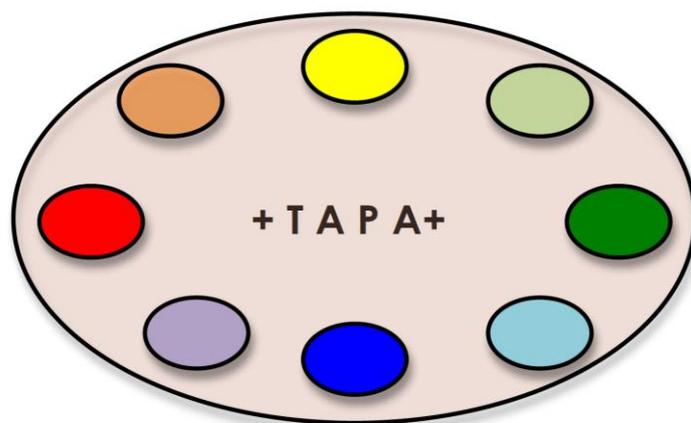# Suggestions for Teaching Transactional Analysis to Children and Young People

+ T A P A +

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Suggestions for Teaching Transactional Analysis to Children and Young People

Julie Hay

For details of the TAPA, please go to
www.taproficiencyawards.org

There are now several versions of TA Proficiency Awards, with an option to add more as new applications arise. Many are targeted at children and the adults who are in contact with them.

Existing options are:

TAPACY – for Children & Young People

TAPATE – for Teachers & Educators

TAPACP – for Caregivers & Parents

TAPAHA – for Helpers & Assistants

TAPDA - Personal and/or Professional Development

This booklet contains ideas for TAPACY.

You are welcome to reproduce any of the content of this booklet but please do so in accordance with the conditions of the open access licence described on the previous page. Include an acknowledgement of where it came from – help us encourage more people to become involved with sharing TA concepts with children and the adults who are in contact with them.

Acknowledgements

This material has been stimulated by many people, including:

- Giles Barrow, who developed the original TAPACY programme in 2004

- Ulrika Widén, whose work on TAPACY Schemes in Italy generated many creative ways of teaching TA to children, and who has provided the great illustrations in this booklet

- Dan Rodriguez-Clark, who allowed us to extract ideas from his book *50 Great Activities for any Classroom* Marston Gate: Amazon.co.uk 2013

- Cesare Fregola, who provided information on creative ways of teaching TA to Children, as well as applying TA concepts when teaching other subjects.

- Julie Hay, whose suggested teaching activities in *Transactional Analysis for Trainers* Hertford: Sherwood Publishing 2009 can be adapted for use with children as well as adults.

- The many volunteers who have contributed to the running of TAPA Schemes internationally, whether that be as national coordinators, by teaching students, assessing portfolios of evidence, or running Award Ceremonies.

Contents

Introduction

This manual has been produced to share ideas for teaching transactional analysis to children. It may also be useful for teaching TA to adults.

It consists of 4 sections:

Part 1 contains some theory reminders, so that the teaching is about positive TA ideas and not the pathological concepts that relate to therapy.

Part 2 is a selection of icebreakers and energizers, to get lessons started. Some of these can also be used to illustrate learning points, as explained in Part 3.

Part 3 contains Learning activities. These are listed under the various TA concepts but many of them can be used for several concepts – you can choose so that you have a variety of activities for your learning group.

Part 4 provides ideas for how you can help students provide evidence of what they have learned.

Part 5 contains suggestions of ways that you can invite students to evaluate the lessons, to give you feedback for the future.

Risk Management

When choosing activities to use, we remind you to check if any of your students might have:

- Any physical impediments

- Any allergies (e.g. nuts)

- Expectation of healthy eating only (or their parents have) (e.g. no sweets, no chocolate)

TA Terms

Any TA terms can be changed to the ones you use in your country. See http://www.pifcic.org/ta-translation-dictionaries.html for translations of various TA terms into a number of different languages.

There are a number of TA concepts that have been given alternative names, especially when we want to emphasise that they have healthy equivalents.

