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Collaboration in the Classroom: The Teacher Toolkit



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Introduction

An award winning playwright, a counter terrorism expert and an aeronautical engineer are among experts who have returned to their old state schools to bring the curriculum to life for current students.

Future First's vision is that every state school and college should be supported by a thriving, engaged alumni community. For generations, private schools and universities have effectively harnessed the talent, time and support that former students can share. Now, Future First is making it easy and inexpensive for state schools and colleges to do the same.

From inspiring speakers and mentors to fundraisers and even school governors, alumni contribute to their old school and college communities in a variety of ways. A staggering 91% of the schools and colleges we work with said that using alumni to enhance lessons was an 'important' or 'very important' reason why they signed up to our service, but if we surveyed those who are actively using alumni in the classroom the percentage would be much lower. So we've done something about it.

Thanks to support from the Commercial Education Trust, we have developed and enhanced the 'in-lesson' offer to our members, which sees volunteers return to the classroom to co-teach lessons with teachers, acting as a resource to enrich student learning. Although we've seen this approach adopted in a wide range of subjects, our core funding was for interventions in Science and English, and therefore the majority of our examples are drawn from these areas.

We've seen an award-winning playwright, a counter-terrorism expert and an aeronautical engineer – to name a few – co-teach English and Science lessons in their old schools. In these sessions, the primary aim has been to directly support students' learning – covering content from the curriculum or scheme of work in an original and engaging way.

We are excited to share our learnings and recommendations with you here, in the form of this Teacher Toolkit, and inspire you to use volunteers in the classroom to enhance the teaching of the core curriculum.



Petrina de Gouttes
Project Lead

“Alumni in the English classroom enriched not only the academic experience of my students but it also made them realise that creativity exists in all parts of English – even in non-fiction!”

English Teacher

The Teacher Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to help you to make the most of volunteers as a lesson resource. You do not have to read this guide cover to cover and may find that some sections are more relevant to you than others. It will take you through why co-teaching is important, the roles and responsibilities, as well as four key steps in ensuring that your use of volunteers in the classroom is effective and well executed.



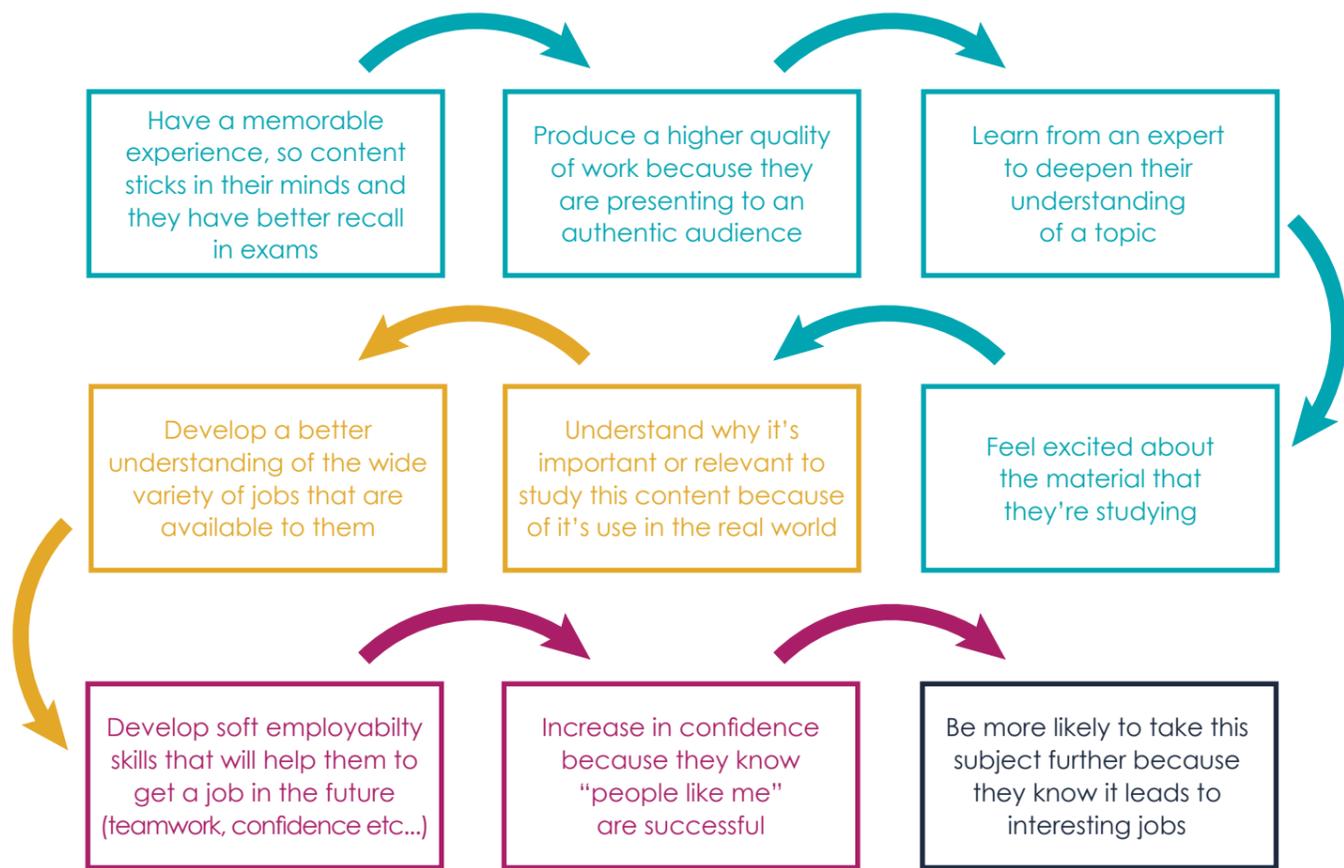
Wherever you see this symbol throughout the document you will find our handy hints and tips

