

‘Still Fighting It’: Cyber Bullying

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Introduction

In my 10th grade class we are struggling with “hidden” bullying. This is a difficult topic for all the pupils, some of them talk a lot about it but some of them do not mention it. I thought that if I could use this topic in an English class they would have to discuss it openly. I wanted to put them together in groups, established by me, because then they would have to cooperate and discuss the topic with other people than their nearest friends. I wanted to work with the topic in both literature and culture. The work should end up with every group making a presentation in class.

At school we use the textbook *New Flight 3* (Bromseth & Wigdahl, 2007) on our syllabus. In 10th grade there is a chapter in the book called “Our inner selves”. The topic in this chapter is about self-image, health and trends. The pupils are supposed to know words and phrases related to express love and friendship and also for feelings and expressions of affection. I thought the subject bullying could be used when teaching this chapter.

I have chosen some competence aims after 10th grade in LK06 that are suitable for working with this subject. These are:

Language learning

- use various situations, work methods and strategies to learn English
- describe and assess his/her own work in learning English

Communication

- present and discuss current events and interdisciplinary topics

- read and understand texts of different lengths and genres
- demonstrate the ability to distinguish positively and negatively loaded expressions referring to individuals and groups
- communicate via digital media

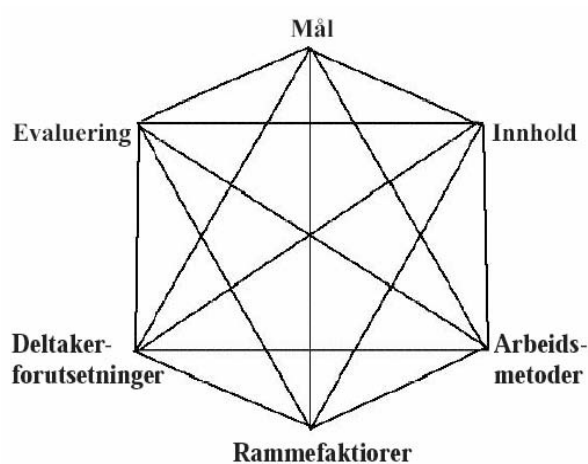
Culture, society and literature

- read and discuss a representative selection of literary texts from the genres poetry, short stories, novels and drama from the English-speaking world
- prepare and discuss his/ her own oral or written texts inspired by literature and art.

(LK06)

Below are the lesson plans and the evaluation after working with the topic in my class.

In every lesson I have used the didactic relation model (Imsen,1997: 36). The model is a good help to structure the purpose of the lesson.



First lesson

Background factors

The pupils must know how to speak some English. They must know how we can communicate in a good way and also know how to cooperate. The pupils do not have to know anything about the topic in advance.

Goals

When the first lesson is over the pupils should know some words and phrases related to love, friendship, self-image, health and trends. They should also know something about expressing affections and feelings.

Contents

For the first lesson I use the textbook in 10th grade *New Flight 3* Chapter 6 (Bromseth & Wigdahl, 2007). I also use Internet to show the pupils a clip from YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fNumIY9D7uY>). The clip is about cyber bullying, and I thought it would be a suitable way to present the topic for the pupils. Perhaps it could bring them into a good discussion.

Method

- Divide the pupils into groups. Do this in advance. This is necessary to achieve the best possible composition of groups. After this is done, show them the clip from YouTube about cyber bullying
- Let the pupils look at the clip from YouTube.
- Discuss what they have just seen afterwards. Ask them if they know what the topic for following week is.
- Show the pupils the clip from YouTube once more, but this time they have to look carefully, they have to take notes because afterwards they are going to tell what they feel about the video.
- Divide the class into groups and discuss one more time.
- Hand out the first worksheet with some questions for them to answer. (See appendix attachment 1)

Evaluation of first lesson

The first lesson went very well. The pupils found the topic interesting. Maybe because they know cyber bullying exists in our class and they want to do something about it, or maybe they find it interesting to do something different from our usual way of working.

The clip on YouTube affected them a lot. Some even cried. They tried to express how they felt in English and it went OK, but it is difficult for some of them since they lack words to express feelings in another language. But they learned some new words which fitted the subject, and

words that are part of the syllabus. These are words to express how they feel about themselves and about others, and also what they feel in different situations.

The pupils worked well with the presentations. Some groups struggled in the beginning with cooperation. Maybe I had not put the working groups together in the very best way as some pupils spent a long time discussing how to start their work. After a while, however, all the groups were trying to solve their task.

The whole lesson was performed in English and none of the pupils were allowed to speak Norwegian to each other. They struggled in the beginning, but after a while they were working quite well together.

Second lesson

Background factors

The pupils should know something about the topic bullying. They should know some words and phrases to use while working with the topic. The pupils must know which group they belong to and they should also bring the worksheet from the last lesson. And also in order to work with this presentation they must have seen the clip from YouTube (Childnet International - Cyber Bullying)

Goals

After this class the pupils should be able to give a presentation on the subject cyber bullying. They will know about books they can read to get further information around the topic. I tell them about what kind of information it is all right to put online and what is not. I will tell them a story about bullying which I have used in class before. They know it, but this time they are older and know more about life. (See appendix attachment 2)

The pupils will know more about bullying in other countries, is it so much more different from here in Norway? Are young people around the world dealing with the same problem? What is different if there are any differences? These are questions they should be more able to answer after this lesson.

