

## **Introduction**

Learning can only flourish in a positive learning environment. Therefore, it is necessary to create such an environment. In this short essay I will explore how such an environment can be created and what currently limits me in the creation of it. However, before doing this, one needs first define what actually makes up a good learning environment.

## **What is a good learning environment**

Before trying to create a good learning environment, one should determine what classifies as good. For me, this is an environment in which someone can develop himself/herself. Therefore, what is a good environment might differ from person to person. However, I also believe there will be commonalities between these. Looking at the model of Maslow (1943) self-development is on the top of the pyramid. Lower sections of this model include basic primary needs such as food, safety, social interaction and recognition. These all need to be fulfilled in order for someone to start developing himself/herself (or, in other words, start learning). If you are able to meet these preconditions, it is likely others will be able to learn and develop themselves.

## **How to create a good learning environment**

In order to create an environment in which individuals can reach their full potential one needs to meet the prerequisites described in the previous section. Make sure their basic needs are fulfilled (Note: although you can attempt this, this (to me) is not your responsibility as a teacher but rather that of the parents. However, I can imagine cases might arise in which you (or the school you work in) has to (partially) take on this responsibility (e.g. by providing breakfast at schools)), make sure your class meets set safety criteria (again, I consider this more the role of the school than me as an individual teacher) and emotional safety is created (something you can influence), interaction exists in your class (which can be done through a multitude of teaching activities. For example a think-pair-share activity), value your learners and recognise their actions (e.g. by rewarding them for their learning effort). If you do this I think you are well underway in developing a good environment in which learners can flourish.

## **What limits me in the creation of a good learning environment**

Although I am very much aware of the theory behind creating good learning environments I sometimes find it hard to realise this. The primary difficulty I face is to value the effort learners put into the activities. This might be due to my own abilities. I found (and still find) learning something relatively easy and, as a result of this, sometimes do not realise enough this holds not always true for others. Therefore I should try to be more aware of this and give extra praise when I see someone working hard to learn new things.

## References

Maslow, A. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological review*, 40(4), 370-396.