Why co-teach?

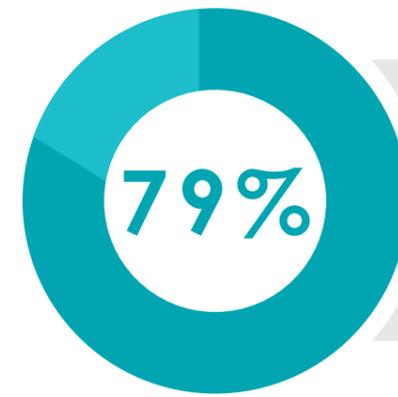
Increasingly schools are recognising the value of bringing professionals into the school environment to ensure that learning is anchored in real life. Most initiatives focus on how volunteers from the world of work can contribute to careers learning and skills development and these sessions often sit outside of the main curriculum. We're keen to change that.

The framework below demonstrates the primary and secondary drivers of developing these interactions:

I want students to...



- Curriculum driven reasons for career integration
- Career learning driven reasons for career integration
- Great by-products of any volunteer interaction
- Could be taught separately; potential by-product



79% of students who took part in a co-taught lesson said that they found the lesson 'more interesting' or 'much more interesting' than typical lessons in that topic.

As the framework demonstrates, first and foremost co-teaching is an engaging means of meeting learning objectives to help your students achieve. An authentic learning audience is proven to increase student engagement and deepen their understanding of a topic.

By adopting this approach regularly across your lessons, students gain exposure to careers that utilise the skills and knowledge they are acquiring in the classroom.

By using the skills and expertise of professionals to bring lessons to life, students recognise the value of what they are learning and how it relates to jobs and the wider world.

Our research suggests that this impacts on student motivation to work hard in their lessons and builds their knowledge of future opportunities.

Finally, the more opportunities that you are able to give your students to interact with volunteers from the working world, the more they are able to develop the social capital, soft skills and confidence that they need to be successful in the future. We've categorised this here as a 'by-product' because it's not an immediate goal of these sessions – a less tangible but hugely powerful cumulative effect of introducing your students to relatable role models.

The primary benefit of co-teaching with a volunteer is that they are used as a curriculum resource to further learning objectives and to aid student understanding of the topic being discussed. If you are interested in running a careers Q&A session, we suggest using volunteers in a workshop setting rather than as a co-teacher. For more information, please see the Future First Events Guide.

100% of teachers said that having a volunteer in the lesson added value to the teaching of the topic.



Case study: Felpham Community College



At Felpham Community College, science teacher Chris wanted his students to participate more actively in class and fully engage with what they were studying. We set up a series of four lessons, showcasing very different applications of the content they were covering in physics that term.

Each lesson included a brief explanation of the alumni's role and one of the scientific principles they needed within it, before the students got stuck in to a short experiment that demonstrated the principle in practice. These were co-delivered by Chris and the former student to ensure that they pitched at the appropriate level for students.

The class heard from aeronautical engineer, Rob; mechanical engineer, Nick; and former apprentice, now robot operator, Lewis. The fourth participant, Victoria, was initially overlooked when we were seeking out possible participants because she did not study science at A-Level, and had a degree in fashion. However, after digging a little deeper into her job designing bespoke car interiors at Rolls Royce, it was clear it was a great example of how scientific principle underpinned careers that the students wouldn't initially expect.