Contents

We use the *New Flight 3 Textbook*, and the worksheet from the day before. We use the Internet to look at articles that say something about bullying. I also watch some DVD clips from Olweus, Roland and Arnesen's cartoon film *Kjetil og Kjartan* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GD4dOg77l28>). It is unfortunately in Norwegian, but it is related to the subject and it contains interesting clips. They illustrate different forms of bullying and how people react to such behavior.

Method

- Ask the pupils to go to their groups (from the previous day).
- Ask if the work with the presentation is going well.
- Give them some time to work with the presentation before they are supposed to move forward with the topic.
- When this is done I want the pupils to return to their own seats, and I am going to read a passage from the book *Bridge to Terabithia* (Paterson, 1977: 31- 52). I have read it for them once before.
- After this story, let the pupils talk together again.
- To create some variation the *Kjetil og Kjartan* DVD is replayed. The pupils should discuss in English what they have just seen.
- Tell them afterwards what kind of information we have to think carefully about before putting it online. Ask them if they have examples of what to do or not.
- If there is any time left let the pupils work further on the presentation.

Evaluation of second lesson

This session worked well, but I had prepared too much work for three lessons. The pupils were stressed so they did not have time to do a good job. That is why I understood that they needed more time to work on the presentation.

The pupils were working very well with this topic. After the first lesson they learned useful words to use in discussions around this theme. They also talked about how it is in other countries and learned that young people around the world think about it, and do many of the same things. I got good feedback about the DVD's with *Kjetil og Kjartan*. All the pupils understood the contents from the clips, and they liked that it was in Norwegian so they could

understand everything. They also thought it was alright having to speak English about it afterwards.

Third lesson

Conditions

The pupils must know how to do active listening. They need to know how to listen to a text/ song in order to take notice of the lyrics. They also need to know how to write in English. The pupils must know what verbs, nouns, and adjectives are and how to conjugate them.

Goals

The pupils should now know some words and phrases related to love, friendship and self-image. After this lesson they will know how to conjugate verbs, adjectives, and the plural of nouns. They will be able to explain why a song like, “Still fighting it” (Ben Folds, 2001 Sony BMG Music Entertainment), is chosen for a clip about bullying, and hopefully be able to analyze the text.(See appendix attachment 3)

Method

- Play the song, ask the pupils to remember words or phrases while hearing it.
- Write these words or phrases on the blackboard.
- Ask them to find verbs, adjectives, and nouns from what is written on the blackboard.
- Is there anything in these words or phrases that can explain what the song is about?
- Play the song one more time, and this time they receive the gapped worksheet. They are now supposed to fill in the missing words.
- Play the song for the third time so the pupils can check their answers.
- Discuss the contents of the song.

Evaluation of third lesson

The pupils liked this exercise. We wrote down many words and phrases on the blackboard the first time. They talked about the things that were written down. We discussed using the new

words they have learned. I realized that when we were talking together as a whole group some of the pupils did not take part in the conversation. This had happened every time, and I wanted them to participate in the discussion; it was not easy, but when I used the gapped exercise they took part in the conversation and gave answers to some questions. The reason for that was that they did not have the vocabulary in English that the other pupils had, so they felt left out, but when we had an exercise that was concrete they took part in answering.

We conjugated verbs that were used in the song. Afterwards we had a little vocabulary test.

Result of the presentations

The 19th October it was time for the pupils to have their presentations. While working together in groups with pupils they did not know that well, they had done a good job. We used this lesson to listen to each other. We had done a lot of talking and discussion before and now it was time to just listen.

All the pupils did well. They told me that they had liked the topic, and that they felt that they had learned more English. I understood after this that it is important to give them as concrete exercises as possible. The pupils who are struggling with English need “fill in” tasks so they can feel that they also have achieved something.

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Appendix

Attachment 1

Worksheet

Your assignment is to do a written presentation on cyber bullying. The presentation has to be finished by Wednesday, October 19th. Your presentation should deal with the following topics:

1. What is cyber bullying? Read through what your assignment is and spend 10 minutes discussing different ways going about it.
2. Who experience cyber bullying? What percentage of young people experience cb?
3. What can victims do to get rid of cb?
4. What can other people (friends, family or teachers) do to get rid of cb?
5. Why do you think people bully others? Have you yourself maybe been a bully?
6. What kind of information do we have to think carefully about before putting it online.

Attachment 2

My name is Chris. I've been bullied from the time I stepped foot on my secondary school (Year 7) till present day (Year 11) .

I have 3 more months left until absolute freedom, and I'm really stressing to find out how long 3 months actually fly past to anyone who's been bullied for a long time at 16 years old. I am experiencing a lot of cussing and laughing and taunting from many boys in my year, and I actually don't know how long I can stay strong before I have a breakdown. I'm frightened to see certain boys in my year every day because I know if I see them in my lessons or in the playground, the same thing always comes, the taunting about how I got pushed or who I am as a person.

