

Creating a positive learning environment

Edmund Dudley
Serbia, April 2018

In this session

- Being a role model for positivity
- Making it motivating and rewarding
- Suitable tasks and rewards
- Games and activities that help



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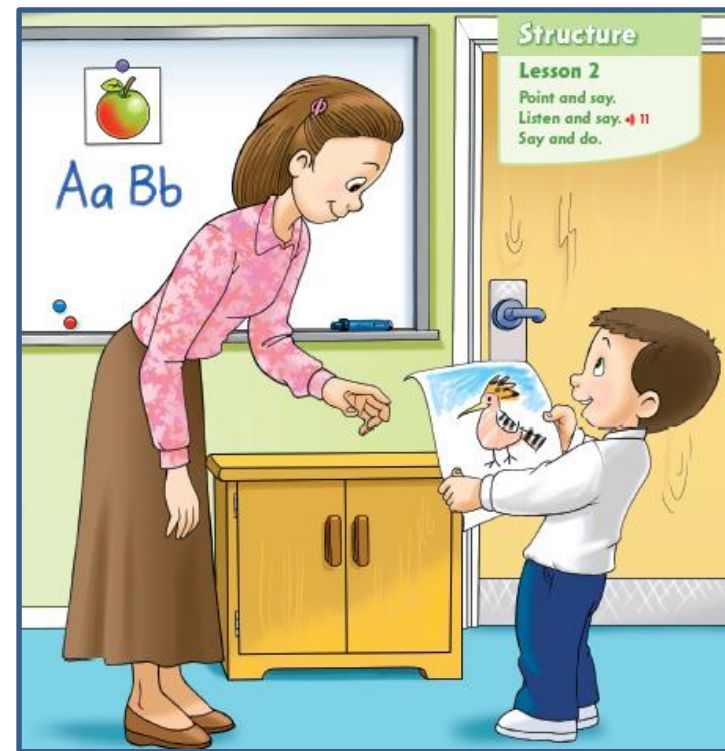
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Being a role model for positivity

What attitudes are students learning from us?

- how to handle setbacks
- how to persevere
- how to listen
- how to wait
- how to be curious
- how to be optimistic
- the value of hard work
- the importance of laughter



Which statements do you agree with?

- a) The boy can ride a bike.
- b) The boy can't ride a bike.
- c) The boy can't ride a bike yet.



The power of yet

Children often get frustrated

I can't do it

I don't understand it

Help them develop a growth mindset – using the power of yet

*I can't do it
yet*

*I don't understand it
yet*

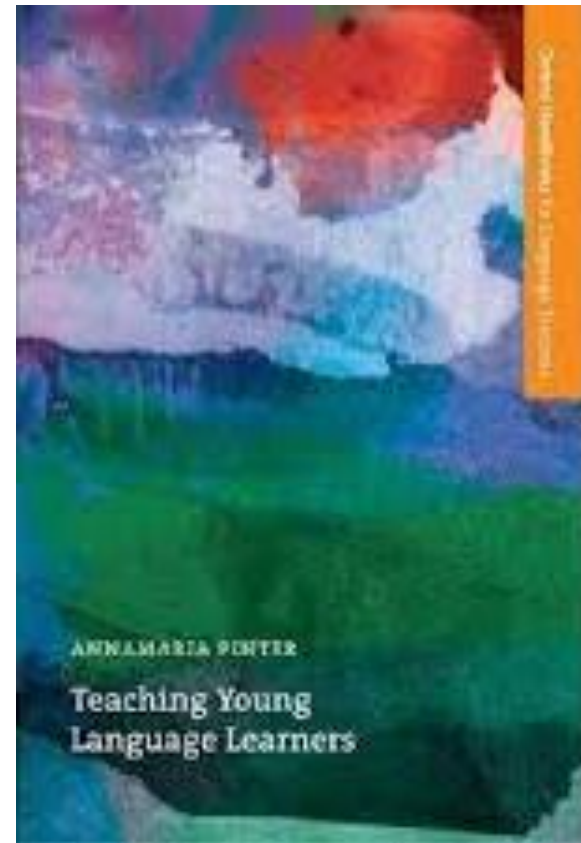
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It is essential that children of all abilities find learning a new language a motivating and rewarding experience.

Pinter (2006)



A motivating and rewarding experience

What makes the lesson motivating?

