




# Ken Wilson

## Turning passive students into active learners



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## **Sporting Excellence simulation:**

- 1**  You chose your name, nationality and sporting ability
- 2** You chose the location and duration of the Sporting Excellence conference
- 3** You introduced yourselves to each other
- 4** You arranged to meet later

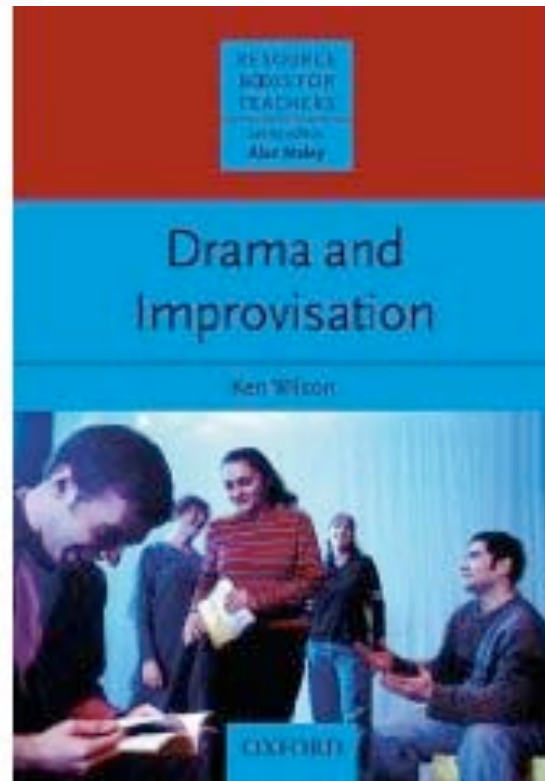


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- 5 Someone was 30 minutes late and apologised *profusely*
- 6 You said goodbye to each other at the airport
- 7 You decided on the location of next year's conference
- 8 You wrote to the government
- 9 You met the following year

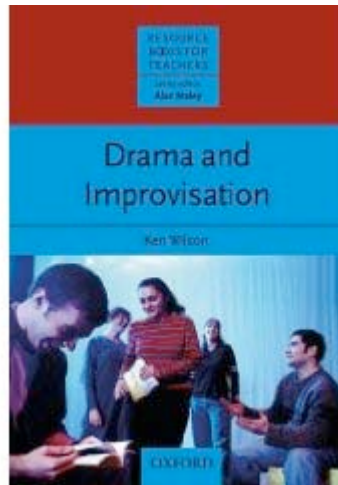
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The Sporting Excellence activity is taken from this book:



**Drama and Improvisation (2008) Ken Wilson**  
**Oxford University Press**  
**ISBN 978 - 0 - 19 - 442580 - 3**

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**A**

**scary  
message  
to ALL  
TEACHERS...**



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**You are working TOO HARD  
and you are taking  
too much  
responsibility for  
what happens  
in the classroom.**



My daddy is an  
eggsorsted teacher.

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# So ... what is the solution?

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**“Do you still get paid if I’m not learning anything?”**