A quick starter saw students designing their dream car, before hearing from Victoria and seeing some of her design and then getting down to some materials science. Victoria had brought in offcuts of material from the factory. Students performed stretch tests on the materials to identify which would stand up best to wear and tear. Victoria then discussed the range of tests she needed to do when making new products.

Students were surveyed before and after the lesson series so that we could understand their impact. Greater numbers of students said that they looked forward to science lessons and that they understood how what they were doing in science was relevant to the outside world.

“Let's give them an unusual experience”

By providing the students with an unusual experience, Chris was able to support the students to apply their understanding of physics to real-life contexts and encourage more active participation. The school plans to roll out the same approach in maths lessons this year.

“As a teacher you always have to manage people in the classroom and think on your feet, so co-teaching was very straightforward on the day.”

Julie, English teacher at the Angmering School

The roles

Your role

Your teaching expertise, knowledge of your class and the curriculum makes you essential in shaping the experience for the students and directing volunteers. Although it would be possible for you to hand over the reins of your classroom to an outside expert for the hour, the quality of the experience for the students is higher when the session emerges from a collaboration between the teacher and the volunteer.

As the person bringing everything together, you'll need to:

- Identify which part of the module you would like a volunteer to co-teach;
- Find and contact suitable volunteers from new or existing school partnerships as well as from your own network;
- Share the lesson plan with the volunteer and give an indication as to how you would like to use them in your classroom;
- Give the volunteer some background information on the students and prior learning;
- Work with the volunteer in the classroom.

A recommended timeline of events can be found on page 12, which is followed by a step by step guide on how to prepare for and use volunteers in your classroom.



Remember, it's your lesson plan and they are there to support you and your aims. They'll be looking for direction so share your lesson objectives and what you need from them.

Volunteer's role

In providing context for your students' learning, volunteers can be so much more than a participant in a Q&A. For example, volunteers could set work-based challenges, act as an expert judge or lead a class discussion. They could also provide video, text or practical resources from their workplace – one of our volunteers brought in an engine! – which could be the main focus of the lesson. Whatever support you are looking for on the day, collaboration is essential to ensuring that the lesson is of value to your students.

- The volunteer should provide you with a short outline about their line of work so that you can both think of ways in which they could support your lesson;
- They could identify useful materials from their work or course that can support the lesson;
- They should consider how they would describe their job to the age group they will be supporting.

Support from Future First

Do you work in a Future First member school? Great! Don't forget, as part of the core package your Alumni Officer can provide you with ideas and recommendations about how to use volunteers in the classroom.

- We can help you to formulate your ideas;
- We can share useful hints and tips with you;
- We can give you an insight into how other schools are using volunteers in their classrooms.

Case study:

Woodford County High School for Girls



Looking to encourage and inspire the weaker students in her class, English teacher Jasmina was keen to use a curriculum intervention that could involve and excite the whole class about the topic at the time: Shakespeare. Aware that an award-winning playwright is an alumna of the school, Future First reached out to see if she would be interested in helping students to understand character development in 'Much Ado about Nothing'.

It's not every day that students get an opportunity to learn directly from a playwright, let alone an award-winning one who was once a pupil at their school! Lucy co-taught two English lessons at her old school and gave students an insight into a play she was writing at the time and how she builds and develops characters in her writing.

At the beginning of the first lesson, students had the opportunity to quiz Lucy about her chosen career path, including how she writes her plays and overcomes challenges like writer's block. The students were both surprised and intrigued to learn that Lucy uses similar techniques to Shakespeare when writing.

Before the lesson, Lucy produced a comprehensive guide to writing dramatic monologues, full of hints and tips around motivations, audience and language, which was a valued resource in the lessons. Students took part in activities and challenges led by Lucy and Jasmina before preparing to write their own dramatic monologues in the next lesson.

Supported by Lucy and Jasmina, students wrote creative and impressive dramatic monologues in the style of Shakespeare for two characters in the play and receive focused and detailed feedback from Lucy.

“The students are doing well! They are participating and more engaged than students of the same level who did not take part in the lesson with alumni”

Jasmina, English teacher at Woodford County High School for Girls





English

- Marketing professional supports GCSE students to develop their understanding of persuasive language in non-fiction texts.
- Students present ideas on dramatic monologues and character development to a playwright for feedback.
- Reporter helps students reflect on bias in the media as part of a Year 9 unit on multiculturalism.
- Publishing assistant helps students with their creative writing by explain what books grab him straight away, and what tends to end up in the rejection pile.



