



Lesson 1: INTRODUCTION TO COURSE and TEFL THEORY

Introduction to Course

I start with a general introduction of who I am, my own teaching experience and philosophy, what I'm going to be talking about on the course and roughly how the course is going to be laid out.

I then go around the class and get them to give a short introduction of themselves – name, teaching experience, why they are interested in doing the course, what they hope to get from it.

I then give them some variation of a simple 'Getting to know you' exercise, the same as I might start any course with a group of foreign students.

Ex. The students stand up and walk around asking each other, and myself, questions.

Find someone who...

Plays a musical instrument...

Likes sport...

Is afraid of the dark... etc.

I then give the students the sheet below with three questions about the differences between state school teaching and teaching foreigners. I get them to work on these questions in pairs or groups of three. Afterwards, I write their feedback up on the board and deal with some of the question/issues there and then. Other issues, for example – 'We will need to be able to explain grammar to the students', I will point them to what part of the course that will be covered in, 'Yes, we will be looking at Grammar in lessons 2 and 3.' Etc.

** One of the differences between teaching in a state school and TEFL that I will point out at this time (particularly if it's a big class) is how tables are usually laid out in the classroom. I'll explain that many TEFL classes have the tables in a horseshoe shape (well, at least in our school we do) and I will take that moment to get them to move the tables into that position themselves.*

TEFL Theory

For whatever remains of Lesson 1, I will have a quick look at some of the TEFL theory but encourage them to read through the handout themselves at home.

I'll ask them about their own experiences of learning a language, most usually Irish in primary and secondary school. Was it a positive experience? What types of methods were used? Again, I will reference some of the methods in the handout if they're mentioned.

I give them a quick example of *Communicative Language Learning* where I teach them something simple myself in Italian or Spanish (presuming none of them can speak the language) without any translation into English.

I usually finish up with some example of *Task Based Learning*. Basically, I give them some task, game or activity like 'Creating your own Country' that I use myself during a Summer Course and depending on time we do it quickly together.

** I always try and give them handouts or examples of actual exercises that they might be able to use themselves on a Summer Junior Course and I say that this is what I'll try to be doing throughout the course. So, for example, in explaining Task Based Learning I'm actually giving them a handout with a task/exercise that works really well with a class of junior students and they can later use themselves.*

In your opinion...

1. What do you think would be the biggest differences between teaching in a state (secondary or primary) school and a TEFL summer school?

 2. What would be the biggest differences between teaching a group of Irish students and teaching a group of foreign students?

 3. What do you think your students would want/need from you as a TEFL teacher? (Think of your students typically as European teenagers here in Ireland for a four week summer course.)
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