

Just Being Me! Challenging stereotypical assumptions of LGBT in classrooms



tracey.bedford@gbtraining.org.uk

Introduction

- A Research population of 30 learners.
- Thirty percent of learners felt confident to challenge assumptions.
- Negative Assumptions generally based on family beliefs and social perception.
- A small yet significant number of learners (6.6%) did not understand what a negative assumption was.

Dilemma
56.6% of learners made negative assumptions of LGBT communities at the start of the programme

Experiences of Teachers

- Teachers confronted with a range of behaviours.
- Outcomes are not the same as intentions or assumptions.
- Dealing with values and beliefs contested in society.
- Challenge their personal beliefs in sessions.
- Must be prepared to teach 'critical thinking skills'.
- Need well-planned pedagogical responses.

Methodology

- New qualification pilot in West Midlands.
- Case Study, Field Notes, Learner Interviews.
- False assumption story - learning activities.
- 'Receive, Apply, Reuse' (RAR) structure.
- Identifying the value of playing a game to teach thinking.

Key Themes

There is little doubt that teachers should avoid assuming all learners will respect the values and beliefs of others.

Neither can assumptions be made of teachers completing 'Train-the-Trainer' developmental activities have the skill or passion to teach LGBT.

Key Literature

Biesta, G. (2010) *Good Education in an Age of Measurement*. Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.

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Richardson, R. (2009) *Holding Together*. Stoke-on-Trent: Trentham Books, 24, 26-8.

Stenhouse, L. (1975) *An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development*. London: Heinemann, 143-57.

Young, M. (2013) *Powerful Knowledge in Education*. London: University of London, Institute of Education.



"Playing a game really helped me to open up!"

Experiences of learners

- Equality and diversity visible in classrooms.
- Learners have the desire to listen and learn.
- Derived a platform for developing critical thinking.
- Learners developed debating and open-discussion skills.
- Safe and non-judgmental learning spaces.
- Learners benefit from being taught how to think.

Recommendations

- Teachers need 'critical-friends' to standardise pedagogical responses with to ensure similar teaching and learning strategies which combat the challenges faced.
- Games excite learner participation and understanding.
- Learners need to make better use of independent learning to explore variances in social justice within LGBT communities.

Conclusion

- Playing board games enrich pedagogical responses.
- Deep-rooted beliefs and values may never change.
- Emotional intelligence must be considered at starting points.
- Sometimes, you need to recap before progress can be made.

