

# Hot Seating

*A non-didactic way of the teacher giving information to the class, without giving up the spotlight!*

## HOW?

1. Best done with the desks cleared and the class sitting in a horseshoe around the *Hot Seat*.
2. The teacher announces that she will play a character and that she will be this character only when sitting in the *Hot Seat*. A small piece of costume such as a scarf or bag helps everyone distinguish between the teacher being in and out of role.
3. The reason for portraying the character is firstly explained e.g. *"I'll be St Mark so we can understand more about the background of the first gospel"*. Give the students time to consider the precise learning objectives - write it up for all to see e.g. *"For the exam you need to know who wrote Mark's gospel, when it was written, why it was written, the conditions in which it was written"*.
4. Ground rules are established e.g. no comments of any kind on either the students' questions or the teacher's answers, except by asking another question.
5. The teacher sits and takes questions in role, providing answers which, at best, invite further questions.
6. If the teacher wishes to speak to the class *as teacher*, then it is important for him to stand up and remove any costuming to signal the change.

## APPLICATIONS

- ◆ **Maths:** a ship's captain (co-ordinates); Pythagoras.
- ◆ **Science:** Madame Curie; Louis Pasteur; a physiotherapist; an atom interviewed about various chemical reactions!
- ◆ **Art:** Picasso; Oldenberg.
- ◆ **Business Studies:** John Harvey-Jones; different roles within an organisation.
- ◆ **English:** characters in plays, novels and poems; authors.
- ◆ **Modern Languages:** questions can be prepared beforehand; answers can be recorded and translated later.
- ◆ **History:** any real historical character; also fictional observer or messenger type characters who are reporting and interpreting events.
- ◆ **Technology:** a famous designer, chef, engineer; an expert in a particular process - a consultant or technician.

## WHY DO IT?

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- ◆ Once underway, the process can be quite gripping. even moving.
- ◆ It gives everyone access to information, irrespective of reading ability.
- ◆ The exercise particularly suits learners with an 'abstract random' or 'reflective' learning style, but because of its 'soap opera' feel, it actually appeals to most students.
- ◆ As the students determine what information they receive (by asking the questions) they are practising the management of their own learning.

## VARIATIONS

1. Students can research and prepare questions beforehand.
2. Students can be set research tasks as a result of the *first* Hot Seat interview and asked to bring the results to a *second* interview.
3. Individual students can take the Hot Seat, especially after a period of research, perhaps as homework.
4. Group Hot Seat: students work in small groups to prepare the character. The group puts forward one student as the 'frontperson', with the others sitting behind as 'alter egos' ready to be consulted on what to say.
5. Objects rather than human characters can be hot seated - especially good for science, technology and modern languages.
6. 'In Conversation With ...'