

# Hearing yourself teach: resource overview

**Collection:** The Subject & pedagogy

## Learning outcomes

Activities of this nature are designed to help you focus on the process of your teaching. Carrying out activities of this kind (even on a selective and occasional basis) should help you

- become more aware of your goals as a teacher;
- become more competent at finding ways of carrying these goals into practice;
- learn from the things that go well in a class or learning occasion;
- learn from the things that go badly in a class or learning occasion;
- understand more about your relationship to your students;
- (in terms of your career and for your own satisfaction) NOT to keep having the same experience over and over again!

## Overview

One of the themes that runs through this collection of resources is a theme that has continued to inform contemporary professional development since the publication in 1983 of Donald Schon's *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. This resource, which we've called 'hearing yourself teach' suggests that people who work in the English subject group have available to them in the very modes of their subjects tools and media for entering into reflective dialogue with themselves and others. One set of these is explored in the related resource ['Writing and the Teacher'](#). But even if your bent is not towards making poetry or fiction out of your teaching experience, the dialogic and discursive nature of the subject may still help you in articulating what you want to do. Probably the best thing you can do is have an unguarded conversation with a trusted colleague. But sometimes trusted colleagues are not available when you want them. And



**1** | This resource is part of a set of professional development resources for Higher Education English (including English Literature, English Language & Creative Writing) called 'The Pool'. The resources were developed by the English Subject Centre in 2011 as part of a JISC/HEA Open Educational Resources (OER) Project.

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even conversations with colleagues may need to be jump started by some prior reflection on what was on your mind. In turn, reflection (like creative writing) doesn't always flow of itself. Sometimes a framework, or a set of prompts can help you get going. Perhaps one of the crucial insights which grow out of English and Creative Writing (and indeed Drama) is that of indirection. That frequently - in teaching as in thought - we can get at what really matters not by a head-on assault but by going around: starting from something that seems peripheral; dwelling on an apparently random image or memory; distracting the conscious mind in some way. In his recent book *Teach Us To Sit Still*, the novelist Tim Parks refers to the need sometimes to 'steal a moment's inattention from oneself'. The activities below are offered in that spirit.

## Activities within this resource

- Keeping a teaching journal: individual activity
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## Resources in the *Subject and Pedagogy* Collection

- Subject and pedagogy: introduction to the collection
- Working with the English subject benchmark statement: resource overview
  - Using the English subject benchmark: group activity
  - Using the English subject benchmark: individual activity
- Working with the Creative Writing subject benchmark statement: resource overview
  - Using the Creative Writing subject benchmark: group activity
  - Using the Creative Writing subject benchmark: individual activity
- Writing and the teacher: resource overview
  - Writing tasks: group activity
  - Metaphors: group activity
- **Hearing yourself teach: resource overview (\* you are here)**
  - Keeping a teaching journal: individual activity
- Working with threshold concepts: resource overview
  - Crossing the line: individual activity
  - Crossing the line: group activity



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