

Promoting Learner Autonomy: *It's trip time!*

Name of the task: It's trip time!

Task: project work → planning a trip

Level: upper intermediate and above

Aims:

- **language structures:** to practice such functions as agreeing, disagreeing, suggesting and persuading
- **vocabulary:** to activate *holiday* related vocabulary

Age of the learners: teenagers and higher

Time: depends on the learners' pacing

Procedure:

1. The learners write down the names of four capitals of English-speaking European countries they would like to visit.
2. The learners mill around, looking at each other's lists and ask each new partner about one of his/her capitals - why he/she would like to go there.
3. The learners form their own groups according to the capital they would most like to visit (one group=one capital)
4. The teacher tells the learners to imagine that the European Union has granted some money to their school. The money must be used to visit and hence get to know the culture of one of the capitals of the European English-speaking capitals. The teacher tells the learners that their class has been chosen to go for the trip to the capital of the country they have chosen.
5. The learner's task is to plan in groups the whole three-day trip to the capital they have chosen including:
 - transport to the capital
 - accommodation
 - food
 - tourist attractions
6. The learners get authentic leaflets with information on:
 - transport: the buses/trains/airplanes that can get them to the capital etc.

- accommodation: hotels/youth hostels etc. in the capital
 - food: bars/restaurants/cafeterias etc. in the capital
 - tourist attractions: theatres/cinemas/operas/pubs/clubs/discos etc. in the capital.
7. The learners are also told to choose a leader, who will be responsible for the whole group, and a secretary, who will write down their ideas since when they finish the task (it doesn't have to be during the present lesson) they'll have to present their ideas to the class.
 8. The learners are encouraged to use dictionaries if none of the group members knows the word.
 9. After completing the task learners are asked to read their plan in groups in order to check and correct their work. Only then the group shares their ideas with the rest of the class.

Variation:

Provided the learners have the access to computers and the Internet in the classroom:

- They do not have to limit their choice of the countries they would like to visit to the English-speaking ones (compare point 1 above). They may choose some other European countries as they will look for the information about the country on their own (compare point 6 above). If they have problems, the teacher provides them with the addresses of some sites. Obviously, if there is no access to the Internet in the classroom, it is impossible for the teacher to prepare the materials (schedules and timetables) for every European country that the learner can think of...Hence the restriction that the learners should choose an English-speaking European country if there is no access to the Internet in the classroom
- The learners are encouraged to use on-line dictionaries (compare point 8 above).