
Activity One: Work the imagination

Ask the students to find a space in the room where they can sit comfortably in a small place of their own. Tell them in advance that you will be asking them to close their eyes. Quiet Baroque music should be playing in the background. Ask the students to create a mental picture of the following things with their eyes closed. Encourage them to create as realistic a picture as possible, using all their senses. They should use all the time they are given to build up the image. Some of the images are, initially, harder than others.

1. Yourself sitting in the room where you sleep.
2. Your school bag on a table.
3. The taste of a freshly cut lemon.
4. Your hand being plunged into ice cold water.
5. Being hit with a feather pillow.
6. Putting your hand into some soil in the garden.
7. The taste of Coca-Cola.
8. An empty classroom.
9. The taste of chocolate ice cream.
10. Stepping out of a heated house into the street in the middle of winter.

Notice their reactions as they visualise. For example, many often grimace when recreating the lemon taste (even though there is nothing physically there!) Some people claim that they actually “tasted” the Coca-Cola, That’s the power of the imagination.

Gather their reactions to this activity. How easy or difficult did they find it? How powerful do they think their imagination is? How can their imagination be useful in learning/revision?

This can be extended with students working in pairs. Each pair sits facing one another. One prompts the other to create a mental picture, then the other has a go. It is important for the students to work with somebody with whom they feel comfortable.

Points to make:

- The imagination is so powerful that it can recreate a sensation/picture in our minds that is almost real.
- Our imagination gets better the more we use it.
- Our imagination is a very powerful tool that can help us improve our memory and that we can use this tool for revision. The next activity begins to show us how we can do this.