

Activities and techniques for boosting learners' confidence and self-esteem

Edmund Dudley
Zürich, 7 March 2018



In this session

- What are the obstacles?
- Speak, pass, or nominate
- The value of *I don't know*
- Ways to ask questions
- Mixing in different skills
- Looking ahead

In this session

- **What are the obstacles?**
- Speak, pass, or nominate
- The value of *I don't know*
- Ways to ask questions
- Mixing in different skills
- Looking ahead

How do confidence and self-esteem affect students' answers?
Think about your ownn students.

How do you feel when ...

- 1 you have an exam in ten minutes?
- 2 your exam finishes?
- 3 you see a large spider in your bedroom?
- 4 friends or family members are arguing?
- 5 you arrive at a party?
- 6 you can't sleep?

In this session

- What are the obstacles?
- **Speak, pass, or nominate**
- The value of *I don't know*
- Ways to ask questions
- Mixing in different skills
- Looking ahead

How do you feel when ...

- 1 you have an exam in ten minutes?
- 2 your exam finishes?
- 3 you see a large spider in your bedroom?
- 4 friends or family members are arguing?
- 5 you arrive at a party?
- 6 you can't sleep?

Do you want to **speak**, **pass**, or **nominate**?

Speak

Pass

Nominate

→ I'll give an answer

→ Not now. Maybe later.

→ My partner has a good answer

Speak, pass, or nominate

Some observations

- The majority of students choose to speak
- Students who pass have a sense of relief...
- ...which often leads to renewed confidence
- Nominated students can pass!
- Students appreciate being given options

In this session

- What are the obstacles?
- Speak, pass, or nominate
- **The value of *I don't know***
- Ways to ask questions
- Mixing in different skills
- Looking ahead

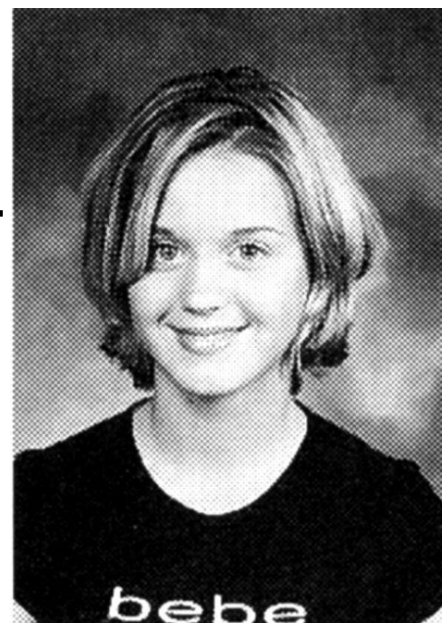
Valuing *learning*

- A student who knows all the answers has not learned anything
- Rewarding knowledge devalues the importance of learning
- *I don't know* is not the end of the road; it's the point at which learning can begin

Scale of 1 - 5

Can you identify the famous person?

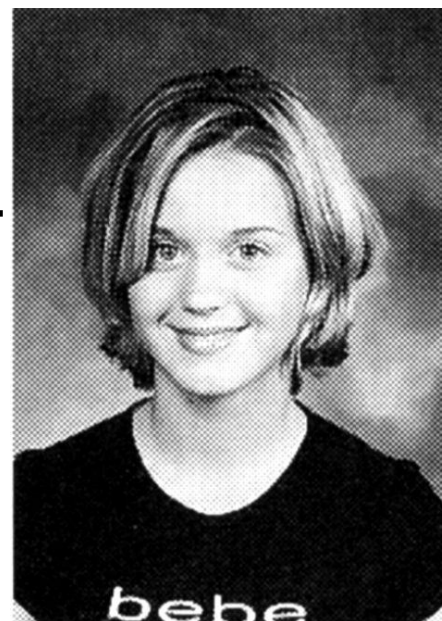
1. I have no idea, but I'll say...
2. I don't know, but it could be...
3. I think it might be...
4. I'm pretty certain it's...
5. I'm 100% sure it's...



Scale of 1 - 5

Can you identify the famous person?

1. I have no idea, but I'll say...
2. I don't know, but it could be...
3. I think it might be...
4. I'm pretty certain it's...
5. I'm 100% sure it's...