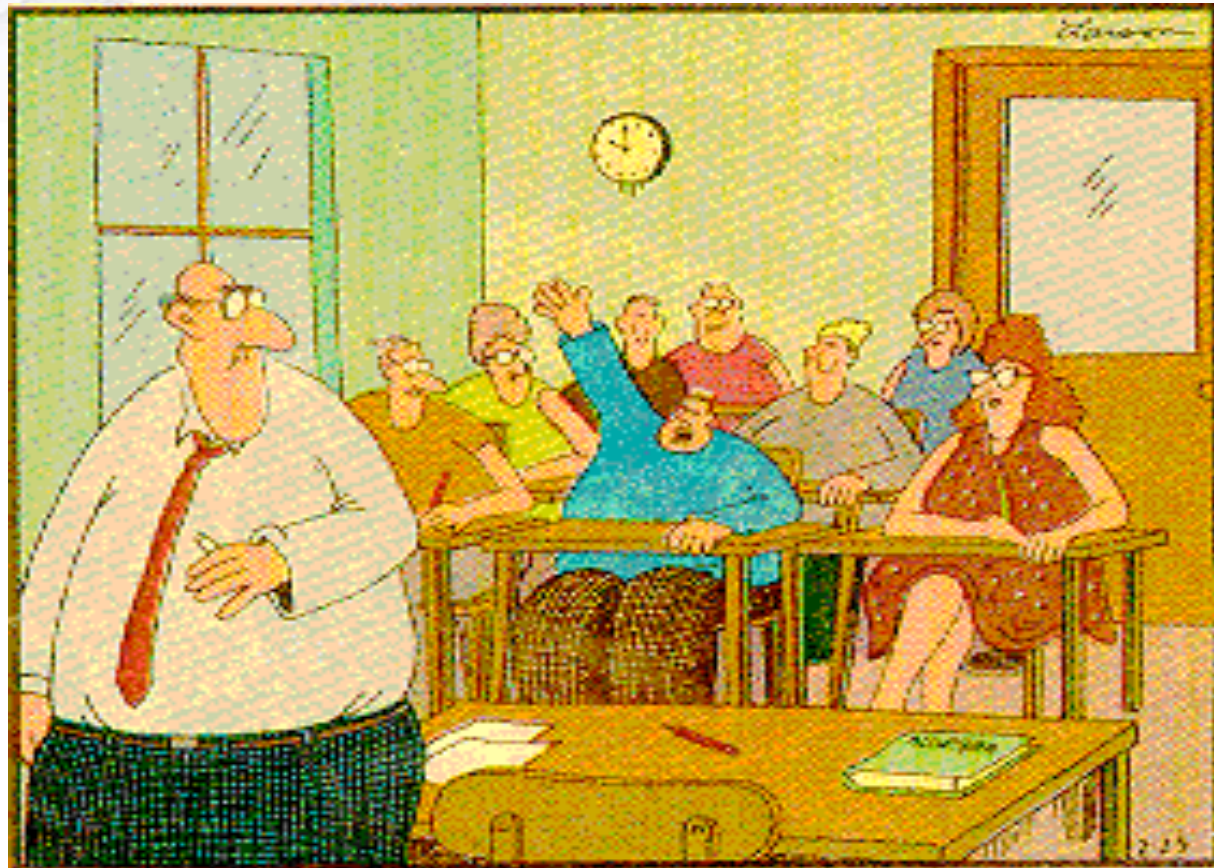
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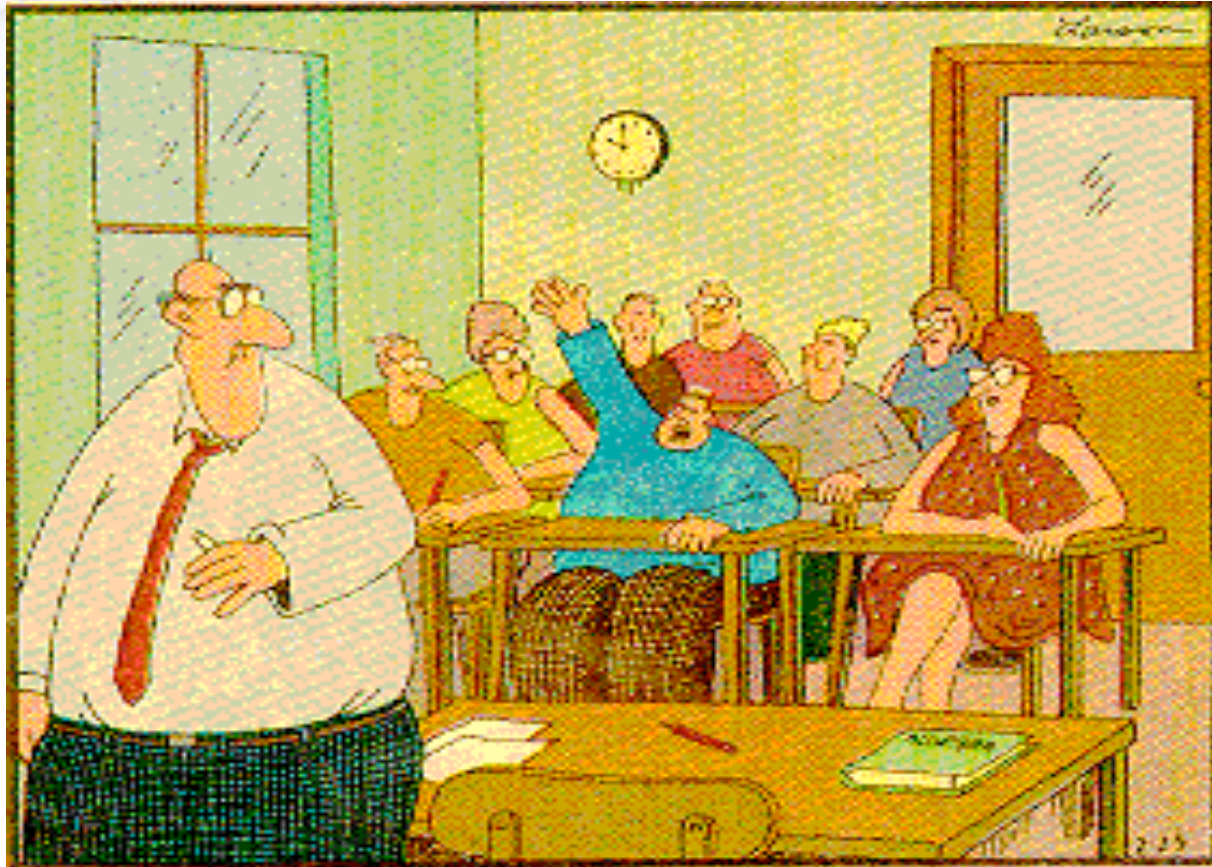
**Give more  
responsibility  
for what  
happens in the  
classroom to  
the majority of  
the occupants...**