Science

- Renal specialist helps provide depth and real life examples for Year 12 biology unit on the kidney.
- Mechanic brings to life Newton's Laws of Motion, bringing example kit for the students to see up close.
- Sportswear designer demonstrates how the science of friction and aerodynamics impact on the clothing produced by their company.



PE

- Business coach shares motivational techniques used to build great teams, come back from defeat and persevere.
- Dietician supports BTEC students with work on sports nutrition.
- Physiotherapist helps students to understand how to exercise safely and recover effectively from intensive workouts.



Geography

- Local government town planner helps Year 8 explore how their local area has changed over the past decade with increased urbanisation.
- Year 9 sustainability project culminates with climate change specialist providing feedback on student suggestions and sharing the latest research on innovative solutions.
- Documentary maker helps students to produce their own film about a country or local geographical landmark.



History

- Police officer helps Year 7s solve the murder of Thomas Beckett – and develop their source skills – by sharing how she evaluates the reliability of witness testimony.
- Bank of England employee helps Year 10s understand the economics behind Weimar Republic hyperinflation.
- Alumni volunteers who left the school in the 1950s, 60s and 70s help Year 9s understand change and continuity for the women's rights across the 20th century.



A few ideas to get you started



Creative Arts

- Speech and language therapist runs a workshop on projection ahead of an auditorium performance.
- Prop maker helps students to think about how stage dressing can bring their set texts to life.
- Museum curator helps students to evaluate and put together their own exhibition, by identifying common themes amongst the art they are studying.



Maths

- Chef provides practical examples for Year 8 students learning about ratio and proportion.
- Resource planner contextualises scatter graphs for KS4 students
- Graphic artist helps students see how patterns can be beautiful when co-teaching geometry.



Citizenship & Religious Education

- Civil servant helps A Level philosophy and ethics students understand how theories like utilitarianism might play out when making political decisions.
- Retail bank manager helps Year 8 students studying budgeting to put together their own savings plan.
- Diversity & Inclusion manager helps students to identify how different traditions and religious beliefs will affect people in the workplace.

Bringing volunteers into the curriculum

Volunteer support could be planned into your schemes of work as they're written, but we suggest allowing six weeks between first reaching out to prospective volunteers and actually delivering the lesson. This is for two reasons: firstly, you may need to contact 2 – 5 people in order to secure someone for your lesson and secondly, volunteers will probably need to arrange leave from work in order to participate.

The timeline of events



➤ Stage One: The need

You could be struggling to engage female students in mechanics or wanting to emphasise the importance of research skills in history; volunteers from new or existing partnerships can be used to enrich any part of a topic, no matter how abstract it might be.

There are four steps we recommend following to ensure that you are well prepared before approaching volunteers to come in and co-teach your lesson:

👥 Identify the group and topic

To determine what support you would like and then how you envision co-teaching to work, we recommend starting by identifying the topic and the year group, and then narrowing down to a particular class you teach.

📖 Consult the topic scheme of work and associated lesson plans

You know your subject, you know your students, and you have a scheme of work. Take a look at your scheme of work or lesson plan with a fresh pair of eyes and start to think outside the box when it comes to the types of people who could support your lesson. Take a look at our ideas for creative and interesting lessons.

🗝️ Bring the volunteer into your lesson plan

Now that you've identified a purpose to bringing volunteers into your lesson, have thought outside the box, and are starting to think about the type of people to approach, it's time to integrate them into your lesson plan.

What role do you want the volunteer to play in the classroom? Will they set a task and then go around supporting groups? Perhaps they could lead a discussion. Take down some notes on the possible ways volunteers could support you and make sure that you add these suggestions to your invitation email. We find that it's best to approach volunteers with a proposal that is flexible to their ideas and expertise as you learn more about their career history.



➤ Stage Two:

Find and contact suitable volunteers

So, you've identified the group, annotated your scheme of work and have a few lessons in mind for co-teaching with a volunteer. Now it's time to find and contact the perfect volunteer to bring your lesson to life and maintain contact with them.

Finding the perfect volunteer

Depending on your flexibility with dates, there are a number of ways that you can find suitable people to come in and support your lesson. Here we explore three ways: existing school partnerships, the school community, and people in your network. You should expect to contact 2-5 volunteers to secure someone.

There may be some other avenues to explore that haven't been mentioned here, but hopefully these ideas give you some food for thought.