Katy Perry

I don't know

A beginning, not an end

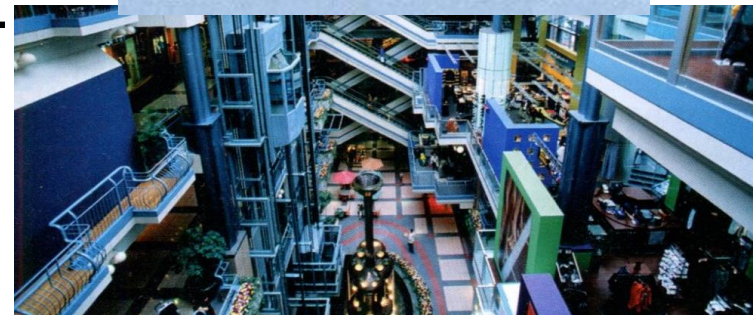
Where do you think this is?

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



I don't know

A beginning, not an end

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 system every day.

Underground Montreal

The people of Montreal like being different. In other big Canadian cities, like Toronto and Vancouver, the first language is English. In Montreal, people's first language is French. And when other people in Canada complain about the long, cold winters, Montrealers smile. Their city is also very cold in winter, and has a lot of snow on the ground for three or four months every year. But that isn't a problem. Why? Because they've got an underground city in Montreal.

There are 32 kilometres of tunnels under Montreal's city centre, and some of them are fifty years old. The tunnels link ten train stations, two bus stations, 1,200 offices, 2,000 shops, 200 restaurants, forty banks, forty cinemas, seven hotels, two universities and many other important buildings. 500,000 people use the tunnels every day to escape the winter weather.



The value of *I don't know*

- Becoming comfortable with uncertainty
- Developing the habit of speculation
- Flexing the muscle of curiosity
- Removing the stigma of *I don't know*

In this session

- What are the obstacles?
- Speak, pass, or nominate
- The value of *I don't know*
- **Ways to ask questions**
- Mixing in different skills
- Looking ahead

Closed questions

- concerned with what is true
- *right* and *wrong* answers



- e.g. “Which ones are winter sports?”
 “What can you see in picture 4?”
 “Do you play chess?”

Open questions

- subjective
- more than one possible answer
- room for different opinions

e.g. Which activity is...

...boring?

...awesome?

...addictive?

...healthy?



Offer *invitations to speak*

- more indirect way of asking
- slightly playful
- encourages students
- allows them to save face

e.g.

“Maria, you look like you have an interesting answer to this question...”

“Omar, it looks like you really want to say something...”

“Is there anything you want to add?”

Ask negative questions

Teenagers hate talking about things they love...

...and love talking about things they hate!

Ask negative questions

Teenagers hate talking about things they love...

...and love talking about things they hate!

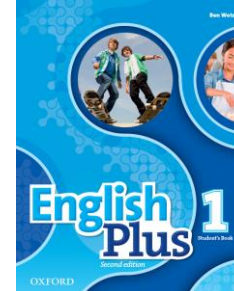
**What's the worst
song on YouTube?**

**What's the most
stupid ad on TV right
now?**

**Who is the rudest
shopkeeper in town?**

In this session

- What are the obstacles?
- Speak, pass, or nominate
- The value of *I don't know*
- Ways to ask questions
- **Mixing in different skills**
- Looking ahead



VOCABULARY Places in a town or city

1 Complete the words in the text.

Our town is very good for food! There's a nice Turkish ¹r _____ and an Italian ²c _____ too.

If you like sport, there's a ³s _____ c _____, and there's a nice ⁴p _____ – it's a good place for football.

There's a three-star ⁵h _____ for visitors to the town. And there's a small ⁶c _____ with new films every week, but there isn't a ⁷t _____.

There's a very good ⁸s _____ in our town – I'm a student there and I'm very happy!

I can talk about places in a town or city.

MY EVALUATION

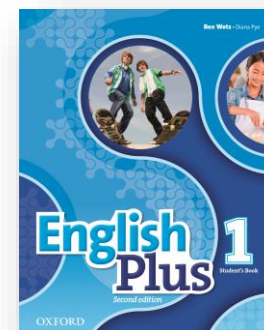


- Students complete the exercise
- Check their answers
- Ask follow-up questions
- ✓ Sts have to “own” their answers
- ✓ Effective for revision, too

Look at the picture for
10 seconds.
Memorise the items!