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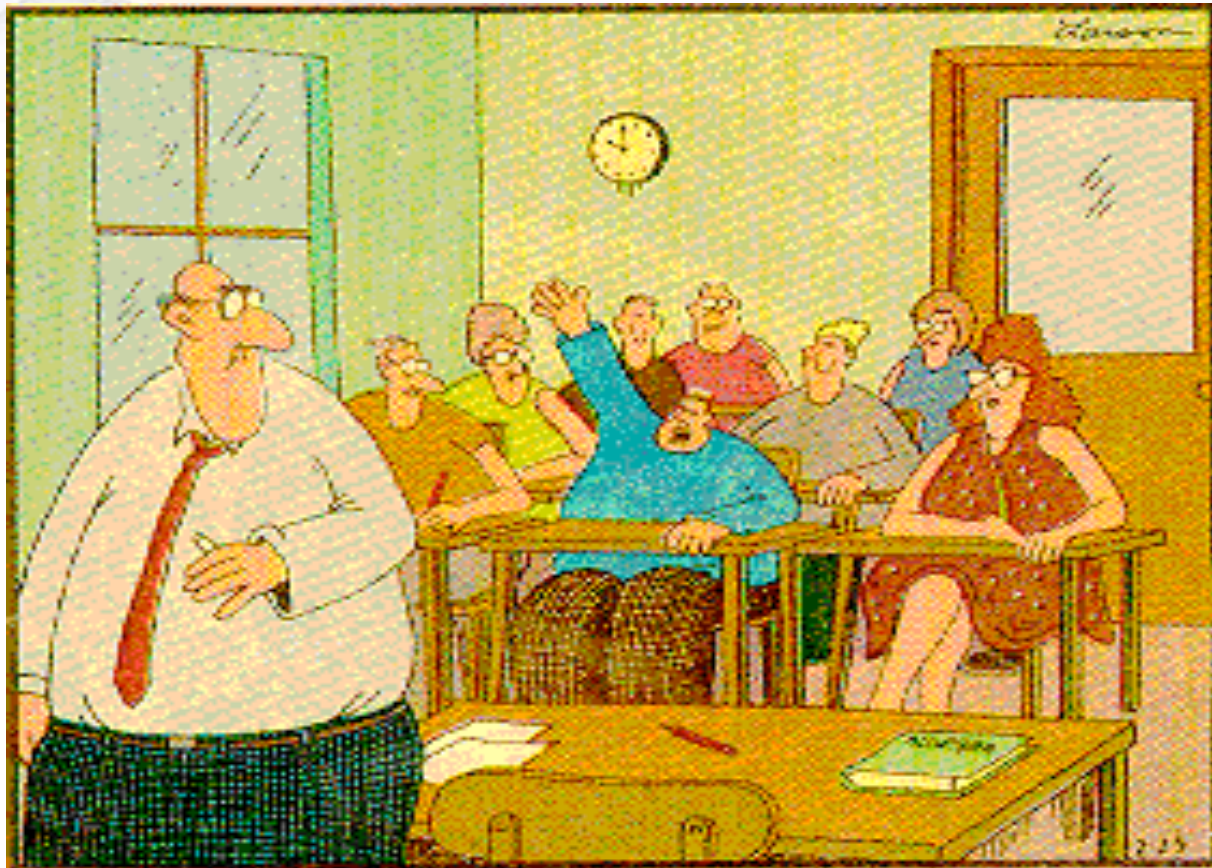


