

WHO'S IN THE PIT?

Component: Motivation and Mindset

ILO: To be aware and unafraid of the challenges in learning

TOOL

This simple tool helps students to acknowledge when they are struggling with learning and by making it commonplace in the sessions to talk about the challenges they will come to see them as a normal, expected part of learning and be less afraid of them. They will also know that they have support from their teacher and peers to deal with the challenge.

This TLA is adapted from 7 Ways to Teach Kids Failure Is a Great Thing by biglifejournal.com

ACTIVITY

When you can see students being challenged in their learning ask the group "who's in the pit?" Acknowledge this pit is commonplace. Spend some time discussing why this task is challenging and look at ways to overcome it - either in the short term or by extended practice. Make sure you offer support and scaffolding at this point to help them navigate their way through. You could do this by teacher instruction or peer support.



Once acknowledging the pit is commonplace you can also flag up points in the course where you know many students can get into difficulty. It can help to highlight that this is a tricky point and show students some ways to navigate through it. Explaining Threshold Concepts and a model of learning such Unconscious Competence can help students to understand the learning process.

HOW

When asking "who's in the pit?" it is important to be positive and upbeat and acknowledge that "now we are getting to the good stuff - this is where the learning takes place!". By making this a positive place to be and encouraging students to enjoy the stuckness as they challenge themselves, they are more likely to strive.

If you are going to point out a potential pit, it is important not to set this up so that students expect it to be too difficult and therefore switch off. It is about highlighting a potential learning challenge and scaffolding the sessions so they know how to get through it and also know what support is available.

EXAMPLES

In Music Theory when students are learning about the relative minor it can help to flag this as a potential pitfall and look over ways to avoid it.

LARGE GROUP TEACHING

This can be used as part of whole-group teaching.

SUCCESS

Students identify a tricky topic and use practised methods to navigate it. They embrace the challenges of learning.

NEXT STEPS

For tricky topics you may need to provide extra group support, videos of explanation on the VLE and tutorials.

RESOURCES/REFERENCES

www.musostudy.com/resources/2E/warning.png

Image to use on slides etc.

7 Ways to Teach Kids Failure Is a Great Thing

<https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/help-kids-overcome-fear-failure>