Existing school partnerships

Existing school partnerships could provide you with appropriate volunteers and we strongly recommend that you investigate this route. You may want to approach a local business who fundraised for the school one time or volunteers who mentor students once a month at your school – whomever you have partnerships with already, we suggest reaching out to the main contact at that business and telling them about the opportunity. If you see them in school why not mention it to them there and then?



The School Community

Look to the wider school community and encourage school governors, Parent Teacher Association members, parents as well as former students to come and co-teach your lesson. As they are already invested in school life, co-teaching presents a great opportunity to involve them in a different way to what they are used to.

Ask your colleagues if they hold any informal relationships with businesses or people who support the school and share with them your aims. Who knows, you may even inspire them to consider asking a volunteer to co-teach their lesson too!



Your network

You may have friends or family members, or even friends of friends, who could bring your lesson to life. Start talking about your lesson and the type of things that your students will be learning to the people around you – they might be able to identify someone who could support you.

“During the lessons with alumni I received work from lower ability students that was on par with some of the best in the class, which was amazing.”

Jasmina, English teacher at Woodford County High School for Girls



Contacting potential volunteers

Once you have found 2-5 people to approach, it's time to get in contact with them. Some of this won't be new to you, but we find it's always good to remember some key email etiquette rules when asking for a volunteer's time.



Invitation email

Unless you already know the volunteer or have spoken on the phone or face to face, it is likely that your first communication with the volunteer will be through email. It's really important to get this invitation email right and give enough information to capture their attention, leaving most of the logistical information and lesson detail to the confirmation email.

- Introduce yourself and the school or college you are writing from and explain what you are hoping to achieve in inviting them to come in and support your lesson.
- For each volunteer you contact, make sure that you tell them what it is you think they can bring to your lesson in just a couple of sentences - for example you may want to mention the relevance of their degree, work experience, or interests if known. We suggest that once they have confirmed, you go on to give them further information about the lesson and their contribution.
- As well as sharing practical information with potential volunteers, make sure that you tell them about the exciting aspects of taking part too! If you want them to bring the topic to life in the classroom, you'll need to inspire them by mentioning the possible outcomes for student learning and enjoyment here.
- Include a series of dates in your invitation email as well as the time of your lesson, so that they can cross-check their calendar then and there.



- Avoid sending bulk emails!
- Craft a good subject line – 69% of emails are opened based solely on the subject line.



Follow up email

If you haven't received a response a week after sending your invitation email, make sure that you follow up with a second email to your volunteers. People often shy away from sending a follow up email, but persistence is key if you want to bring your lesson to life by inviting someone from “outside” in.

• Be very polite

It may seem obvious, but as it's very hard to interpret tone in an email and words can sometimes sound harsh. If you maintain a consciously polite tone throughout your correspondence, you're more likely to receive a positive response as sometimes people just need (and appreciate!) a nudge. Swap “You haven't replied to my first email” for “I would like to follow up on the email I sent recently”.

• Emphasis

Find the original email in your 'Sent' folder and write your follow up email with the original invitation email in the thread. Not only will this help to jog the person's memory, it also means that you can re-emphasise the point of your initial email in fewer words and with more bite. Use your follow up email as a way of highlighting some key and exciting information that may not have stood out in your first email.



Take out “FW:” – emails with “FW:” in the subject line are opened 17% less than those without.



Confirmation email

Once a volunteer has confirmed that they are available to take part, you can really start planning the co-teaching elements of your lesson.

• Share the lesson plan

Encourage your volunteer to take a look at the draft lesson plan and think of some ways they might be able to contribute, as well as sharing your own ideas as an example. Consider adding a column to your lesson plan that clearly outlines the role the volunteer could play and at what point. Our phone calls to volunteers tend to last between 10 -15 minutes because the volunteer has already looked through the lesson materials ahead of the call.

• Find a date

Find out exactly when your volunteer can take part and save the date!

• Arrange a phone call

Professional emails are for organising not for conversing, so arrange a good time to speak to your volunteer on the phone. You will accomplish more in the 5-10 minutes that you are on the phone to your volunteer than you will in exchanging emails.

Finding a good time to speak doesn't need to be a difficult task. Instead of listing your availability for a call, include a date and a time slot for the following week as well as a sentence which reads "If there is a better time to call do let me know". And trust us, if this is the case they will let you know.

• Share contact details

If you don't already have your volunteer's telephone number or it isn't included in their email signature, make sure that you ask for it in this email.

Future First Members:

If you're a Future First member, you'll be able to access a database full of former students who are ready and willing to come in and support the school. Before you get going, here is a reminder of how to log-on to the Future First portal.