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*Mr Osbourne, may I be excused?*

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*Mr Osbourne, may I be excused?  
My brain is full.*



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# 1 The map of the book

## 2 Reading texts

## 3 Exercises

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## Contents

Starter Unit (pp. 4-7)	
In this module you will...	
learn, read and talk about...	learn how to...
<b>Module 1 (pp. 4-7)</b> Unit 1 countries, appearance, character, family members, ability Unit 2 household activities, requests, sports, actions Trail Tales! Episode 1 (p. 20) Go Green! 1 (p. 21) Our World (p. 22) Checkpoint 1 (p. 23)	• talk about countries and origin • describe people and talk about their character • talk about abilities • describe things happening now • ask for help • the verb 'to be' • the verb 'have got' • positive adjectives • the verb 'can' • present continuous • prepositions of movement • about your super family • a description of a picture
In this module you will...	
learn, read and talk about...	learn how to...
<b>Module 2 (pp. 24-27)</b> Unit 3 buildings, directions, clothes, prices, the Green Cross Code Unit 4 jobs, daily routine, free time, hobbies Trail Tales! Episode 2 (p. 34) Go Green! 2 (p. 37) Our World (p. 38) Checkpoint 2 (p. 39)	• talk about location • give directions • a family clothes • talk about prices • talk about everyday activities • tell the time • express preference • imperative • there is/there are • pronunciation of place • plural • present simple • adverb of frequency • prepositions of time • about your neighbourhood • about your daily routine and favourite subject
In this module you will...	
learn, read and talk about...	learn how to...
<b>Module 3 (pp. 40-43)</b> Unit 5 country code rules, threats, advice Unit 6 food, containers Trail Tales! Episode 3 (p. 52) Go Green! 3 (p. 53) Our World (p. 54) Checkpoint 3 (p. 55)	• protect the countryside • give and follow rules • talk about threats • give advice • talk about food and quantities • that/mustn't • should/shouldn't • object pronouns • much/many/a lot of • somebody • containers • prepositions of place • a letter giving advice • about your favourite food
In this module you will...	
learn, read and talk about...	learn how to...
<b>Module 4 (pp. 56-57)</b> Unit 7 animals, habitats Unit 8 feelings, buildings Trail Tales! Episode 4 (p. 68) Go Green! 4 (p. 69) Our World (p. 70) Checkpoint 4 (p. 71)	• compare animals • talk about animal habitats • talk about feelings • talk about where you were • compare adjectives • comparatives • with/where • about animals and their habitats • about where you were last weekend
In this module you will...	
learn, read and talk about...	learn how to...
<b>Module 5 (pp. 72-83)</b> Unit 9 lengths, coffee, kings, queens Unit 10 Willow and Emma's father, famous people Trail Tales! Episode 5 (p. 84) Go Green! 5 (p. 85) Our World (p. 86) Checkpoint 5 (p. 87)	• about your past • tell a story • simple past (regular) • about your neighbourhood • about your daily routine and favourite subject • about people in the past • about famous people in the past
In this module you will...	
learn, read and talk about...	learn how to...
<b>Module 6 (pp. 88-91)</b> Unit 11 big animals, months, animals, penguin passage Unit 12 holidays, things to take on a holiday, holiday activities Trail Tales! Episode 6 (p. 100) Go Green! 6 (p. 101) Our World (p. 102) Checkpoint 6 (p. 103)  Optional Units (pp. 104-106) Our School (pp. 107-112)	• ask questions • talk about animals • talk about plans and intentions • question words • ordinal • months • will • be going to • about an animal • about your holiday plans



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# What do you know about ...

