

MOTIVATING LEARNERS USING DIGITAL TOOLS by Jonathan Bygrave

Jonathan Bygrave has worked in ELT as a teacher, editor, publisher and author since 1992. During that time he has been involved in developing both print and online materials. Jonathan has travelled extensively to research the use of course books in modern classrooms and has been an author on *Upbeat*, *New Sky*, *New Total English*, *Real Life* and *Cutting Edge 3rd edition*.

The internet is a prime source of information for teenage learners and has changed the way they learn. They feel more independent and are more motivated in a digital environment than when they work with books alone. This has important implications for how we integrate digital materials into the teaching and learning process.

TEACHERS NEED DIGITAL RESOURCES THAT:

- keep students focused, busy and engaged.
- reflect how students normally consume information (e.g. through pictures and videos rather than text).
- are interactive so they can be used for independent learning (e.g. games).

HOW TO SELECT VIDEO RESOURCES TO USE WITH TEENAGE LEARNERS

- Choose videos about teenagers, perhaps even filmed by them, where they discuss their own lives and interests.
- Pick short, casual and unscripted videos, like those they watch online.
- Show clips which allow a natural transition to language practice, such as situational videos with useful phrases.
- Use animations to present grammar to make it easier to understand and remember.

WHY SUPPLEMENT TEXTBOOKS WITH ONLINE PRACTICE?

- Most teenagers spend a lot of time online, so it's a good idea for some of their assignments to be online too.
- Setting practice online is motivating for teenagers because it can help personalise learning, diagnose problems and help each student advance faster.
- With a learning management system (LMS), teachers can set online assignments for students, such as interactive grammar and vocabulary quizzes, web quests and writing tasks.
- For teachers, the biggest advantage of using a learning management system is how it shows student engagement and performance and makes it easier to analyse errors.

Digital tools can be skillfully exploited to make learning English both more engaging for teenage learners and more rewarding for teachers. If we use tools that make language practice more natural and more fun, we can be almost certain that the learning outcomes will be better.

For more teacher training videos and expert tips go to:
www.PearsonELT.com/upbeat

MOTIVATING TEENAGE LEARNERS

Keeping learners engaged and focused is one of the biggest challenges for teachers working with teenagers. The intrinsically motivated teenage learner is generally considered to be a rare species. Are we helpless in our efforts to engage learners and therefore achieve better learning outcomes?

The experts and authors of *Upbeat* (and an upcoming course by the same authors) have agreed to share with us practical tips and ideas, and materials you can use in the classroom.

- Strengthen your skills with free teacher training videos.
- Pick up the latest tips from our methodology experts.
- Use free photocopiable lessons on current topics in your classroom now.



Teaching Effective Oral Communication by Ingrid Freebairn



Ingrid Freebairn's expert tips on Teaching Effective Oral Communication



Lesson plan: The Internet Never Forgets
Teaching notes: The Internet Never Forgets