1. Go to www.futurefirst.org.uk
2. Select 'log in' in the top right hand corner of the screen.
3. Enter your username (first name surname) and password (if you can't remember your password, select 'request new password').
4. Once you are logged on, you'll see a menu bar on the left hand side of the screen with various options. Click on 'Search Alumni' and that's where your journey will begin!

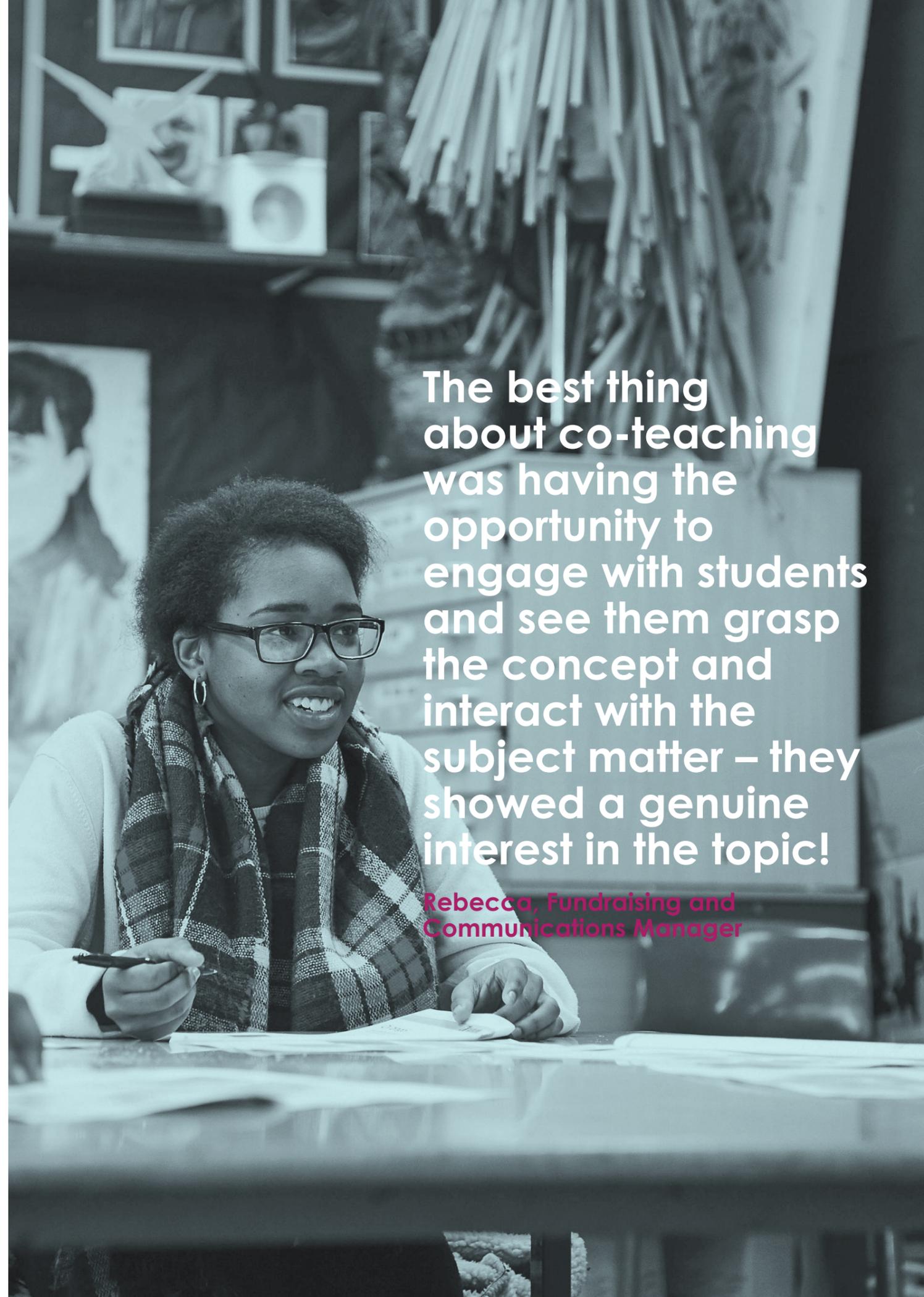


- *Contact 2-5 volunteers – for the same lesson – at least six weeks in advance. If more than one person responds, why not invite them to get involved in another lesson? Or, perhaps you could invite them to share their experiences in an assembly instead?*
- *Offer volunteers a timeframe rather than just one date. For example, you could say "during the first two weeks of June we will be covering this topic, so it would be fantastic if you could come in just for an hour (10am to 11am) on one of those days."*
- *Suggest that your volunteer uses their 'volunteering day' to take part in the lesson, if their work place offers such an initiative.*

Top tip: Don't get bogged down in job titles and professions; college and university students can make brilliant volunteers too!