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# What do you know about ...

➤ **great white sharks?**



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# What do you know about ...

- **great white sharks?**
- **American prisons?**



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# What do you know about ...

- **great white sharks?**
- **American prisons?**
- **meeting people online?**



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# What do you know about ...

- **great white sharks?**
- **American prisons?**
- **meeting people online?**
- **Julius Caesar?**



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# What do you know about ...

- great white sharks?
- American prisons?
- meeting people online?
- Julius Caesar?
- Heath Ledger?



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# What do you know about ...

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# What do you know about ...

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- Ian Fleming?
- Bethany Hamilton?



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# What do you know about ...

- great white sharks?
- American prisons?
- meeting people online?
- Julius Caesar?
- Heath Ledger?
- megacities?
- Ian Fleming?
- **Bethany Hamilton?**

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## The courage of the one-armed surfer



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# 2 Reading



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**Most ELT reading texts,  
up to Intermediate level,  
are NARRATIVE  
or INFORMATIVE  
texts.**



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## 1 A NARRATIVE reading text ....

# Doctors and Nurses





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**At the hospital near where I live, all the doctors are women and all the nurses are men. When new patients arrive at the hospital, they always call the doctors nurses, which makes the doctors feel quite annoyed. And they also call the nurses doctors, which makes the nurses feel quite pleased.**



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**One day at the hospital, a patient (a man) approached a doctor. ‘Excuse me, nurse,’ said the patient. ‘When can I see the doctor?’**

**‘Listen,’ said the doctor. ‘I’m a doctor, and the man over there that you think is a doctor is actually a student nurse.’**



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**Oh, sorry,' said the patient. 'The last time I came to this hospital, that doctor --- sorry, that nurse --- that nurse said that you were a nurse.'**

**'Well, I'm not,' said the doctor. 'I'm a doctor, not a nurse.'**

**'Well, once again, sorry about that,' said the patient. 'By the way, what's your name?'**

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**‘Nurse,’ said the  
doctor. ‘Doctor  
Nurse.’**



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**At the hospital near where I live, all the doctors are women and all the nurses are men. When new patients arrive at the hospital, they always call the doctors nurses, which makes the doctors feel quite annoyed. And they also call the nurses doctors, which makes the nurses feel quite pleased.**

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2 An **INFORMATIVE** reading text...

**Six things you  
might not know  
about  
language**



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- 1 The oldest written language is ... The earliest hieroglyphics are dated 3,100 BC, more than 5,000 years ago.**
- 2 The English word with the most dictionary definitions is ....**
- 3 There are about 7,000 languages and dialects spoken in the world. About ... of them are spoken in India.**
- 4 .... is spoken as a first language by more people than any other language in the world. It is spoken by nearly 70 per cent of a population of 1.3 billion people.**
- 5 The commonest sound in language is the ... sound.**
- 6 There is an African language which has only three numbers. The numbers are ...**



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- 1 The oldest written language is Egyptian. The earliest hieroglyphics are dated 3,100 BC, more than 5,000 years ago.
- 2 The English word with the most dictionary definitions is *set*.
- 3 There are about 7,000 languages and dialects spoken in the world. About 845 of them are spoken in India.
- 4 Mandarin Chinese is spoken as a first language by more people than any other language in the world. It is spoken by nearly 70 per cent of a population of 1.3 billion people.
- 5 The commonest sound in language is the /a:/ sound, as in *father*.
- 6 There is an African language which has only three numbers. The numbers are *one*, *two* and *more than two*.



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## ***Set* no longer the longest entry in the Oxford English Dictionary!**

For many years the verb *set* has been cited as the longest entry in the OED. But a re-check shows that it has at last been toppled from this position. The longest entry in the revised edition is the verb *make*. However, it is quite possible that *set* will regain its long-held position at the top of the league of long words when it comes itself to be revised.



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**The longest entries currently in the online Third Edition of the OED are: *make* (verb), *set* (verb), *run* (verb), *take* (verb), *go* (verb), *pre-*, *non-*, *over-*, *stand* (verb).**

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# 3 Exercises



"What, you afraid of a little exercise?"