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS
BANANAS!



Did anyone notice the unusual word here? →

How many items can you remember?

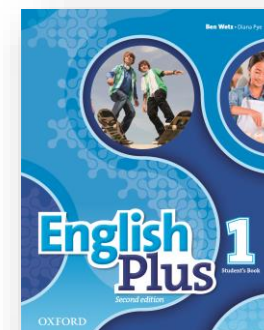
Work in pairs

- Students write down what they remember in Eng/L1
- Provide time for them to translate L1 → Eng
- Check:
 - Start with whoever had the fewest
 - Others listen and check off what's been said
 - Continue until all the items have been said

Look at the picture for
10 seconds.
Memorise the items!



OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS
BANANAS!



Pictures from words

Collaborative task

- On your own:
 - brainstorm words you associate with the topic of **summer**
- In your groups:
 - Pool your words
 - Decide on an image
 - Create a picture from words



- Share your image with another group
- Take it in turns to speak
- Listen attentively to others
- Ask questions
- Give positive feedback

I really like the
way you...

My favourite
thing about it
is...

Who did this
part? It's great!

In this session

- What are the obstacles?
- Speak, pass, or nominate
- The value of *I don't know*
- Ways to ask questions
- Mixing in different skills
- **Looking ahead**

Visualisation

1. A letter to my nine year-old self

Think back to when you were nine years old.

Were you worried or anxious about your future learning?

Were you afraid of anything in particular?

Think about the ways you have succeeded since then.

Write a letter to your nine-year-old self.

Explain how you were able to succeed.

Give advice!

Visualisation

2. A letter from my future self

Think about your future learning.

What are you worried or anxious about?

Are you afraid of anything in particular?

Now imagine it's the future. You have managed to succeed.

Write a letter from the future to yourself as you are today.

Explain how you were able to succeed.

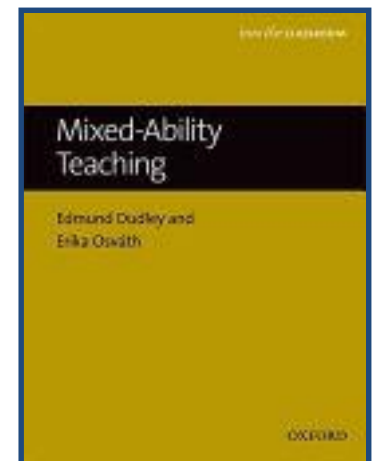
Give advice!

Visualisation

3. Backtracking from future success to now

- Think about a tough challenge ahead, e.g. a test
- Imagine yourself having succeeded

Close your eyes ... Imagine you're doing the test ... You feel calm and relaxed ... You're ready to begin ... You read through the questions on the test ... It isn't easy, but you know what you have to do ... You understand ... You can concentrate ... You complete the answers ... You don't understand everything, but you can do the task ... You read through your work again ... You've finished ... You're happy with it ... You feel good about yourself!

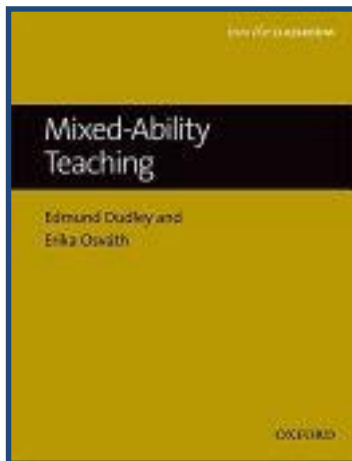


- How were you able to do it?
- What steps did you take before the test?
→ 3 constructive steps, e.g.

I read through my notes

I did practice exercises

I got someone to help me prepare



The real power of visualisation

- Breaking the cycle of negative thoughts
- Linking success to attitude
- Helping students develop vital skills

In this session

- What are the obstacles?
- Speak, pass, or nominate
- The value of *I don't know*
- Ways to ask questions
- Mixing in different skills
- Looking ahead

Activities and techniques for boosting learners' confidence and self-esteem

Edmund Dudley
Zürich, 7 March 2018



edtothemund

Slides here:

legyened.edublogs.org