertise



Teacher roles

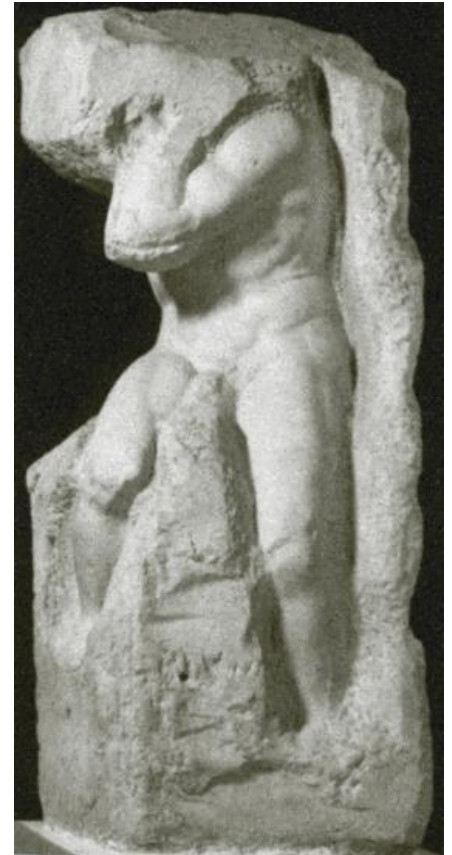
- Facilitating involvement
- Creating options and openings for involvement
- Promoting learning in frontal teaching



In this session

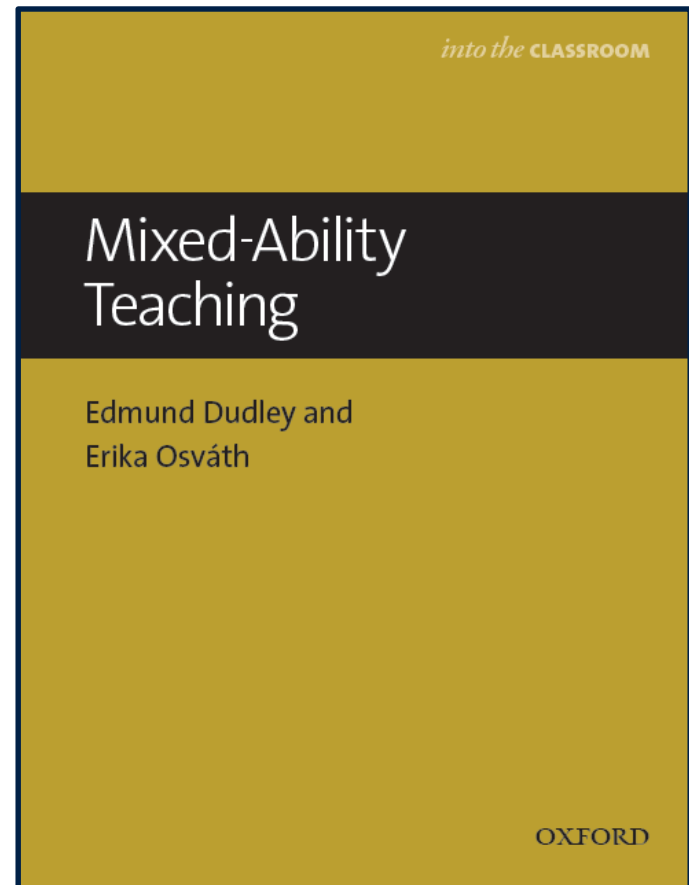
Preparing for a class and managing the classroom

- What do we mean by *mixed ability*?
- Identifying variables and setting goals
- Handling materials and activities
- Approaches to differentiation
- Groups and roles:
a positive learning environment
- **A whole-person approach**



A wider context for learning

“It makes sense to think of the classroom as a miniature version of the world outside, in which success depends not only on gaining knowledge, but also on having social skills, values, and life skills.”



Social skills

- turn-taking
- team work
- fair play
- respecting others' opinions
- willingness to compromise



→ reward attitudes as well as outcomes

Life skills

Thinking about:

- success outside school
- life challenges

Focusing on non-cognitive skills:

