

# Are you ready to follow teens' pace?



## Teaching teenagers has always been presented as a challenge. What's your opinion about it?

It is and it is not. At least not more than teaching any other age group. If you aim to keep learners motivated, they all are a challenge in their own way.

## And what makes teens a challenge?

Well...the fact that teenagers live in a permanent state of flux; as someone has said, in "nobody's land". Teens keep the pace of the world's changes. In fact, more often than not, THEY are the source of change.

## And what bearing does this have on teaching?

Teens ask for teachers who can dance at their pace. Not that we have to keep moving up and down. Dancing at their pace means keeping oneself updated and this IS a challenge. There was a time when it was the teacher who made classroom decisions. Not that this is different now but today teenagers are ready to question not only what they are taught but also HOW they are taught. In a time of change and in a period in their lives when most of what they do and what happens to them is transitional, teenagers want teachers who are willing to change.

## So how does their learning affect our teaching?

Teens need immediate answers. Their learning is mainly experiential. They see English as a bridge, a door to new horizons. It's no longer English for the sake of English. Teens need to learn English and they also need to learn how to learn English and through English so that they can grow socially independent. They ask for new contents and new tools that enable them to cope with the uncertainty and instability of today's world. This is not altogether new. We've been talking about empowering learners for a long time. What teens are telling us today is "Stop talking!" "Start doing!". "Give an answer to changes NOW" and this is the challenge!. And I tell my colleagues "to give teens an answer, make your teaching RELEVANT"! STOP training them! EDUCATE them!

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