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**...make students feel ... or**





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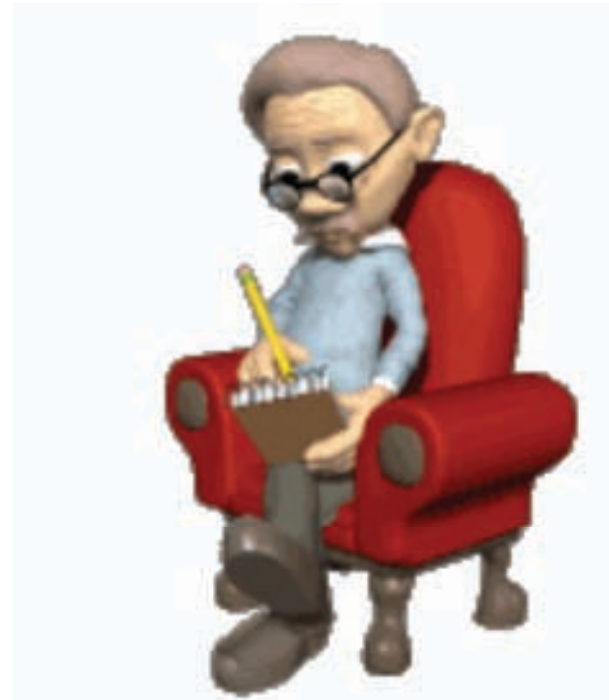
## Choose an appropriate future tense

- 1 (VISIT) We.... my grandparents this weekend and I'm really looking forward to it.
- 2 (LEAVE) What time ..... the next plane ..... for Toulouse?
- 3 (LET) I ..... you know as soon as the doctor arrives.
- 4 (DO) What .... you ... this time next year?

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# Some final thoughts...

(This is the part  
where you can  
take notes)





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1

**A lot of learning is passive.  
Students have to spend a lot  
of time listening to the  
teacher and/or reading a  
text.**

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**Exercise material is particularly passive. Stimulus sentences are usually written in a way that means reasonably aware students can do them in their sleep.**



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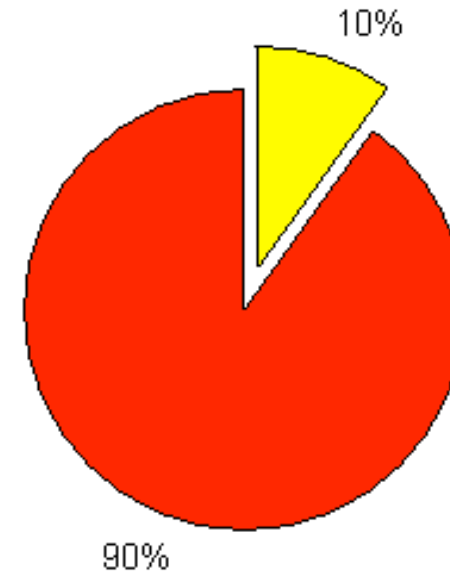
2



**A lot of students enjoy passive learning. They are the ones who smile when you start talking, or look really pleased when you tell them to open the book and read something.**

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**But the reality is that these students may represent only 10% of the class, and at most 25 per cent. The other 75-90% will not benefit from a diet of mainly passive learning.**





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**But the reality is that these students represent AT MOST 25 per cent of the class. The other 75 per cent do not benefit from a diet of mainly passive learning.**



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3

**Learners retain more of what they are taught when they are actively involved in the learning process and statistics suggest that, if students don't feel involved, an incredible amount of 'learnt' material is forgotten very quickly.**

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4

**Active learning can be fun and fun activities can generate laughter. This is a plus - there is a definite relationship between laughter and learning. As we say in English, laughter is a great *aide memoire*.**





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5

**There are teachers who think that knowledge is power and that this means they are more powerful and more valuable if they have ALL the knowledge.**

