

# 10 Tips - WP Workshops

## PLANNING

### 1. SET CLEAR OBJECTIVES

What is the point of this workshop? Set very clear outcomes and keep coming back to them during planning. This will keep your session focused and ensure you include the most relevant information.

### 2. LESS IS MORE

There is only a certain amount of information a student can retain so don't worry about not including everything related to the topic. If you only have 20 minutes, as opposed to an hour, to talk about "Why HE?", what is the key message you want students to take away? This will need to be significantly less than from the full session.

### 3. DON'T TELL, SHOW

What activities are you planning to incorporate? Without thoughtful planning, WP workshops can end up being information sharing via PowerPoint presentation. Students need the opportunity to grapple with relevant concepts or materials to be able to learn - this could be through discussion, a card sort or a memory game.

### 4. PLAN EXTENSION TASKS

It's always worth planning extra material (even if you don't end up using it) to stretch and challenge more able students. This might just be an extension question which gets them to apply a different perspective, or an in-depth article to read.

## DELIVERY

### 5. INTRODUCE VOCABULARY WITH DUE CONSIDERATION

To ensure that students can access all of your resources, identify the vocabulary that might need explaining. During your session you can simply ask, "What do we mean by...?". Go through the session ahead of time and pick out any possible unfamiliar words. It's better to identify too many than to assume knowledge, as students will rarely ask what a word means in the middle of the session.



## 6. DON'T FOCUS ON OUTLIERS

When working with WP students in particular, the advice needs to be unbiased, unambiguous and focus on the most probable routes to success. "I know of one student that got into Oxford with a BTEC", or "I read a great personal statement in the style of a political speech", might be the only things that students retain from a session and get the wrong idea completely.

## 7. CONSIDER THE BALANCE IN THE TYPE OF ACTIVITIES YOU PLAN

Think of activities as either 'hot' or 'cold'. Hot ones stir up the group - this might be a discussion activity, or a game with students out of their seats. Cold ones settle the group, like independent reading or reflection. Mixing up the types of activity helps to minimise boredom or over-stimulation.

## 8. FULLY EXPLAIN TASKS AND KEEP THEM TIMED

I have definitely set students off on a task to later find they are doing the wrong thing! Ensure students are provided with clear instructions and have a sound understanding of what they need to do. Asking a student to re-explain the task to the group in their own words, or modelling the first answer, are useful techniques for this. Make sure that the timings for tasks are snappy and students are aware that they may be asked to provide feedback - "I'll be asking for your feedback in 2 minutes."

## 9. BE PRESENT DURING SESSION

If you ask students to discuss something in pairs, walk around and listen for good examples. You can then use these when you re-engage the whole group, as opposed to asking for volunteers. This also gives you the chance to hear weaker examples and provide extra support. If teachers or ambassadors are in the room, ask them to do the same and highlight any good responses they heard to the group.

## 10. PLAN YOUR DIALOGUE

Obviously, you plan the actual session, but it's also helpful to plan your general pattern. Sometimes it's the comments and jokes, made without thinking, that reinforce, or even introduce, preconceptions to students. Often, these are based on personal experiences and are not particularly helpful: "no one really reads personal statements", "you'll be out partying the whole first term".

**For progression not determined by privilege**

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