



TEACHING US A LESSON

Level: Advanced (C1)

Age: Teenagers / Adults

Time: 45 minutes

Language summary: Language of speculation (modal verbs); expressions connected to teaching and learning; decoding famous quotes

Image work: Looking at an image from different perspectives; using an image as a stimulus for discussion

PROCEDURE:

- 1** Ask students to discuss this question in pairs and then discuss the different viewpoints and reasons. A wide variety of responses will ensure a good discussion.
- 2** This idiomatic expression means 'to punish someone for doing something so they will not do it again'. It isn't directly linked to formal education but implies that living includes learning about what is right and wrong. This expression could apply equally to teachers and students.
- 3 Key:**
 - *learn something by heart = to study by rote and memorize information*
 - *learn the hard way = learn from difficult experiences, rather than the advice of others*
 - *make the grade = to be satisfactory, what is expected*
 - *you can't teach an old dog new tricks = when someone has done something in a particular way for a long time, it is hard for them to change*
 - *teacher's pet = the teacher's favourite student whom they favour and spoil*
 - *experience is the best teacher = you need to experience things to really understand them*
- 4** Allow some time for the students to look at the picture. The teacher could be either exasperated or just thinking about something.
- 5** Ask students to make a list of positives / negatives about teaching as a job. You could ask different pairs to focus on different areas so that you have a good mix of both perspectives.

6 Accept a variety of answers here. Some would argue that teaching is like acting and teachers need the same degree of ability to take on a different persona in the classroom. Others would say that teachers get caught up in the process of teaching, enabling them to switch off from their own problems. Some students may find it hard to believe teachers have bad days and may be considering this for the first time.

7 Allow some time for discussion here. Technology might include the use of computers (by students or teachers), interactive whiteboards, mobile devices and laptops. It is often believed that technology in itself makes teaching more exciting. However, try to get the students to consider that there still needs to be content to the lesson, whether it is delivered in a more traditional way or through technology. For countries where there is no technology available, you could ask your students what types of technology they would like to have in the ideal classroom. Make sure that any students who feel traditional methods are better get the chance to express their views.

8 These quotes link up with expressions in Q3. Help the students to unpick the quotes, as some of the language is difficult. In simple terms, their central message is:

1. *If teaching is enjoyable, people learn more.*
2. *Students need to be taught to understand their emotions too.*
3. *Only through actual experience will a student really learn.*
4. *An education is not only about what you learn in school, but teaches you what is important in life.*

Key: 1. d; 2. b; 3. c; 4. a



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- 1 Describe your favourite teacher to your partner. Give reasons for your answers. Now think about your least favourite teacher. What is the difference?
- 2 What do you think the expression *to teach (someone) a lesson* means? Is it related to education?
- 3 Discuss the meaning of these other expressions connected to teaching and teachers. Do you have similar expressions in your language?
 - *learn something by heart*
 - *learn the hard way*
 - *make the grade*
 - *you can't teach an old dog new tricks*
 - *teacher's pet*
 - *experience is the best teacher*
- 4 The picture shows a teacher at work. How do you think he might be feeling? What do you think he is thinking about? Use the following language:
He could / might / may [feel frustrated with the students for not listening to him].
- 5 Do you think teaching is an easy or difficult job? Would either you or your partner like to become a teacher? Why or why not?
- 6 Teachers are always on display in the classroom. How do you think they cope when they are having a bad day?
- 7 Do you think the use of technology makes teaching more exciting for the students? Why or why not?
- 8 Look at the following famous quotations (1–4) about teaching and match them with the person who said them (a–d). In small groups discuss whether you agree or disagree with the idea expressed. Which is the best quote, in your opinion?
 1. *Teaching should be such that what is offered is perceived as a valuable gift and not as a hard duty.*
 2. *Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.*
 3. *I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.*
 4. *Education is teaching our children to desire the right things.*
 - a. *Plato*
 - b. *Aristotle*
 - c. *Confucius*
 - d. *Einstein*