I am really really confused into why they do it, and I have managed to not cry from the very point I realised I am starting to get hated by people and getting cussed till now, but I really am starting to crack. I HATE those boys, and I don't know what to do at this moment of time. The fact that there's only 3 months left is the only thought I have got to hang on to, but I feel depressed, frightened about walking past or getting attention from the specific, horrible bullies, I feel paranoid, every night I'm going to bed without having to think what happened today, WHY it happened. What could've happened if they just left me alone, why do they HAVE to taunt me, am I that much different from a normal human? do they have to do what they did today? Every night I try to block out those thoughts by keeping myself occupied with something, but it's always there. Even now I'm paranoid about what might happen. If actually, the bullies might see this on the internet and taunt me even more back at school.

I'm frightened and paranoid of what's going to happen tomorrow in a specific lesson, at a specific time, If I try to try new ways into avoiding that boy, moving away from him, try to not get his attention, it would force myself to not be MYSELF, to not hang out with my friends in that area, since they have no problem into hanging in that area and don't receive any bullying. I have no reason to just force them to come with me because I'm getting bullied, That would seem greedy. They are great friends, so that covers it.

I have no idea what to do. Does anyone experience this in some sort of way, or have they been through those times and is a recovering victim? I don't know what to do. I really need some help into what I should do. Should I stick it out for the remaining 3 months? I'm getting so much headaches when I go to sleep, I hold on to my will and strength into not crying because of many factors. For one I'm a boy, and boys don't cry. But I'm on the edge. I spoke to my

local GP, and he said I;m not going mad, im just very frightened, extremely scared, and that it's not my fault. I hold on to this thought as well, but it really seems that i can't take much of this anymore, even for three months. I pray. But that's it. I don't believe in karma, because i know for a fact karma hasn't helped for such a long time.

To anyone who happens to read this, and is one of those boys/girls at 16 who have been through this horrible struggle, I hope to share your experiences and gain more hope into pulling through this traumatizing months. To everyone who have been a victim, i know what you can be going through. Even though I am struggling myself, I'm hear to say that

THEY ARE NOT AND NEVER WILL BE BETTER THAN YOU. YOU ARE PERFECT JUST THE WAY NATURE MADE YOU AND THE WAY YOU WERE BROUGHT UP. IT JUST HAPPENS TO BE THAT YOU HAPPEN TO COME ACROSS SUCH DISGUSTING BULLIES. THEY ARE NOT BETTER THEN YOU. ANY NAME THAT THEY CALL YOU CANNOT MAKE YOU WEAKER OR WORSE THAN WHAT YOU ARE NOW. THEY CANNOT REMOVE YOUR TALENTS OR YOU EXISTENCE BY MOVING THEIR LIPS AND MAKING SUCH HORRIBLE SOUNDS COME OUT. THEIR OPINIONS CANNOT DEFINE YOU AS A PERSON. YOU ARE STRONG. BE PROUD OF WHO YOU ARE, THESE ARE JUST WORDS ON A COMPUTER, BUT PRETEND THIS IS A VOICE. THEIR OPINIONS DON'T MATTER. YOUR LIFE CANNOT BE BASED ON THEIR OPINIONS. YOU ARE WHO YOU ARE.

THERE IS AN END TO EVERY ROAD. I'M SURE OF IT. HOW YOU TRAVEL THE ROAD IS WHAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE, HOW YOU DEAL WITH THESE BULLIES ARE EVERYTHING. DON'T MAKE THEM BIGGER THEN YOU. THEY THINK THEY ARE, BUT THEY ARE NOT.

I'm going through these very stages as I speak. I hope that these 3 months can end, but I'm desperate. Please advise me into what to do during these three months. I will be SO grateful to hear from anyone that is going through or has been through this.

Attachment 3

Worksheet

Song title:

Fill in the missing words.

Good morning, _____.
I am a _____.
Wearing a brown polyester

You want a coke?
Maybe some fries?
The roast beef combo's only \$9.95
It's okay, you don't _____ to pay
I've got all the change

_____ knows
It hurts to _____
And everybody does
It's so weird to be back _____
Let me tell you what
The years go on and
We're still _____ it, we're
still fighting it
And you're so much like me
I'm _____

Good _____, son
In _____ years from now
Maybe we'll both sit down and
have a few beers
And I can tell you 'bout

And how I picked you up and
everything changed
It was _____
Sunny days and _____

I knew you'd _____ the same
things.

Everybody knows
It _____ to grow up
And everybody does
It's so _____ to be back here.
Let me tell you what
The _____ go on and
We're still fighting it, we're still
fighting it
You'll _____ and try and one day
you'll _____
Away from _____

Good morning, son
I am a bird

It was pain
_____ days and rain
I knew you'd feel the same things

Everybody knows
It hurts to grow up
And everybody does
It's so weird to be back here.
Let me tell you what
The years go on and
We're still fighting it, we're still
fighting it
Oh, we're still fighting it, we're still
fighting it

And you're so _____ like me
I'm sorry