- the feeling of curiosity
- an appealing challenge

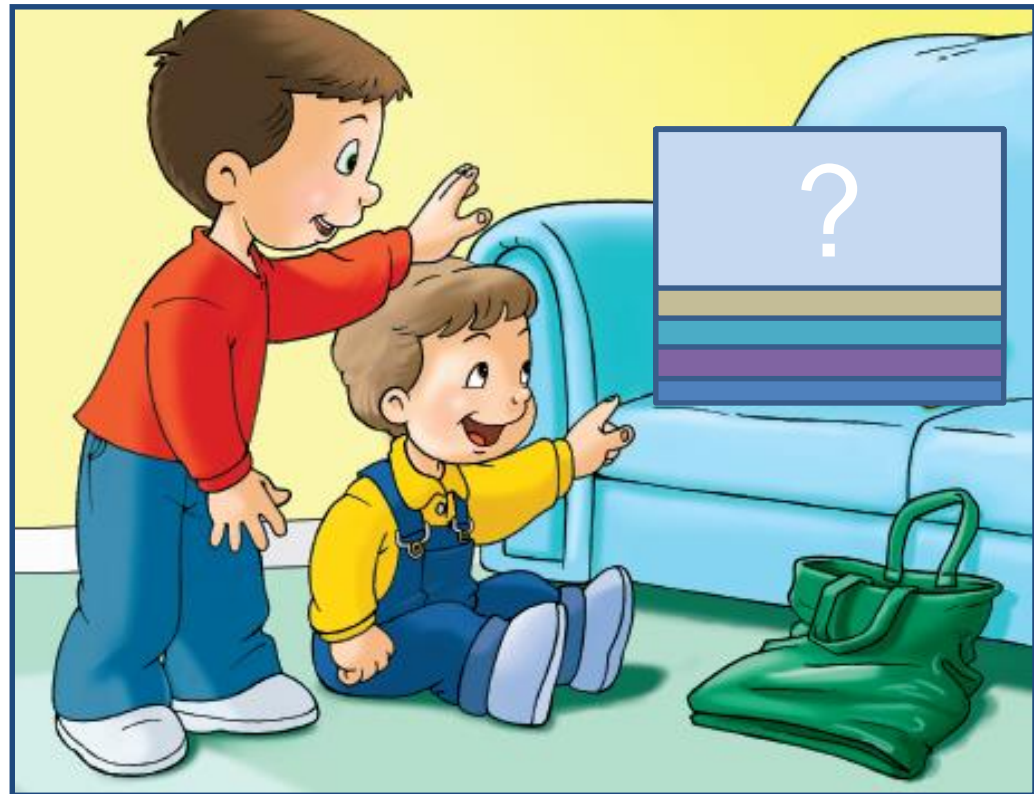
What makes the experience rewarding?

- Students feel good about themselves
 - as learners
 - as people

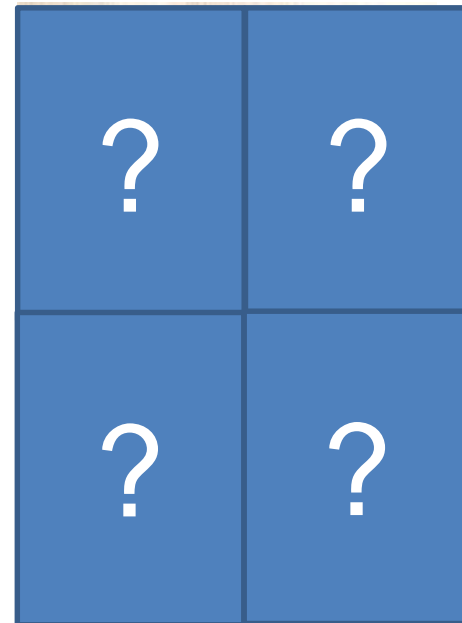
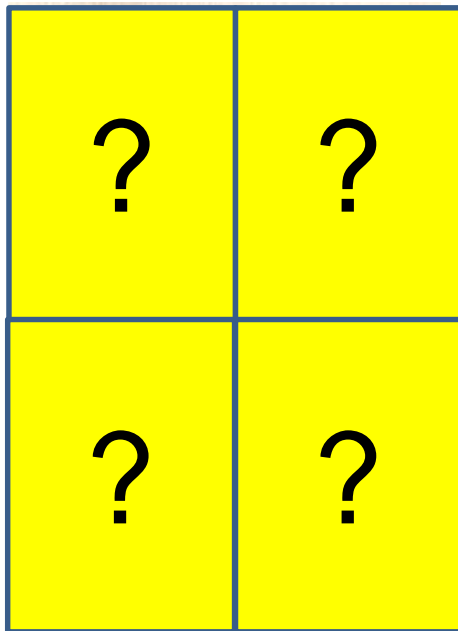


What are they excited about?

- What can the children see?
- Ask questions
- When the answer is *yes*, reveal more



What about me? What about you?



