

TEACHERS' DAY in CIUDAD REAL, 6th April

TOOLS and TECHNIQUES for TEACHING ENGLISH

Although only a small group of teachers turned up on the day, this Teachers' Day was one of the most productive I have attended. This was due to the participants' enthusiasm and of course the quality of the talks too.

We kicked off with **"Every child matters: mixed ability classes"** by **Michael Brand** courtesy of Pearson, a topic we face on a daily basis. In this talk we learned about some very interesting ideas to cope with different abilities. Personally I particularly liked the one where we help weaker students by providing them with a partially filled in script. Something to definitely try out.

The second speaker was **Chris Foreman** with **"USING DRAMA"**, courtesy of Express English. This was a highly practical session with a lot of audience participation. We certainly should be using more drama in our lessons, to make them more enjoyable and also to allow shyer students to take on different roles.

After the coffee break was **"An interdisciplinary approach to classroom activities"** by **Hamish Binns**, who has become a regular speaker at our events. This talk contained useful ideas to combine activities from different subjects to provide interesting lessons while at the same time practising English. This is possibly the way forward in our teaching practice.

The afternoon sessions started off with **"Making craft work"** by **Julia Mena Dobson**, who had teachers sitting on the floor in groups learning how to use glue, scissors and other craft materials properly. This was an original talk, and extremely useful for teachers of very and not so very young learners.

This was followed by **"Prevención y cuidado de la voz en el docente"** by **María Cristina Marchante Buitrago**, a local speech therapist. This is an aspect teachers need to take care of, as we all use our voices constantly. Sucking a mint is not good for your voice!

Our last speaker was **Katherine S. Smith** with **"The power of using picture books at all ages in the classroom to promote character development."** In this talk we learned that we can use picture books with secondary school students as well as with primary, in particular to talk about topics such as immigration, other cultures and so on.

Finally we finished off with the traditional raffle with books provided by the publishers who sponsored us, Express/Edebé and Pearson. Thanks also to Cambridgemb who provided handbooks and above all to ANPE who were our co-organisers.

