

Facing up to nightmares: group activity

Collection: Small group teaching

Resource: Nightmare scenarios

Approximate duration

40 minutes

Learning outcomes

You can't altogether prepare for the unexpected. And in fact the attempt to do so might actually inhibit you more than the dread of things going wrong. But as a result of this activity you should have thought through some ways of handling and responding to common problems of seminar life. You might also learn to shed some of the debilitating dread of things that could go wrong, through gaining confidence in your own ability to cope.

Introduction

Please watch the videos about 'Nightmare scenarios' listed in the [Resource overview](#). These are extracts from the closing session of a training day for postgraduate tutors hosted by the English Subject Centre. The panel of tutors is responding to questions posed by postgraduates in the audience. Between them they offer a snapshot of a group discussion of the kind of problems that are the subject of this resource.

The activity

1. This activity requires each group of 3-4 participants to have access to a computer playing one of the videos listed in the resource overview discussing a 'nightmare scenario' that might occur in a small group teaching session.



1 | This resource is part of a set of professional development resources for Higher Education English (including English Literature, English Language & Creative Writing) called 'The Pool'. The resources were developed by the English Subject Centre in 2011 as part of a JISC/HEA Open Educational Resources (OER) Project.

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2. Allocate each group a different nightmare scenario from the list in the resource overview.
3. Ask each group to discuss amongst themselves the scenario in question.
4. Ask all groups to watch the video in which 'their' nightmare is discussed. When they have watched it, ask them to discuss the scenario again. Do they agree with the comments made in the video?
5. In the final plenary session, go round each group to ask about their nightmare scenario and its potential solutions.

Relationship to the Professional Standards Framework

- **Core Knowledge 2:** Appropriate methods for teaching and learning in the subject area and at the level of the academic programme
- **Professional Values 3:** Commitment to the development of learning communities
- **Professional Values 4:** Commitment to encouraging participation in higher education, acknowledging diversity and promoting equality of opportunity

More information about the Professional Standards Framework can be obtained from the summary factsheet in the *Subject & Pedagogy* collection in HumBox.

<http://humbox.ac.uk/2731/>

Resources in the Small group teaching collection

- Small group teaching: introduction to the collection
- Seminar design: resource overview
 - Seminar design: individual activity
 - Seminar design: group activity
- Peer reviewing a seminar: *Oliver Twist* : resource overview
 - Peer review: individual activity
 - Adjusting the level
- Peer reviewing a seminar: *The Bonesetter's Daughter* : resource overview
 - A complex dialogue
 - Negotiated authority



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- Thinking about seminars: resource overview
 - Relevance and red herrings
 - Weighing up the elements
- Nightmare scenarios: resource overview
 - **Facing up to nightmares: group activity (*you are here)**
 - Comparing notes
- Transformative writing: resource overview
 - Transformations: individual activity
 - Transformations: group activity



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