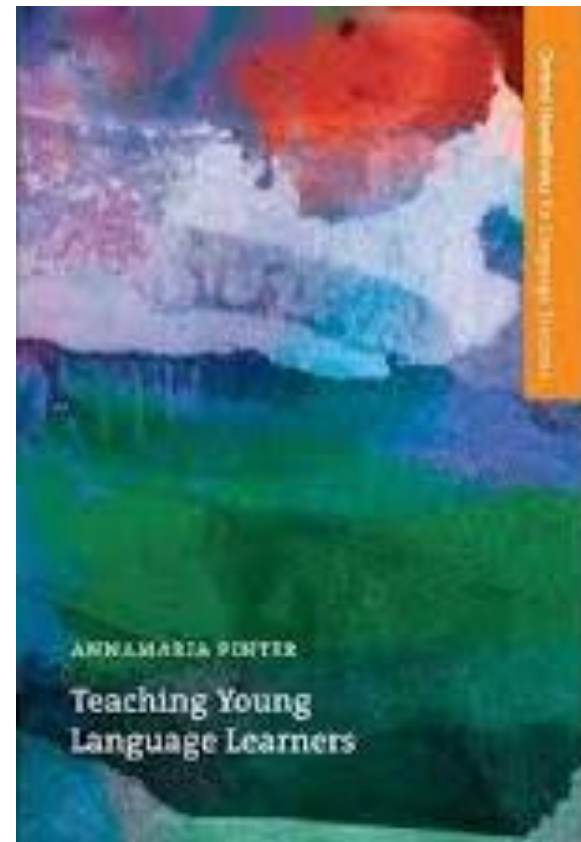
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It is the teacher's challenge to provide them with suitable tasks and rewards according to their individual needs

Pinter (2006)



Suitable tasks and rewards



Suitable tasks

- acknowledge that not all students are the same
- provide some differentiation through open-endedness

Suitable rewards

- take account of effort as well as achievement
- also promote important values and attitudes

Me in Numbers

Personal 1 - 10

- Create your own personal list:

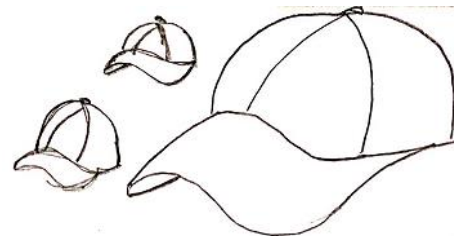
I have:
1 watch,
2 eyes,
3 baseball
caps...
4...



Me in Numbers

Work with a partner.

Listen to their personal 1-10 and draw



Then repeat their list back to them

1 book

2 dolls

3 sheep

4 oranges

5 cars

6 pencils

7 ducks

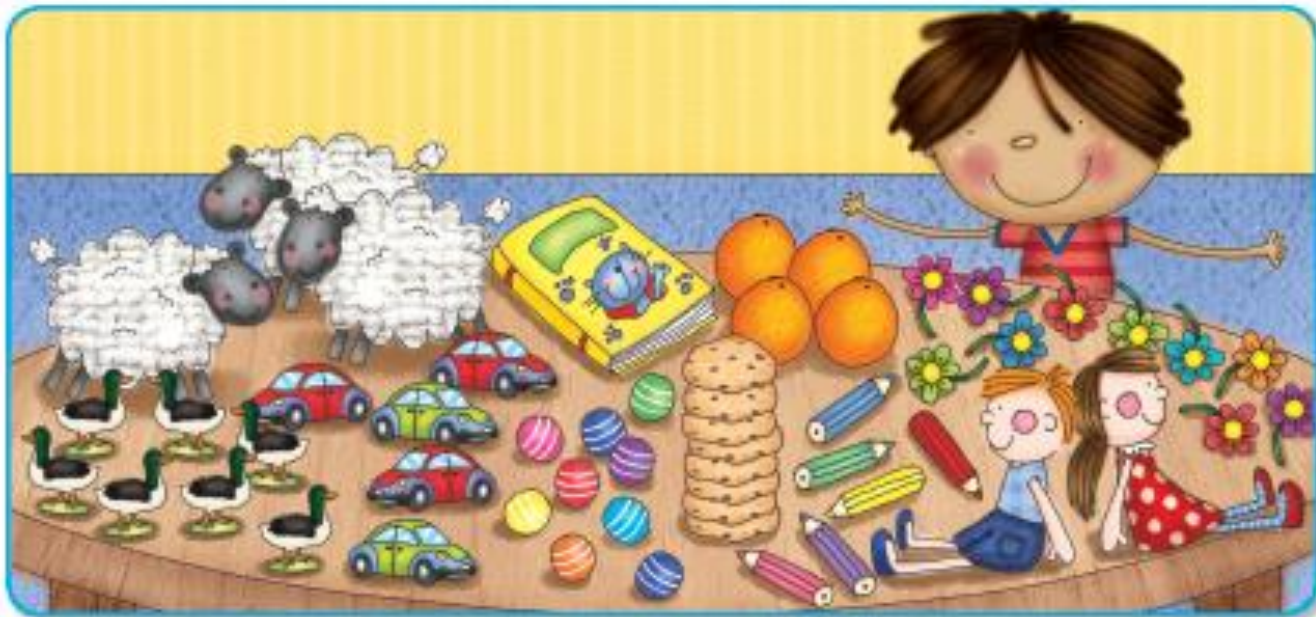
8 biscuits

9 balls

10 flowers

Count and remember

Did anyone notice the mistake?



