Moving from teacher to trainer (MTT1)

Resource 9: Getting the grouping right for adult audiences

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Here are some grouping ideas commonly used in classrooms – are they appropriate for adult audiences?

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| *Whispering pairs*  For quick revision, pairs whisper to each other all of the points they remember from last time they met. Everyone engages in the task, shielding their ideas from others and the teacher can then ask any pair in the knowledge that everyone has been supported by their partner. Everyone feels they have contributed to the subsequent brainstorm of ideas with the whole class.  Suitable or not? Why? |
| *Double your list for brainstorming*  Here, for two minutes, individuals think through their own, individual ideas first and list them. Pairs share the items on their list and get rid of any repetitions – they merge their lists, getting rid of any ideas they don’t like and elaborating on any they do. This can then be extended to ‘snowballing’ where one pair joins with another pair and merges their ideas.  Suitable or not? Why? |
| *Pair work for feedback*  The trainer sets a short thinking activity such as ‘Which objective on your list does this video clip illustrate? Explain how.’ Participants think for themselves first, then share and compare their idea with a partner, trying to come to a consensus.  Suitable or not? Why? |
| *Completing ‘worksheet’ in pairs*  A pair is given a sheet with a series of tasks (or one task) to complete. They do this together.  Suitable or not? Why? |
| *Twos to fours*  As mentioned earlier, individual brainstorming followed by ‘double your list’ where pairs exchange their ideas with another pair can be extended with the ‘snowball’ method. Two pairs come together, making a group of four to pool their pair ideas further. They could be asked to produce a final ‘agreed’ group list or decide on the best, say, five ideas thus providing a focus for their discussion.  Suitable or not? Why? |
| *Jigsaw groups*  This is where participants are assigned a home group. The home groups are given a task to do with a variety of different sub-tasks which they assign to individuals. These individuals then regroup into expert groups. So, say the task is for the home group to write a group essay in French with five different distinct paragraphs, there will be an expert group for each of these paragraphs. The expert groups discuss the content of the paragraph they have been assigned. The expert groups then return into the home group formation. Within each group there will be ‘experts’ for putting together each paragraph of the essay.  Suitable or not? Why? |