CREATING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Time:

60-90 minutes

Aim:

The aim of this module is to support teachers to explore an element of managing the lesson by examining practical ways to ensure a positive classroom environment to benefit both teachers and learners.

Outcomes:

By the end of the module, teachers will be better able to:

- Reflect on current practice in relation to creating a positive classroom environment
- Explore four areas to work on to ensure a positive classroom environment (rapport; motivation; classroom management and teacher characteristics and styles)
- Reflect on the topic explored and apply new learning to their current contexts

Materials:

- Access to the internet, a computer and a projector to play the video and display slides are needed.
- Links to all videos are in the accompanying PowerPoint.
- Copies of handouts for each teacher.
- Labels cut up (one set per pair or small group)

Lesson outline:

Approx. time	Stage	Procedure
10-15	Warmer – activate schemata	• Working in small groups, give teachers a big piece of paper and ask them to divide it into 8 squares. Ask them to think of 8 ways to create a positive learning environment and write one way in each of the 8 squares • Ask the teachers to pick the top 5 most important and number these 1-5 • Tell each teacher they have 5 S's (strengths) and to distribute them across the 8 boxes according to where they think their strengths as a teacher are (NB: they can put more than one S in one box if they think it's a particular strength) • Tell each teacher they have 5 I's (areas for improvement) and ask them to repeat the task • Ask the groups to sit back and study their paper. Do they notice anything of interest? i.e. are there more S's or I's in a particular box, and how do these relate what they've rated as most important. Elicit whole class feedback, thoughts and opinions.

2	Four areas of exploration	● Tell the teachers that with the help of a webinar we are going to explore four areas that we can focus on to create a positive classroom environment ● Ask teachers if they had any of these four areas on their papers from the previous task
5	Motivation	● Show teachers the motivation quote and ask them to discuss in pairs whether they agree or disagree ● Ask the groups how many of them wrote motivation in one of their boxes from the previous task
5-10	Video one: motivation	● Watch video one ● Elicit whole class discussion based on their thoughts on the video and how this compares with their thoughts on the previous activities. Highlight the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, it's link to feedback, and be sure everybody understands its implications
5	Rapport	● Display the sentence and ask the teachers to fill in the gaps with the three words below ● Check answers and understanding of the British Council definition of Rapport

10	Classroom management	● Tell the teachers they are going to see five statements, ask them to work individually and rank each of the statements with a number from 1-4
		    ○ 1 - disagree completely
		    ○ 2 - disagree
		    ○ 3 - agree
		    ○ 4 - agree completely
		● Ask the teachers to work with a partner to compare their thoughts
		● Elicit whole class discussion and highlight any interesting results, thoughts or opinions, and elicit that these are things we should be doing in terms of classroom management in order to establish rapport

5	Body language	● Tell teachers that body language can play an important role in establishing rapport and support positive classroom management ● Ask teachers to work in pairs and reflect upon their own practice, considering the role that body language plays, and ask them to note down their ideas
10	Video two: body language	● Hand out the 5 while watching questions (handout 1) and ask them to note the answers based on video two ● Elicit whole class discussion based on the comments in the video and how this links to their ideas and specific contexts explored in the previous task

10	Interaction	- Elicit from teachers how 'interaction' plays a role in helping to establish good rapport in the classroom, take note of one or two practical examples that the teachers can contribute - Give pairs or small groups cut ups (*cut ups 1 below*) of the ten practical ways of promoting good interaction in the classroom. Ask the teachers to consider these ten aspects and make three columns (Left, things they do regularly; Middle - things they would like to do but don't very often; Right - things they never do) (NB: even-handed = be fair to all students) - Elicit whole class discussion and compare thoughts and opinions between groups, highlighting any key similarities or differences and elicit what teachers think any implications might be
5-10	Teacher characteristics	- Display the quote and ask teachers to consider whether they agree or disagree - Tell the teachers that they are going to see some video that discusses three core characteristics that teachers may display in order to achieve successful rapport with their students, ask them to predict what these three characteristics might be and why
5-10	Video three: teacher characteristics	- Tell the teachers that they are going to watch video three, while watching they should make note of the three core characteristics, what they mean and any practical implications they might have for the classroom. They may want to draw a simple table to collect this information, but notes will do - After watching, conduct whole class feedback. Did they predict correctly? Do they agree? Any other implications?
5-10	Video four: Teaching styles	- Display the slide of continuums and ask teachers to spend a couple of minutes individually contemplating where they would mark themselves on all the of continuums and elicit any thoughts on this, implications they think it might have etc. - Optional - for the cline activity you could make one wall one extreme and the opposite wall the other extreme. Trainers reads the two extremes and teachers stand where they fit between the two extremes and discuss with their neighbours. - Watch video four
10-15	Reflections	- Ask teachers to consider this question for reflection – "Based on everything they've explored this lesson; does anything stand out as having any significant implications for your classroom and you as a teacher?" - Ask each teacher to write one thing that has stood out for them - Elicit a few examples
5	Conclusion/wrap up	End with the final quote and elicit any final comments

Ideas for follow up lessons:

- Using the reflection bubble that the teachers completed at the end of the lesson, ask teachers to keep a teaching journal for the next 1-2 weeks, and every time something comes up (during class, planning, anytime etc.) to make a note of it, how it makes them feel and any implications for the classroom. Use these thoughts as a springboard for a follow-up class.

HANDOUT 1

Body language

1. What % of speaking impacts our students?

2. How much of our communication with our students is based on non-verbal communication?

3. What is another word for influence?

4. How can we use aspects of body language to help improve the classroom environment?

5. List 5 aspects of body language.

CUTUPS 1

Interaction in the classroom

recognise students	listen to students
respect students	be organised
establish routines	use a different pace for different activities
being even-handed	use pairwork and groupwork
give clear, positive feedback	be authentically oneself

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