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- **Games and activities that help**



Games: more than good fun

language
review

creativity

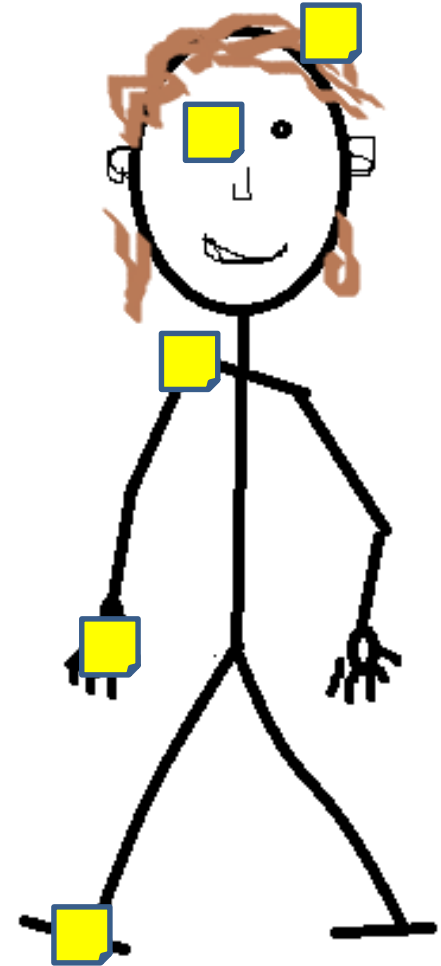
challenge

open-
endedness

inter-
personal
skills

Body bingo

- Write parts of the body on slips of paper
- Get volunteer players to come to the front
- Each player 'wears' five post-its on their body
- Select slips of paper one at a time
- Call out the body part
- Players remove post-its on that part of their body
- Winner is first player to remove all their post-its



Rewarding students

Possible criteria

- achievement
- effort
- improvement (in either)
- attitude towards learning
- attitude towards others
- any others?

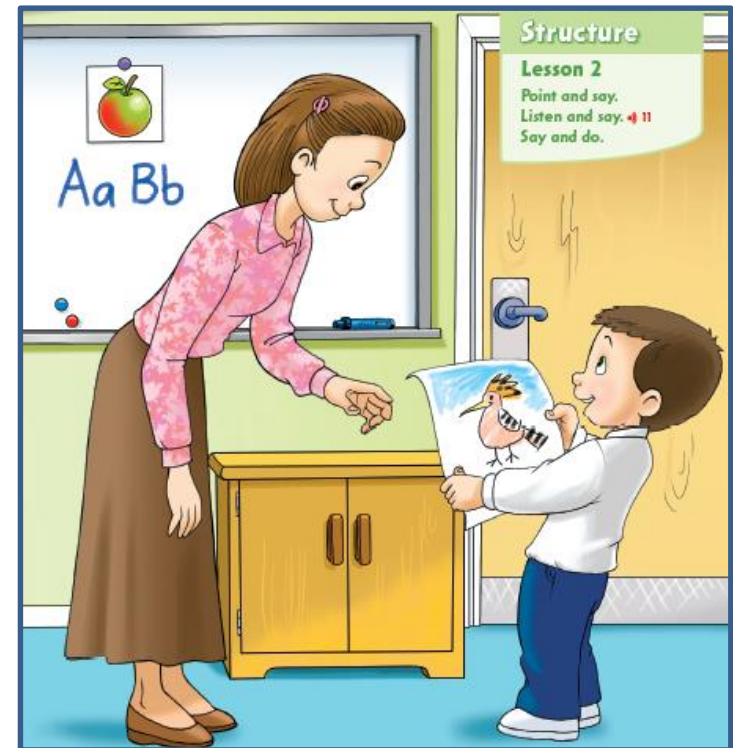


Rewarding students

Special roles

What do you think their role is?

- Chairman of the Board
gets to clean the board 😊
- Super Mouse
operates the laptop/tech
- Polar Bear Lookout
enters/leaves the room first



Communicating disappointment

- Students need honest feedback in order to improve
- Sometimes things are not OK
- Make sure students know what the problem is...
- ...and how the situation can be improved
- Give rewards for a reason
- Ensure rewards have been earned
- Withhold activities if necessary
- Focus on actions/attitudes/behaviour – not people
- Expect things to get better 😊

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References

Pinter, A (2006) *Teaching Young Language Learners OUP*

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