

Workshop (taller de Penny Ur)

Teaching mixed-ability classes

What is a mixed-ability (heterogeneous) class? What are the problems we encounter when we have to teach them?

The introductory section of this workshop will explore definitions (what *is* a mixed-ability, or heterogeneous class?) and discuss some of the associated teaching and learning problems. As with many educational problems, there are no easy solutions. We could, perhaps largely solve them by preparing different tasks to suit different groups within the class; or by preparing several texts at varying levels of difficulty, as suggested by some methodologists. But most of us have neither the time nor the money to invest in such elaborate preparation, let alone the time to check the results later. Most of the time of this workshop will be devoted to discussion of a series of practical teaching principles, illustrated by practical procedures, that involve very little (or no) extra preparation, that can make our job teaching heterogeneous classes easier, and that go some way towards bringing about more effective learning.