39 Developing as a teacher

A Warm-up

1 Think of something which you have become very good at. It could be learning a language, a musical instrument, a sport, a hobby (such as cooking), or anything else. How did you first learn? How did you continue learning? Tell your partner.

2 Work with a partner. Talk about what you consider to be the most useful parts of the CELTA course. However, you can only say one word at a time. Do not plan what you will say beforehand. You must listen to each other so that sentences are coherent and grammatically accurate.

Example:

Trainee 1	I		the		practice		etc.
Trainee 2		enjoyed		teaching		because	

3 Could you use an activity type such as 2 in your teaching? If so, how?

B Professional development

1 Indicate with a cross how much impact the following parts of the CELTA course have had on your learning. Compare your ideas with a partner.

Input sessions	big impact ——— not much impact
Planning teaching practice lessons	big impact ——— not much impact
Teaching	big impact ——— not much impact
Post-teaching feedback discussions	big impact ——— not much impact
Writing evaluations of your own lessons	big impact ——— not much impact
Researching and writing course assignments	big impact ——— not much impact
Websites for teachers and online forums	big impact ——— not much impact
Tutorials with tutors	big impact ——— not much impact
Course reading, e.g. handouts, articles, chapters from books	big impact ——— not much impact
Observation of peers	big impact ——— not much impact
Observation of practising teachers	big impact ——— not much impact
Informal discussions with colleagues	big impact ——— not much impact
Other (what, exactly?)	big impact ——— not much impact

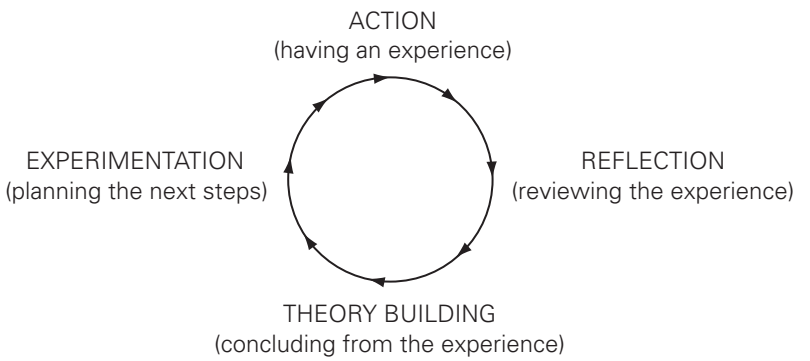
2 Work in groups. In the light of the above, discuss ways to continue developing as a teacher after the course.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009091602.040 Published online by Cambridge University Press

C Learning from experience

The learning experience that underpins the CELTA course is, essentially, one of 'reflecting on experience'. That is, learning takes place through cycles of action and reflection.

1 Study the reflective learning cycle. Identify some concrete experiences that you have had during the course (e.g. 'a student told me that they really liked the speaking activity in the lesson I did on pets last week'). How did you review that experience? What did you decide to do as a consequence? (How) did it change your teaching? Tell your partner about your experiences.



2 Read the quote below.

> Reflective practice occurs . . . when teachers consciously take on the role of reflective practitioner and subject their own beliefs about teaching and learning to critical analysis, take full responsibility for their actions in the classroom, and continue to improve their teaching practice.
>
> Thomas Farrell, 2018

This suggests that teachers can modify both their beliefs about learning and teaching and their practice over time. Work in small groups and discuss the questions below.

a Why do you think this change happens?
b How you can reflect on lessons and continue to improve your teaching practice after the course?
c Can you think of reasons why teachers might not change their practices?

3 Complete the table below, using the terms your trainer dictates.

I will definitely try to do this	I would like to do this but it is unlikely	I don't like this idea much	I don't understand how this helps me as a teacher

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D Case studies

1 Read about these teachers. How are the teachers similar and how are they different in terms of their development? Who do you think you will be most similar to?

George	**Cara**
When I finished my CELTA course, I couldn't wait to start teaching. I was determined that I would try the new things I had learned. If I hear a colleague say they have done something that students liked, I rush to try it out too. Some things work and so I use them again and again. Some things are disasters and I never repeat them! And sometimes I can think of a way of improving it so that it will work. My goal is to start a website where I can share my teaching ideas and also invite other teachers to share theirs. I am already quite active on discussion forums and social media – I just loving talking about teaching!	When I finished my CELTA course, I knew I still had a lot to learn. I was really nervous in the classroom and didn't feel I knew enough. I've always liked reading and I started reading more about teaching: all sorts of things – blogposts but also some journal things. It actually gave me confidence. I remember an experienced teacher talking about something in the staffroom and I knew about it – I had been reading about it – and started to feel I belonged. Colleagues even started asking me questions! I want to go on now and do more courses and get even better qualified. There's so much to learn, and one day I would like to teach other teachers.
Ayala	**Jane**
When I got my first job after CELTA, I was quite nervous going into a new school. The Director of Studies said she wanted to watch me teach and I was so worried, but actually she gave me really good feedback. There were things to work on but it was really helpful and encouraging. There were some development workshops at the school which staff took turns to lead, and they were great. I learned a lot because they were teaching the same sorts of classes as me. After about a year I actually led one of those sessions and the feedback on that was good. I was so proud. I felt I was really contributing to the school.	I did my CELTA course nearly two years ago. I learned a lot on my course but even more when I started teaching. I tried to make friends in the staffroom and found people were really helpful to me and were usually happy to share their experiences. I think I am ready for a new challenge, and I am currently deciding whether to do an MA in TESOL or a Cambridge DELTA course. I know they are both high level and will be hard work. I would really love to end up working in a university so that might influence my choice, but I know a lot of teachers who feel they have benefited from the Diploma because it is really practical.

2 Jane says, 'I am currently deciding whether to do an MA in TESOL or a Cambridge DELTA course. I know they are both high level and will be hard work.'

What information would you like to know about these courses? You could consider such things as:

- entry requirements
- duration
- recognition/value
- modes of study
- assessment
- prices

Ask your trainer any questions you have.

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KEY WORDS FOR TEACHERS

Check you know the meanings of these terms.

- *reflection*
- *observation*
- *teacher beliefs*

REFLECTION

Draw up a 'continue learning' action plan for your first six months of teaching after this course. Make your plan as specific as possible. Then work in pairs or groups and compare your plans.

Reference

Farrell, T. (2018). Reflective Practice for Language Teachers. In J. Liontas (ed.) *The TESOL Encyclopedia of English Language Teaching*. New York: Wiley and Sons.

https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009091602.040 Published online by Cambridge University Press