

Appendix 2: Learner Case Studies

Case study 1 – FS learner- Schools 14-16

This case study looks at the impact the creative writing starter activities had on a disengaged learner, through the reflection of verbal interactions and work produced by the learner. The learner was aware that they were taking part in an action research project and that the reflections could be included in any write up.

In the first session, we asked learners to respond to a poll everywhere to write 3 words they associated with the word “writing”. We had a mixed response with some focusing on what writing consists of, but popular responses included “long” “effort” and “creative”. Asking this learner in particular what their response was, they said they had responded “poo” (only one word submitted).

After this session, each starter activity was a creative writing element, one of which was the haiku activity. This learner attempted the haiku and wrote one which fitted with the rules.

When asked to reflect on how this made them feel, the learner responded “normal, they felt nothing”. This is slightly more positive than the first response.

As the sessions went on, and we continued to run more creative writing starters, e.g., song lyrics as a story, adjectives to describe, the learner was slightly more engaged.

Due to the opportunity to reflect on each activity with the learners, we did get to see what was having an impact and what wasn't. This learner in particular admitted that they found Functional Skills to be boring, and that they prefer the creative writing elements and wished they could do GCSE. The conversation arose around FS being a steppingstone, and with encouragement and determination they would be able to attempt the GCSE in the next academic year. The learner now wishes to complete Level 1 as well as Entry Level 3 and is striving towards GCSE. The lack of engagement, they say, was due to FS being so “functional” and that they prefer to be creative. We had assumed that this learner disliked all aspects of English and this would have continued had we not run the project and the starter activities.

Case study 2: FS Learner- FE 16+

This learner was invited to the library to participate in the creative writing workshops with the UCLan degree learners. The learner was asked if they would like to participate and they agreed.

They initially had no confidence in speaking, putting any ideas forwards, even when it came down to creating a character. They wouldn't verbalise whether they wanted to do a person or an animal. Initially when they were writing things down it was 1 or 2 words however the learner progressed to having more discussions and extended them through 5 senses and physical descriptions. They did this verbally rather than in writing at first to build confidence. Once they had decided on the characteristics of a character, they started writing them down and decided whether it would fit in a poem or a story. They

decided on a story, so picked the setting of the cattery, from a cat's perspective- they are an animal care learner. The idea that it was contextualised to area made them feel more comfortable and confident.

They have now produced their first draft and this is ready to be edited. This learner is now much more confident, and more comfortable, and really contributes to discussions, doesn't need prompting with name now to join in with discussions. They are actively involved in the sessions.

They were so enthusiastic with last piece one of teachers came to collect it so that they could continue to work on it outside of the sessions.

Having the opportunity to work on creative writing (which is a GCSE skill rather than Functional Skills) has really impacted this learner's confidence and motivation for English.