

No: FE30
Title: Exploring The Use Of The Interactive Whiteboard With A Large Group Of Level 2 Child Care Students.
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Background

I am a newly qualified teacher with only one year's experience of teaching in Further Education. I am the course co-ordinator for the CACHE Certificate in Child Care and Education, a level 2 programme of study at Bishop Auckland College. Child care courses are becoming increasingly popular due to the expansion of the child care industry and the demands from employers for well trained and suitably qualified staff. As a result, we are finding that class sizes are increasing to accommodate the high number of students who are choosing a career in child care. The 2005/2006 cohort on CACHE Certificate consists of 33 students, aged 16 – 19 years, who are taught together as one whole group. This poses a number of problems, both from a lecturer's point of view and from a student's perspective.

The learning environment of the classroom is crowded with students, tables and chairs. Because of limited space there is no scope to change the layout of the room to accommodate small group work, practical tasks or role play. This restricts the teaching strategies that can be used to stimulate the learners. During group discussions and independent learning activities noise levels can rise, often inadvertently, purely because of the large number of people contained in one space. In such a noisy, busy environment it is sometimes difficult to redirect the attention of all 33 students when they need to focus on a new task as the lesson progresses.

Following a chance reaction to an animated power point presentation I delivered to this group using the interactive white board, I wondered whether animation and sound effects might be the key to capturing students' attention, enabling the lecturer to gain control of such a large group of learners and progress the lesson forward.

Aims

- To find a way of maintaining the attention of a large group of students
- To promote effective classroom management
- To stimulate students' interest by adding variety and fun to the learning process

Anticipated outcomes

I hope that by using animated presentations on the whiteboard that appeal to the students' interests, I will be able to gain control of the group in a positive manner appropriate to their age and level of maturity.

I believe that the interactive whiteboard acts as a visually stimulating focal point at the front of the classroom and is a powerful tool for both teachers and learners. By adding fun and variety into the lesson through this visual medium I hope that the students will retain information more effectively and be able to recall information more readily.

The students' perceptions of interactive whiteboards

Questionnaire 1

The students completed a questionnaire indicating their previous experience of interactive whiteboards and preferred learning activities.

Only 3 respondents had never seen or used an interactive whiteboard before, and all 3 commented that they found them to be a useful teaching and learning tool in the class room. This was representative of all those questioned, as 80% of the total number of respondents said they also found the boards to be useful.

When asked to identify their most enjoyable learning activities 'small group discussion' emerged as the most popular way to learn, with 'lecture' being highlighted as the least popular.

Standard Power Point presentations were scored as mid-range. Interestingly, 86% of respondents commented that they enjoyed Power Point presentations that were animated with sound effects. This confirmed what I had predicted earlier, that perhaps this could be the key to effective teaching and learning for large groups of students.

Interactive whiteboards in practice

I planned a lesson that incorporated a number of learning activities, including lecture, discussion, worksheets, handouts and standard Power Point slides. I also included an animated Power Point presentation that could be used to help students with their revision. Using an on-line teacher resource exchange, <http://tre.ngfl.gov.uk>, I adapted a version of the television quiz show 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire', inserting relevant revision questions, each with four possible answers, e.g.:

In which year was The Children Act introduced?

- A: 2000
- B: 1989
- C: 1998
- D: 1985

Each student had a set of voting cards marked A, B, C and D. As each question appeared on the screen (accompanied by the music and sound effects as used in the television series) they held up a card to indicate what they believed the correct answer to be. This enabled me to identify instantly which students knew the answer, and to question them about their reason for choosing that answer, thereby assessing their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. As each correct answer was revealed with a fanfare, students could see if their choice had been correct or incorrect.

Findings

Questionnaire 2

During the lesson the students were focused on the task and appeared to be having fun. To check whether this was, in fact, true I asked them to complete a second questionnaire identifying what went well, and what could have been

improved. The comments were, without exception, extremely positive and confirmed what I had hoped – that the students had an effective learning experience through a fun, visual medium. The table below shows a representative sample of the students' comments:

<p style="text-align: center;">WWW (What Went Well...)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">EBI (Even Better If...)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How everyone participated and gave their opinion with the answers</i> • <i>The way we had fun revising</i> • <i>Being able to learn and have fun at the same time</i> • <i>It got us all thinking</i> • <i>We all had fun as a class together</i> • <i>Working as a team</i> • <i>Helped me to remember information</i> • <i>Multiple choice answers jogged my memory</i> • <i>It was a fun, different approach to revision that helped me to remember better</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The questions could get harder as you go along to make our brains work more</i> • <i>Use an interactive voting system, so people can't copy your answers</i> • <i>Buzzers</i> • <i>Have lifelines like on the TV – 50:50, phone a friend, ask the audience</i> • <i>We actually got the prize money!</i>

The next step

This large group of students enjoyed the interactive Power Point presentation which successfully focused and maintained their attention for a significant length of time. The novelty of the game stimulated their interest and aided their memory and recall. They were able to test their own knowledge and I was able to assess their progress in a non-threatening way. The group particularly enjoyed the fact that this exercise brought them together as a team, and they relished the challenge of answering the revision questions correctly. As it was so successful, I will use this approach again in other lessons. The format of the game makes it very easy to adapt to any subject area. I will take on board the students' suggestions about making questions progressively more difficult, and incorporating features like '50:50' and 'ask a friend'.

To make the game even more challenging and valuable as a revision tool, the students themselves could be asked to prepare a set of questions pitched at various levels of difficulty. This would encourage them to revisit their class notes and use research skills to find:

1. a challenging question

2. four possible and plausible answers

When setting the 50:50 options they could offer players a choice between two very similar answers, thereby making the game more challenging and thought provoking.

When repeated as a group activity, the interactive voting system and use of buzzers could add more interest to this game. It could also be uploaded onto the college's Fronter system and accessed by individual students, as an extension or consolidation activity, using their laptops.

Unfortunately, the million pound prize fund is one suggestion that I am unable to help with! However, the use of simple treats like sweets and stickers may be equally as effective in rewarding student participation and achievement.

Lesson Plan

Week 18 Session 8	Day & Time: Wednesday 23rd November 2005 9am -12pm		Room: CC5	
Session Aim:	To: Understand the role of the CCEW within the setting. Revise Unit 5b			
Learning Outcomes:	1.5(a) To know your role in the work setting and the boundaries of that role 2.5(b) To appreciate the roles of others and the line of management and reporting within a range of settings 3. 5(c) To understand the meaning of confidentiality and why it is important to maintain it			
Assessment:				
Time	Activities (Teacher, Learner, Teacher & Learner Activity)	Assessment	Outcomes, KS/BS Reference	Resources
9am	LA Complete ITC Research questionnaire	Written		Questionnaires
9.30	TA Introduce role of Ofsted in settings. Exposition re: Standard 12. Focus on 12.4 and 12.5 LA Complete confidentiality worksheet.	Oral, discussion Written	5c.	Handouts : - Standard 12 - Data Protection - Work sheet 3
10.15	BREAK			
10.30	TLA Discussion re: the role of the student and level 2 worker – responsibilities and boundaries. TA Presentation of management structures in a range of settings. Identify where students and assistants 'fit in'.	Oral Discussion, Q&A	5a. 5b.	Power Point presentation on whiteboard
10.45	TLA Group activity – Revision exercise: 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' interactive quiz game covering aspects of the whole unit.	Practical	All	Power point presentation on whiteboard

12.00	CLOSE			
Evaluation (Notable successes, ideas for future improvements and lessons, work carried over and any special issues)				