**This is a dangerous attitude!**



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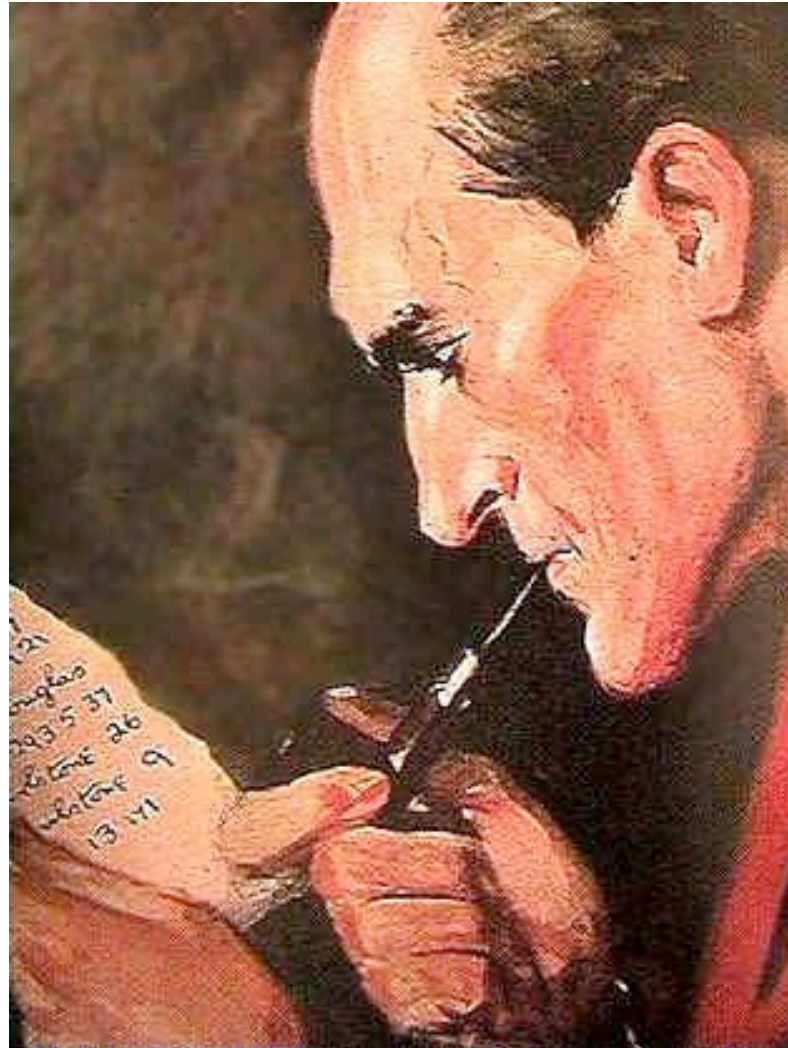
**Allowing students to be more involved in their own learning may mean that teachers have to give up some of the power and authority that they have in the classroom.**

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**Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson went on a camping trip. As they lay down for the night, Holmes said: "Watson, look up into the sky and tell me what you see."**

**Watson said: "I see millions and millions of stars."**

**"And what does that tell you?"**



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**"Astronomically," Watson replied, "it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets.**

**"Theologically, it tells me that God is great and that we are small and insignificant.**

**"Meteorologically, it tells me that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow.**

**"What does it tell you, Holmes?"**



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**"Someone's stolen our tent."**

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**"Someone's stolen our tent."**



