

Why Teach 1-2-1?

In this section of the course we'll consider some of the reasons for teaching one-to-one and the advantages we gain from being in the one-to-one setting. Then we will ask you your reasons for wanting to teach in this format and for taking this course.

Reasons for teaching one-to-one

Variety for the Teacher

When the partners of Global English met back in the 90's they discovered that, although each had come to TEFL through different routes, neither of their courses (one distance, one CELTA) had provided them with enough to become good teachers overnight.

They agreed that most of the practical learning takes place in your first year 'on the job'. For this reason, teaching English as a new teacher is rarely dull. You spend lots of time poring over course books, trying to make things look right on a photocopier and worried in case your students:

- a) won't like you
- b) won't respect you
- c) will throw your bag and materials from the 3rd floor window to the street below (don't laugh, ask Louisa Walsh about it someday!).

But there will come a time in your TESOL career where you find your teaching situation becoming a little tedious. No matter whether you are working with overworked company employees who don't turn up for lessons in Germany, teaching FCE to stressed teens in France or even singing nursery rhymes to kindergarten learners in Korea (in between emptying the potty), TEFL disillusionment has happened to us and it will probably happen to you as well.

So this is where a little variety can make your teaching life more interesting and can help to get you enthused. There is a world of different English language learners out there and some of them are really interesting people too. Teaching one-to-one challenges us and gives us some variety from the more traditional format of class-based teaching. It enables us to develop a new mindset, plan for one rather than many and seek to achieve different objectives. One-to-one can actually be quite relaxing. You are less likely to have your bag and papers thrown out of a window, after all.



Personal Contact

So as we have begun to see, teaching in this format allows for greater personal contact with a student. You have the opportunity to develop your own style, which can perhaps be more relaxed, or more consultative. You can begin to share some of your experiences with your students, which is often why one-to-one appeals to more experienced teachers. Fundamentally, you both have something to talk about – yourselves. Let's face it, most of us like being able to do this – one of the best parts of our one-to-one teaching is being able to compare experiences with our students – a place both of us have visited, a particular TV show or politician that we have an opinion on. Or perhaps something more pertinent, such as a current local or world event that impacts on us both. It is enriching to share mature opinions with educated people – in our sound bite world, a little sensible discussion is what we all crave, isn't it? Just once in a while. Well, teaching one-to-one can give us this opportunity.



Quite often the personal contact is a two-way process. Students like learning this way for the same reasons that we like teaching in this format. But for us it gives the opportunity to learn something from our students as well. Quite often students will share details of their working life, which will enable us to gain a greater insight into what they do. This will help us in understanding how we can best teach them. At other times, this sharing process may be part of an enriching cultural experience for us. Occasionally, this leads to opportunities to have a meal with our students, which may be lesson based or purely for enjoyment.

You may get the opportunity to join in family activities, local events – even go to parties and football matches – which can enhance the cultural experience for you if you are living in a different country. So the one-to-one experience may enable you to find out more about the social side of where you are living and develop a deeper understanding of local traditions. All of this can help you to build a relationship with your student, as well as develop your understanding of the country and culture you are living in.

Finally, there can be fewer time constraints or outside time pressures in this format of teaching. For example, students are less likely to have exams to sit – the nature of their English language learning will be more practical. Quite possibly you will be dipping into and out of a course book, so you won't feel so constrained by the limits that these impose. Similarly you may find that if your student misses a lesson it won't throw out their learning in the same way as if that student were part of a group. You can simply repeat the lesson next time.

Demand – students want it!



One-to-one is in big demand! To find out more about this reason, please click on the link below. This will take you to our interactive listening **AUDIO FILE 1** on the demand for one-to-one English. You'll discover more about why students will always want to learn in this format from William Bradridge.



http://global-english.podomatic.com/entry/2008-07-15T03_39_32-07_00