Using the Philosophy for Children (P4C) Approach in Seminars

oting Learner Autonomy Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability Promoting Learner Autonomy Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability Promoting Fufy Demissie (D&S) rofessional e-learning Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability Promoting Learner Autonomy Embedding, Enhancing and Integrating Employability Inter-profes



Purpose: To investigate how an enquiry based, P4C (Philosophy for Children) approach can be used in seminars

P4C: Building a community of enquiry through P4C - a thinking skills programme for schools developed by Matthew Lipmann in the 1970s

'A group of people used to thinking together with a view to increasing their understanding and appreciation of the world around them and of each other' (www.sapere.org)

Structure

- Stimulus
- Raising questions
- Choosing questions
- First thoughts
- Final thoughts

Principles

- Caring
- Collaborative
- Critical
- Creative

Participants: 6 tutors in two subject areas – Early Years and Primary initial teacher education and IAESECC-Development and Society

Project Plan:

October 2008: half day training programme by external consultant

October 2008: May 2009 undertaking to carry out at least 3 enquiries over semester 1 and 2

Ongoing: Tutor and student evaluation after each session

December 2008 – May 2009: Focus group and individual interviews by a non- participating tutor

Features

- 'philosophical/chewy' questions
- role of facilitator
- ground rules

Role of facilitator: Encourage participants to ask good 'chewy' questions e.g.

- Are words 'real'?
- What makes something beautiful?
- Is it ever good to lie?

Rather than

- Which major river flows through Paris?
- At what age should people get married?

Facilitate discussion by summarising, checking agreement/understanding, asking for evidence, requesting definition of key words, checking progress of discussion, supporting students to make thinking explicit...

Evaluations:

Tutor 'A'

- 'I was very impressed by the depth of students' thinking and the way in which they were able to draw on their own professional experience in a authoritative manner'
- 'I am usually much more controlling. I felt like more of a facilitator of students thinking on a topic '

Tutor 'B'

- ".. found that I had to give a lot more thought into what I was doing than usual"
- 'I have a constant battle with content/purpose...helped me to reflect on importance and value of giving time...'

Student 'A'

...a different way of thinking things through more fully...'

Student 'B'

'... discussion was of good quality as the rules were set...'

Student C

'...enjoyed.. being told we could contribute as much or as little...'

Caring	Collaborative	Critical	Creative
'I'm interested by x's idea'	'I would like to support'	'I would like to question'	'I would like to take a different view'
'I found what x said helpful'	'I agree with'	'I'd like to challenge'	'I would like to link an idea'
'I would like to change my mind'	'I would like to build on'	'I have a reason for'	'I would like to contrast'
'I like what x said when'	'I would like to give an example'	'I would like to ask why'	'I would like to take what x said and ask'

(www.sapere.org)

Stimulus	Question:	
image of child eating junk food	'Who decides what we eat?	
excerpt of a dialogue between adult/child	'how should teachers balance content and ethos?'	
short article on the key worker approach	What are the key characteristics for the key worker	

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