

Overview of 10x/En4

Unit Overview:

The current unit we are studying concentrates on the GCSE Prose essay. We have read the first two chapters of the novel 'Of Mice and Men' by John Steinbeck. Previously we have looked at the historical and social context in which the novel is set. We looked at the depression in 1920s America, the migrant workers and what is meant by the term 'The American Dream'.

The past couple of lessons have been spent being introduced to the key characters in the novel. We have also touched on the concept of 'symbolism' and what it means.

Overview of the Group:

10xEn4 are a very mixed bunch of pupils! They range from predicted grades of 'C' at GCSE to 'F/G'. It is a very small group with a maximum number of ten. However, there are some VERY strong personalities in the group and the differentiation needed is wide reaching. At times there can be as little as five or six pupils present, and two pupils miss AT LEAST one session per week as they attend college - often they miss more than one and then have to try and 'catch up'. Individually there is a statemented student, a pupil who missed almost the whole of Year 9 due to refusing to attend school, a pupil who lacks motivation, an EAL student who has developing verbal and written English skills and a couple of pupils with anger management and behavioural issues. The attendance is very taciturn and affects both the learning and the teaching of the group. The group can be silly and at times temperamental. However, they are a wonderful group of pupils and, although challenging, I really enjoy teaching them.

Approach to Teaching 10xEn4:

I have found that the group work best in pairs, or groups. There are three tables and the pupils on each table work well together. As it's such a small group I am able provide lots of support for the pupils and the help of the teaching assistant, when present, is invaluable.

Given that a couple of the pupils are reluctant to write anything I use a range of strategies to consolidate their learning, including the use of 'thoughtshowers' and short interactive activities etc.