The best thing about co-teaching was having the opportunity to engage with students and see them grasp the concept and interact with the subject matter – they showed a genuine interest in the topic!

Rebecca, Fundraising and Communications Manager



➤ Stage Three: Get the most out of your volunteers

Volunteers – be they speakers, mentors, or advisors – are integral to our work. Over the years Future First have become experts at ensuring that our volunteers are well looked after, feel comfortable and confident in what they are doing and would like to work with us again. Here, we share with you our tips for managing when the professional world meets with the school environment.

Communication is key

During the six week process, it is essential that you maintain semi-regular contact with your volunteer. From our experience, it pays to communicate with volunteers across a variety of channels; emails and phone calls are a great way to build a relationship with a volunteer and ensure that they know what the aim of the lesson is and their role on the day. After the event, we suggest using social media to celebrate and publicise how you're working with volunteers in your school, whilst cementing an online, visible relationship with your volunteer and even their company.

6-5 weeks before:

Initial ideas: Share your ideas with the volunteer and encourage them to input their own. We find that shared ownership of the lesson creates shared responsibility and establishes a certain level of commitment from the volunteer.

3-2 weeks before:

Send a briefing note: Send a short briefing note to your volunteer one to two weeks before the lesson is due to take place. This briefing note should include an overview of the lesson and the objectives, a short profile on the group of students taking part, a final lesson plan and any reminders about resources or props.

The day before:

Send a reminder text: Send a text to your volunteer to let them know that you are looking forward to tomorrow's lesson. Use this text message to remind them of the time they should arrive at the school and to bring any useful resources.

6-3 weeks before:

Pick up the phone: Soon after sharing the lesson plan with your volunteer follow up with a phone call to answer any questions they might have, but also to briefly run them through the lesson and the roles you will each play – remind them that you'll be leading the lesson and so they're not expected to become a teacher all of a sudden! A phone call during these first few weeks of the process is vital to ensuring that your volunteer is committed to the lesson.

5-1 days before:

Tell the world what's happening: Bringing professionals into the classroom presents a brilliant opportunity to generate some content for your school's social media accounts, school newsletters as well as internal meetings with other members of staff. Shouting about the lesson might inspire others to get in touch and offer their services, in turn helping create more professional partnerships for your school – plus, we would love to hear about it!

Note: Those of you who have read the Future First Events Guide will notice that the timings here differ. This is because co-teaching requires more collaboration with volunteers than Future First events and so we highly recommend that you maintain contact with the volunteer from the outset right up until the day of the lesson.



You will need to be flexible to the availability of the volunteers that you approach to co-teach your lesson as well as to the contribution that they can make in the classroom. Although we encourage you to have an idea about the role the volunteer will play, we also highly recommend that you be ready to collaborate and again, think outside the box.

Working with shy volunteers

Although some volunteers may be used to the school environment – maybe they have children, perhaps they've volunteered a number of times, or maybe they worked in education at some point – others will be less confident in this space and may not have gone back to school since finishing their education.



Pick up the phone:

No matter the volunteer you are working with, you should definitely have a phone call with them to speak through the lesson. For those less confident in working with young people, this is going to be a very important stage in developing their confidence and strengthening their commitment to the lesson.



Give them a confidence boost:

Don't underestimate the confidence boost and relief experienced when you tell them that you'll be responsible for leading the lesson and managing behaviour. Even volunteers who are senior managers at work are sometimes nervous when working with young people.

Right at the last minute!

A last minute cancellation is very rare, but luckily it is something you can prepare for:



Ask:

Ask the volunteer to send you the lesson resources related to their work so that there is still a 'real-world' element to your lesson. Ideally, you would have asked for and received the resources before the day.



Do:

Do try to find another time for the volunteer to come in and support your lesson. Again, offer some dates that work for you and your class, particularly if you plan to teach the topic over several lessons.

Show gratitude

Throughout the six week process, you'll be thanking your volunteer endlessly, but it's very important that you remember to do so formally after the lesson:



Follow up:

Soon after the lesson, make sure that you follow up and thank the volunteer for co-teaching with you. From a volunteer and relationship management perspective, this is a highly recommended way of "closing" this experience and opening up the possibility of others.



