



How to Structure a SAIL lesson

Praising

Always be warm, encouraging, supportive and praise our students. It is wholly possible to praise effusively without sounding condescending, so it works for adults and teenagers too. Almost without exception, the students lack confidence in their ability to read, write and/or speak English (although a lot of them mask this by acting cocky or like they 'don't care'!), and will benefit enormously from receiving reassurance from us that they are doing well. We need to understand that they might be embarrassed about their level of English, so support all their efforts and improvements no matter how minor.

Planning and varying

Churning through 10 worksheets a week is going to get old fairly fast. A child's attention span is roughly their age x 2. So, prepare enough activities to be changing as often as is necessary in the hour and half we tutor for. This gives some indication of what we can expect from a child student. There is a list of activities on the sheet attached. Tim is happy to answer specific queries or suggest a few activities, and Will and Bridgid can always be asked (or emailed/called if things are hectic!) and have plenty of good ideas for things to do with students.

Dealing with distractions

If your student is easily distracted, unsettled or upset by others, we should make sure we tutor away from them. If they become distressed or anxious when they are too far from family or friends, we should try to stay near people who make them feel comfortable. Work away from noise and rowdier students if necessary ie. in the rooms at the back of the church. Change activities to keep things fresh. Be patient, remind them to focus and keep on task. Set realistic goals - eg. it might be impossible to read a whole book, so read half each, or read short poems or rhymes.

Having fun

Don't be afraid to make an idiot of yourself. Find interesting, unusual and exciting ways to learn. If you feel like you are struggling to make any kind of connection with your student, take the time to play with them or get to know them as a friend/buddy. Once they like and trust you, it will be easier to begin learning together as a team.