

Background questions

1. What kind of education do you have when it comes to English?

Årsstudium engelsk (60 stp) from UiO

2. How many years have you been teaching English in lower secondary school?

I have been teaching at ungdomsskole for 5,5 years, since fall 2015. I currently teach 9th grade.

Main questions

3. Do you plan your semester based on the course books you have access to? If not, can you describe how you plan it?

I don't plan my semester based on the course book, but I do use some of the material in the course books when I teach. I plan my semester together with colleagues who teach English the same year as me, we are usually a team of four teachers. We plan a little differently each year, but we usually start off by finding topics that fit both the competence aims for English and that are possible to combine with other subjects (tverrfaglighet).

4. with human relations and culture. A challenge is of course that it is quite time consuming for the teacher to find relevant and age/level appropriate authentic literature that is easy. If you do, how do you use authentic literature in the English classroom?

I do try to use authentic literature to bring certain topics to light, especially topics to be available to use, especially when it comes to current events and novels/comics with copyrights. I find that it is useful to use authentic literature that is available on online teaching resources, such as cdu skolen. For example, when working on the topic of racism we read excerpts from young adult fiction works such as *The Hate U Give*, memoirs such as *Born A Crime* and *Twelve Years a Slave*, speeches such as *I Have a Dream*, as well as newspaper articles about current events found in online newspapers. When I teach using authentic literature we usually read or listen to the text together or in smaller groups and discuss the contents. The students are usually asked to sum up the author's thoughts in their own words and give their own opinion of the topic discussed. It is also important to discuss the source material's intent, credibility, and neutrality, as this can be a challenge for the students at this age to comprehend. When teaching literature (lese, tolke og reflektere skjønnlitteratur) we naturally use authentic literature. My English students read at least one English book each year individually as they have reading homework and reading logs, and they must write book reports/recommendations or present them in front of class. We usually also read at least one English novel, novella, or graphic novel together in class each year, as well as short stories.

5. Do you think it is possible to cover the following competence aims in LK20 by using authentic literature? If yes, can you elaborate?

I do think it's possible and, in some cases, more relevant to use authentic literature to cover these competence aims. Many course books do contain excellent excerpts from authentic literature and good factual texts, but when it comes to keeping up with the current situation, course books become outdated quite fast. This works better with online resources for teachers that are updated more frequently. I find that using movies and video games as well as non-fiction authentic texts such as newspaper articles, opinions, and memoirs, will often engage the students much more than using factual texts or fictional stories in the course material.

6. If you look at the following competence aims from LK20, what kind of literature comes to mind? You can mention specific literature or be more general.

For the first one, I interpret "tekster" as more than just written texts, so this is something I try to vary as much as I can. It's important to read, discuss and retell contents of music, photographs, paintings, movies, podcasts, tv series, Tv interviews, etc and not just written text. When it comes to novels and young adult fiction, I find that we cover this mainly using books that the students like to read and that are popular at the time.

7. Since deep learning is a big part of LK20, where the students to a much higher degree are supposed to "learning to learn", do you think you are going to change how you use or focus on literature in the English classroom? If yes, how?

Right now, I feel that we are caught between two chairs and that I need to spend a lot of time adjusting the material that is easily accessible to the demands of the new curriculum. I am excited to see if we will continue to use course books or rely much more on online resources in the future. The past 1-2 years I have been using online resources and online teaching even more than before. This is partly because I have been personally interested in exploring different online resources as an alternative to course books, but also because of necessity due to the pandemic and closed schools etc. The challenge is that it is time-consuming and that I wish I had more time for assessment.

8. In your experience, what are some of the benefits of using a course book as opposed to authentic materials or vice versa?

The benefits of using a course book is that it is more predictable for the students and less time-consuming for the teacher. When the internet or electricity is out it's nice to still be able to do work. The students spend a lot of time in front of screens all day and it's harder (and more expensive) to have authentic literature in paper/book form for all the students. I try to vary by finding relevant texts and tasks in the course books for each topic we cover.

The benefits of using authentic material is that it's easier to adjust to the student group's interest and current events. It also offers more variation and feels more authentic and engaging for many students.

9. How can outside factors affect how we choose methods and learning material? We are interested in any outside factors, such as national tests, how colleagues impact our methods etc.

I am used to working in a team, both with people who have been teaching for ages and people who are fresh out of university and in my opinion, teachers are very adaptive, perhaps especially in English. I have some colleagues who are caught in old habits, and I find myself being caught up in my old habits as well, so having some breaths of fresh air occasionally is great for us all. I always forget about the national test, so I don't think this impacts my methods, but the oral and written exams do. My students work on old exams, example-exams and terminprøver (<https://terminprover-engelsk.cappelendamm.no/>) to prepare for their exam, and I find that these types of tasks are often useful when it comes to giving assessments. If there were no written exams, I would probably teach a little differently, but I mainly find that written exams are quite useful when it comes to the English subject, as long as the tasks are quite open. When we do oral tasks, I try to make it similar to how an oral exam would be to prepare the students. I don't think that outside factors affect my choice in learning material so much, but the fact that we need to present a list of resources used in preparation for the oral exams makes me wish I had used less sources every time!

10. How do you think the students would react and benefit from a more literary approach as opposed to excerpts and facts in a coursebook or vice versa?

As I have mentioned I think that it engages the students more, but it is also challenging for the students not to have a course book. If a literary approach is used it's important to have a well-organized and easy-to-understand semester plan that is shared with the students and updated when necessary. This is especially important for students who struggle in different areas (attention, concentration, learning, language, organization, home life etc). I find that if I don't use course books it can be harder for students to revise and remember what they have learned if they haven't taken notes or done the work as we go along. In short, it's more demanding for some students, while other students become more engaged and less bored.