Share

Share any positive student feedback as well as your own appreciation for having them come and co-teach. Also ask them for their feedback and how they found the lesson so that you can share it with your students, your colleagues, and the wider school community.



Encourage:

They volunteered their time to support your lesson and invested quite a lot in ensuring it ran smoothly, so make sure you give them some positive feedback and share anything that you've learned from having them co-teach with you.



Invite:

Invite them to come back to co-teach!

➤ Stage Four: It's time to co-teach!

Putting your plan into practice on the day will be as straightforward as following your usual lesson plan. Even though the setup will be very familiar to you, your volunteer may not be so familiar with the school environment and so to make sure everything is smooth on the day, you may want to:



Send a reminder:

Remember to send a reminder by email or text message to your volunteer one or two days before the lesson. Include any key information such as when to arrive at reception as well as to remember any materials they agreed to bring along.



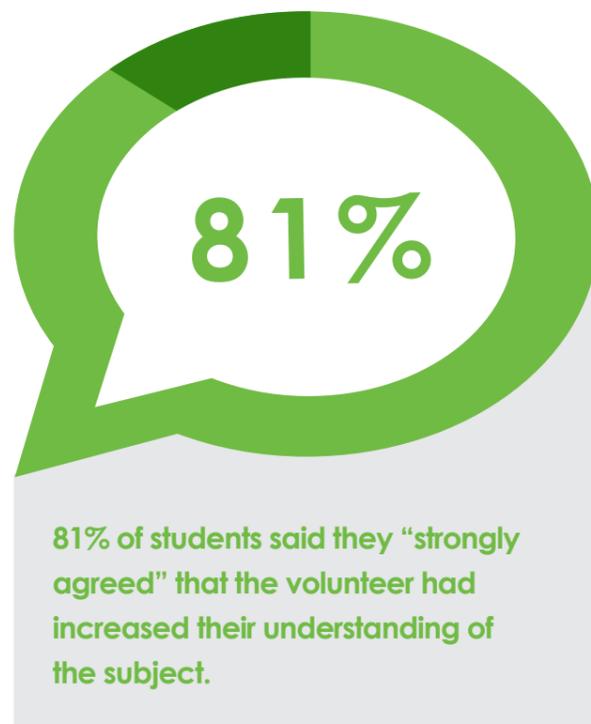
Prepare an introduction:

Suggest that the volunteer prepares a 5 minute introduction about them and their pathway.



Suggest a minimum arrival time of 15 minutes before:

Depending on your schedule, ask them to arrive no less than 15 minutes before the lessons so that you can start as quickly as possible. If you don't have time to collect them from the reception, ask a colleague or send a trusted student to greet them and bring them to your class.



Case study: Angmering School

Keen to inspire students about careers related to English and prove that she “wasn't just making this up!” to her students, Julie, an English teacher at the Angmering School in Sussex, was thrilled at the idea of “bringing someone from outside in” to her classroom to enrich her lessons. Working with Future First, she put a call out to former students to see if they would like to support four of her lessons across the summer term.



Rebecca, a Fundraising and Communications Manager for a national charity and former student of Angmering, was one of the alumni who answered the call from the school to come in and inspire students in Year 9, who were learning about persuasive writing in English.

In the weeks leading up to the two lessons that she was supporting, Rebecca provided examples of her work, including fundraising brochures, posters and leaflets, to be used in the lesson.

“It was great to find a link between class topics and what people do.”

Julie, English teacher at the Angmering School

On the first day, students analysed the ‘real world’ materials that Rebecca supplied, picking out persuasive language techniques like emotive language, repetition and personal pronouns. The class teacher led a discussion about the techniques they had identified and the effect of each. Building on this, the students next had the opportunity to look at the persuasive effect of images used in the fundraising brochure as well as on the posters. Further enriching the lesson, Rebecca was then able to give them an insight into her role and explain why she used the techniques, emphasising the relevance of what they are learning to her job.

Inspired by Rebecca's marketing role at a national charity, the second day saw students work together to create marketing materials for a charity of their choice. Putting everything they had learned into practice and referencing Rebecca's resources, the groups designed colourful, engaging and persuasive fundraising posters about a cause close to their hearts.

As a result of the four alumni lessons, student enjoyment of and interest in English increased, as did their motivation to work harder in the subject. Through discussions that took place during the lessons, gaps in student knowledge and confidence were uncovered that Julie was able to address. In the weeks after the lesson, students frequently referenced the things they learned and the conversations that took place.

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