- not giving up
- being brave
- seeking advice
- getting help



Using group-work and pair-work

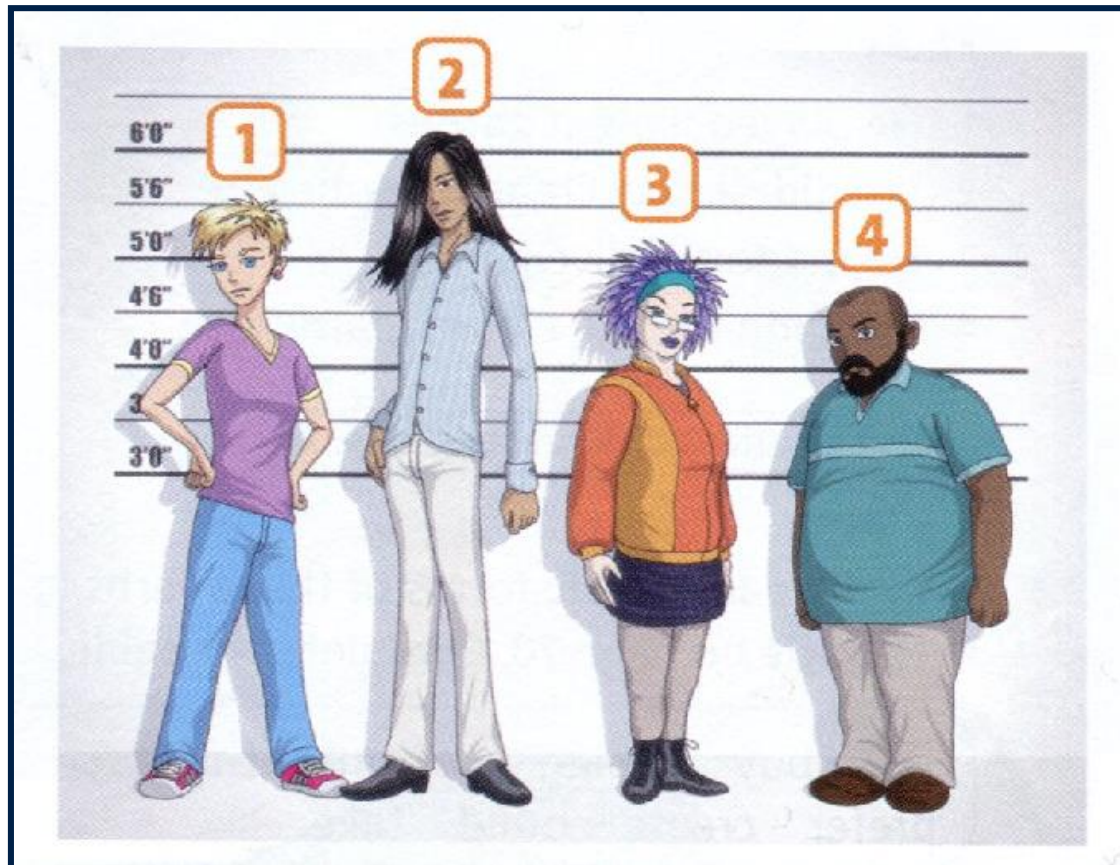
Mediation task



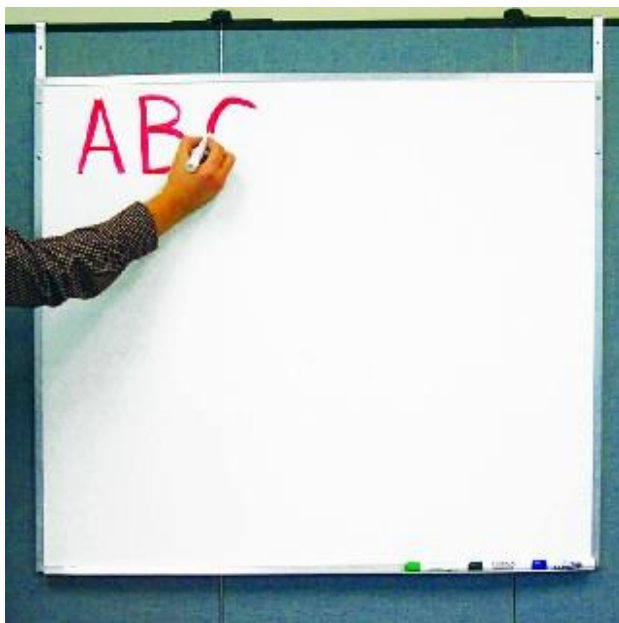
12 SPEAKING Work in pairs.
Write a dialogue between a customer and a waiter.
Use the menu

- Student A - Waiter: only speaks **English**
- Student B – Customer 1: only speaks **L1**
- Student C – Customer 2: translates between **English** *and* **L1**

Focusing on non-linguistic skills



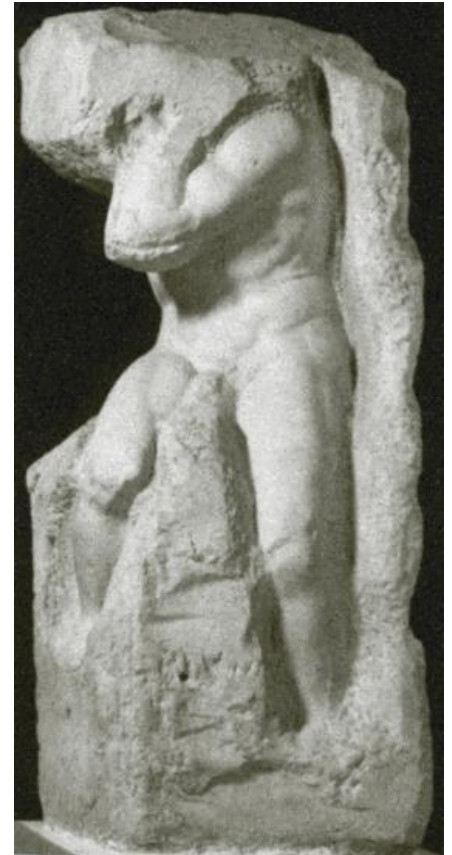
Rewards and incentives



In this session

Preparing for a class and managing the classroom

- What do we mean by *mixed ability*?
- Identifying variables and setting goals
- Handling materials and activities
- Approaches to differentiation
- Groups and roles:
a positive learning environment
- A whole-person approach



Engaging All Learners in the Mixed-Ability Classroom

Edmund Dudley

English Teachers' Day, Luxembourg

13 October, 2016

legyened.edublogs.org