

Essential session:

How Children Learn

This very practical and hands-on session starts with participants directly experiencing a lesson for young learners and then leads into analysis and discussion of the theories and methodology of how children learn that underlie the lesson plan.

Optional sessions:

Assessing Young Learners

Assessment is a vital part of the learning process: it shows students how well they have done so far and what they need to do for the next stage of their learning. This session looks at teaching and assessment as one continuous cycle and explores assessment tools that reflect the way children learn in the class as well as evaluating their skills and knowledge. We explore structured assessment activities in class and also consider the advantages of continuous assessment, in particular the language portfolio.

Brain-Based Learning

This session looks at recent research into how the brain learns and at conditions and activities that stimulate learning. Environment plays a crucial role in the learning process and participants will consider how they can make their classrooms learner-friendly. They will explore activities that create relaxed alertness, ways of engaging and stimulating the learning brain, and strategies to help memory as well as investigating the role of positive self-esteem.

Classroom Dynamics

This session reflects on different aspects of classroom dynamics, exploring how routines and the atmosphere in class can affect the performance and behaviour of our young learners. Teachers will pick up a lot of useful tips, techniques, and rules for managing their young learners and creating a positive classroom dynamic.

Classroom Management

A session which involves reflection on different aspects of classroom management and investigation into how grouping, layout, and classroom language can aid the learning and teaching process.

CLIL – Planning Cross-Curricular Teaching around a Theme

This session introduces teachers to CLIL and its main features, starting from a theme-based approach. Teachers experience a number of practical CLIL activities and are asked to think about what is involved in planning CLIL sessions built around a theme. This session can be done in conjunction with the story-based CLIL session, or by itself.

CLIL: Planning Cross-Curricular Teaching around a Story

Starting from a story-based approach, this session introduces teachers to CLIL and its main features. It then goes on to examine what it means in practical terms to implement such an approach in our teaching. Teachers are asked to think about what is involved in planning CLIL sessions built around a story. This session can be done in conjunction with the theme-based CLIL session, or by itself.

Drama

In this session we explore different aspects of drama with young learners, through activities ranging from easy to more demanding. We look at the reasons why drama has benefits for all kinds of young learners and we try out a wide range of practical activities.

Grammar

This session raises awareness of the role of grammar in teaching learners who are too young to deal with abstract analysis, to use metalanguage to describe language, or to apply higher thinking skills. Ways of presenting and practising grammar in motivating ways that help students develop awareness of the patterns of language are introduced and analyzed. Participants will evaluate a series of coursebook grammar activities and brainstorm ways to creatively extend them.

Phonics Fun

Phonics is now widely recognized as a key element in helping young learners read and decode words. There are many different approaches to incorporating phonics into your lessons. In this session, we will look at ways to introduce phonics, as well as demonstrate a few simple and fun activities for your classroom.

Reading

This session considers which reading skills we need to develop with young learners. Participants analyze different types of text and activity appropriate for this age group, and then reflect on the content of reading texts and how this can increase motivation in the classroom.

Projects

Project work encourages learners to work autonomously on ideas and materials generated by themselves. It helps them to understand which learning strategies work best for them, and encourages them to take responsibility for their own work. They learn to appreciate the need for cooperation and the importance of individual contributions to the success of the whole project. The first part of this session explores the educational issues underpinning project work; the second part is dedicated to the planning and presentation of a class project.

Speaking 1: Encouraging Speaking

In many classrooms around the world young learners do not have the confidence to speak English. In order to focus on how we can encourage speaking, even from an early stage, we will introduce ways of presenting and practising speaking as well as a number of games and activities. We will also consider the importance of using L1 for classroom interaction.

Speaking 2: Speaking Activities

This session raises awareness of the role of speaking in teaching young language learners who focus on meaning over form, and fluency over accuracy. We will try out different tasks and games, and participants will be asked to evaluate a series of coursebook speaking activities and brainstorm ways to creatively extend them.

Storytelling

This session centres on a single story, allowing participants to experience the lesson as children do. It provides a model for storytelling and offers opportunities to analyze tasks and their rationale. It is a very interactive session and aims to give practical ideas that the participants can take straight into their classrooms.

Teaching Mixed Classes

This session considers the ways our classes are mixed and the advantages and disadvantages of the mix. We look at practical ways of ensuring that our teaching is directed to all our students and explore classroom management strategies which encourage participation from all our students.

Using Songs and Chants

The session gives participants an opportunity to experience the fun of chants and songs. It is a very active session in which participants will have a chance to analyze how the pedagogical aspects can be served along with the motivational ones.

Vocabulary 1: Presenting New Vocabulary

This session looks at why vocabulary is so important, how it is learned, and what it means to really 'know' a word. It demonstrates some activities which help young learners focus on the meaning, form, and pronunciation of vocabulary items. It focuses on ways of presenting new vocabulary by appealing to learners' different learning styles and the importance of reception before production when it comes to new vocabulary items.

Vocabulary 2: Storing, Recycling & Using Vocabulary

This session looks at how vocabulary is stored and retained. We explore how memory works, and what affects our ability to remember. We examine different ways of recording vocabulary to make the most of different learning styles, and then focus on practising and recycling vocabulary with some practical activities to demonstrate various techniques.

Starting to Write

This session identifies different writing contexts in the classroom and focuses on the needs of children when developing writing skills. It also focuses on the early stages of writing development, including pre-writing and writing at, letter, and word and sentence level, by demonstrating a number of different writing activities.

Young Learner English Exams

Taking part in the Cambridge English examinations could be a wonderful experience of empowerment for students, but for teachers it could mean added stress and more work. This session aims to give participants a quick overview of the Young Learners Starters, Movers, and Flyers examinations. During this session participants will also look at sample papers and focus on the different question types used in the exams.