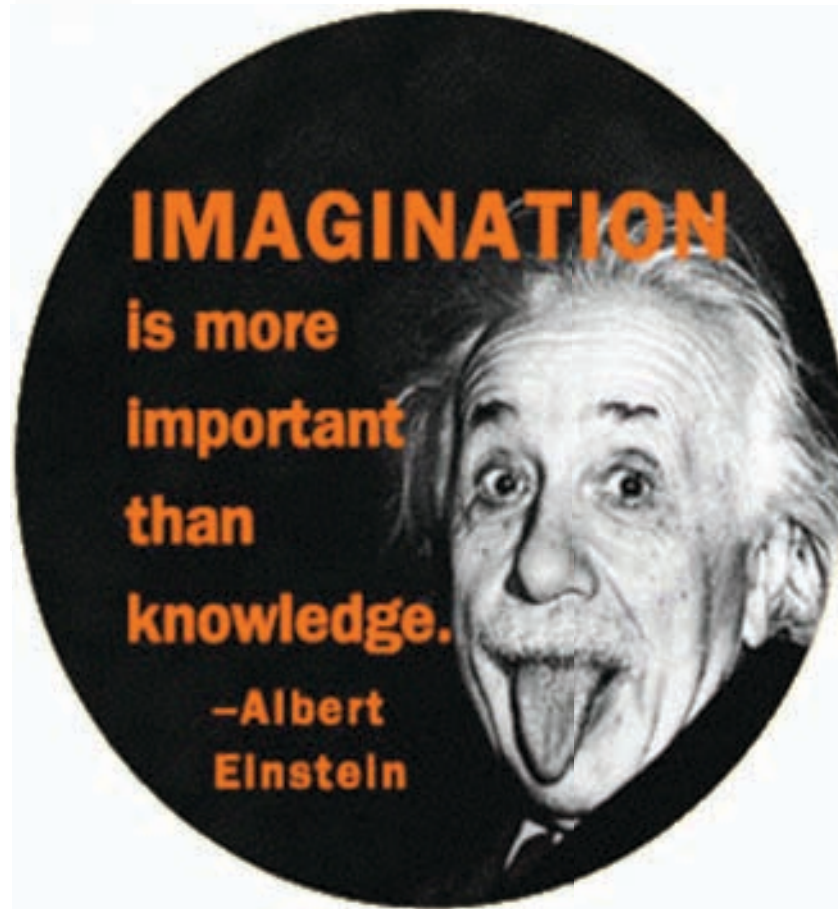


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# One final thought...

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Thank you for listening...

<http://kenwilsonelt.wordpress.com>

Ken Wilson's Blog - Windows Internet Explorer

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## Ken Wilson's Blog

**Blog Stats**

- 13,316 hits

Visitor locations



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**Top Posts**

- English is tough stuff
- Improvisation and teaching - the night at the Comedy Store when I saw the light...
- Welcome to my blog - and sign the guest book :-)
- Coming soon - my six penn'orth on the culture debate
- Watching other people teach (or sometimes not)
- Ken's publications

**Coming soon – my six penn'orth on the culture debate**

November 1, 2009 — Ken Wilson | Edit



Vietnamese restaurant

The 'full English breakfast' photo that was here was making readers with delicate stomachs feel queasy. Here instead is a pic of a cafe round the corner from where I live. 'West Londoners often eat locally-produced food here.'

**Welcome to my blog**

Thank you for visiting! In addition to the blogs on the main page, there are sketches and songs which you can download via the blue box.net widget further down this sidebar. Below that is 'Blogchat', the latest comments from blog-visitors. Well worth reading!

**Recent Posts**

- Coming soon – my six penn'orth on the culture debate
- Welcome to my blog – and sign the guest book :-)

Internet | Protected Mode: On 100%

Skype™ 4 Internet ... Inbox - Wind... Powerpoint 2... Microsoft Po... 11:42

<http://kenwilsonelt.wordpress.com>

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word 2010 interface. The ribbon is set to the 'View' tab, with the 'Format' sub-tab selected. The ribbon includes options for Document Views (Print Layout, Full Screen Reading, Web Layout, Outline, Draft), Show/Hide (Ruler, Document Map, Gridlines, Thumbnails, Message Bar), Zoom (Zoom, 100%), and Window (New Window, View Side by Side, Arrange All, Synchronous Scrolling, Split, Reset Window Position, Switch Windows, Macros). The document content is partially visible, showing text about Lviv and a school. A Box.net widget titled 'MY SHARED FILES' is overlaid on the right side of the document, displaying a list of files:

- School days.doc (31KB Sep-04-2009)
- Language School sketch.doc (38KB Aug-31-2009)
- What would you do workshe... (28KB Aug-30-2009)
- What would you do.wma (2,322KB Aug-29-2009)

Below the file list are links for 'MAKE YOUR OWN BOX.NET WIDGET' and 'UPLOAD MORE FILES'. The status bar at the bottom indicates 'Page: 1 of 1', 'Words: 0', and 'English (United States)'. The Windows taskbar at the very bottom shows several open applications including 'Inbox', 'iTunes', '2 Wi...', 'Skype™', '2 Mi...', 'Watchi...', and 'Micros...'.



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