

Take One of letter you'll get on Monday

Dear Everybody,

One of the ways I use "letters to the group" is to follow-up on teaching when I realise I have left a lot of loose threads hanging.

The exercise we finished with on Friday is one of those devised by Bernard Dufeu in his method Language Psycho-Dramaturgy (See TEACHING MYSELF).

The relaxation exercise is one that I used quite separately from the doubling one.

There are people who do not react well to relaxation exercises and Ga■■■■ is one of these, she tells me.

I don't know if you noticed but the doubling was very powerful in the case of D■■■■ and B■■■■. If you want to know how it went for them catch them at a break time and ask them.

Ge■■ has pointed out to me that last week I gave you a truncated article; I will re-copy the article on Language as being rather than having. Thanks for telling me, Ge■■.

Teaching a class to use the Reversi exercise will take you a period. Don't bother to do it unless you intend to use the exercise on a regular basis.

My best use of it was with a group of 18 second year college students from Gi■■ (Japan).

I taught them their core morning program (15 hours per week over a 12 week term.)

I showed them how to use the game... this took about 45 mins. I then gave them three boards (six girls to a board) loads of paper with one colour one side and a different colour the other, rulers and scissors.

I told them to come the following day with 10 words they wanted to learn, or to consolidate in English: I asked them to choose words they found hard to retain.

The following day they spent 10 minutes putting the English words they had chosen and their Japanese equivalents onto Reversi cards, they then played the game twice (3 agst 3) and spent the last 5 minutes of the lesson randomly testing each other on the words.

I invested one hour in teaching them the game. They played it 3 times a week over 12 weeks.

The game took up 3 out of 15 hours of their core program. I drank coffee, observed, understood them better, and revelled in their high energy autonomy.

I used the game with my middle child when he wanted to boost his French vocab just before taking his GCSE. We played over the 10 days leading up to the exam. Each night I took 56 words (8X8 board) from Maupassant short stories (a level a bit above the GCSE) He already knew about 50% of the words. When tested next day he would know 90% of the words. He often beat me because he plays games better than me. He upped his French vocab by 500 words and his confidence by a large amount.

The game is classically good gender-wise and, mostly, the girls are better at language and the boys at card positioning on the board.

The game is fine from beginner to post-advanced

The game is fine with six year-olds and 60-year olds.

The computer version will be out on CD Rom by Xmas from