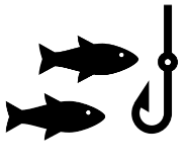
How to help someone learn?

Instructions for teachers and language assistants



Give someone a fish, and you feed them for a day.
Teach them how to fish, and you feed them for a lifetime.

Things to keep in mind

- Help a learner think
- Ask questions rather than give answers
- Encourage learners to try
- It is never bad to make a mistake!

What if… the learner encounters **an unknown word**?

Questions you can ask the learner:

- Where did you read or hear this word?
- What part did you understand?
- What do you think it could mean?
- How could you find the meaning?

What if… the learner has problems with **understanding a text**?

Questions you can ask:

- What is it what you want to learn from the text?
- Where do you think you can find the answer, how do you know that?
- What part did you understand?

What if… the learner has problems with **understanding an instruction**?

Questions you can ask:

- What is your question?
- What part did you understand?
- What do you think you need to do now?

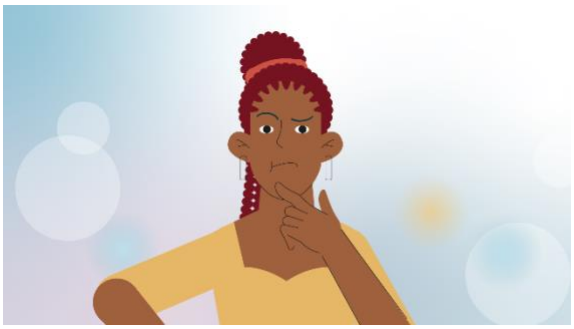
Comparing new language and home language

- Give an example
- Avoid grammar terms

How to grow into your role as Coaching teacher or as Language assistant?

Maybe you have to get used to your role as language assistant or a teacher who coaches in stead of teaching.

You can grow, by reflecting on your experience during the lessons.



Here are some questions you can ask yourself and/or discuss together.

Questions about your behavior:

- Do you manage to support learners in learning to learn, do you manage to cooperate with the learners? (Or do you find it difficult to let go of 'teaching' techniques?)
- What feedback did you receive from the learners/teacher?

Questions about your technique and didactics:

- Which techniques do you use to support learning to learn?
- What is the effect of your techniques on the learners?
- Which technique that you applied works best?

Questions about your experience and feelings:

- What are your most surprising experiences in working with the learners?
- Is teaching in a more coaching way satisfying for you?
- Is assisting in class satisfying for you?

Questions about how to grow further:

- What would you like to improve as Teacher or Language Assistant?
- How can you improve this?