These include:

Modes   =   Ego States (Behavioural)

Personal Styles =   Ego States (Behavioural)

Thinking Styles =   Ego States (Internal)

Windows on
       the World =   Life Positions

Working Styles   =   Drivers

Part 1: Some Theory Reminders

Working Styles (Drivers)

It is important to emphasise Hay's (2009) concept of working styles, as the positive manifestations of drivers. Otherwise, drivers are driven ways of behaving that we use to unconsciously reinforce unhelpful life positions. Working styles are the same behavioural patterns as drivers but do not have the driven quality – we can recognise working styles as our strengths and so do other people.

Strokes

Keep in mind that Berne's definition of positive strokes was that they invited I'm OK, You're OK in the recipient, whilst negative strokes invite not OK, of self, others or both. Constructive criticism is therefore a positive stroke, and praising by comparison to someone else who is not as good as the person being stroked will be a negative stroke (invites them into I'm OK, They're not OK).

Drama Triangle

Make sure that students learn that Rescuer/Saviour is negative. It is often understood as positive and helpful, which overlooks that it means helping someone who does not need to be helped, and even stopping the person from learning how to do things. Students will probably be able to identify times when they have wanted to do something themselves and a grown-up insisted on helping.

Windows on the World/Life Positions

Teaching these as windows helps students understand that we are filtering and distorting (discounting) what we notice. Decide whether you are teaching life positions as attitudes and beliefs (as in Berne who said existential positions), or as behaviours (as in Ernst whose OK Corral was about how we get on with people). It is probably no longer useful to use the term OK Corral because children nowadays will not be familiar with the cowboy movie this was based on.

Ego States

There are many different models of ego states within the TA literature. Choose the one you like best. Note that Susannah Temple's TIFF model is about behaviour and includes only positive versions of Adult. Julie Hay's model of behavioural ego states/personal styles is also about behaviour, and includes negative as well as positive Adult, such as when someone is overly logical (known in English as geeks or nerds). Hay's model also uses Functional Adult as that term for logical behaviour, to distinguish it from when Adult means being in the here-and-now.

At the TAPA level, there is no need to worry about the differences between structure and function. If you want to teach about how ego states are formed, then you could use Julie Hay's model of internal ego states, or just explain that there are three systems of ego states on the inside, one copied from parent figures, one that is us as we are growing up, and one that is us thinking about what is going on. Neuroscience now tells us that memories are not recorded but reconstructed each time – so the old metaphor of tape recordings is no longer appropriate but for older students you could instead talk of us having various software programmes for the three different ways of accessing the past or present.

Discounting

We discount to stay sane. We turn out background noise so that we can concentrate. It is only when we discount too much, to maintain our frame of reference, that it becomes a problem. Symbiosis is also natural and necessary when we are a baby. It is only if it continues past the time when we can manage things ourselves that it becomes a problem.

Feel free to contact us if you are unfamiliar with some of the theories mentioned above, or would like references so that you can go back to original sources.

Part 2: Icebreakers and/or Energizers

Paired Introductions

Have students pair up and you give them headings e.g. name, where they live, hobbies, a 'claim to fame' (e.g. something unusual they have experienced), a 'secret' (e.g. something others probably will not know about them already). Give them 5-10 minutes to find out about each and then they introduce each other to the group. (This is less stressful than introducing themselves).

Bingo Cards

Give students sheets or cards with squares drawn on them – can be as many or as few squares as you like. Can be blank squares or you can label them beforehand. Their task is to enter the name of a different student for each item you have told them is required e.g. has a pet (and what is it?), has a favourite lesson (what is it?), plays a sport (what?), has a hobby (what?), has a birthday in a different month to the student who is asking, has a favourite TA programme or book (which?). If you wish, you can ask students to identify two different students for some of these e.g. 2 with pets – but they must be different pets (e.g. dog, cat), different months for birthdays, etc.

If you know that several students have siblings, you could add - has a brother, has a sister; again, they could add names for more than one student with a brother or sister.

Throwing the Ball
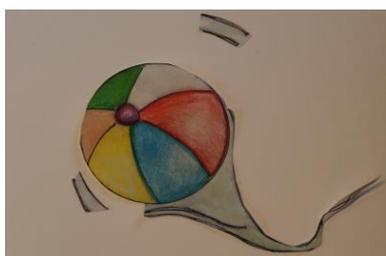
Have the students sit or stand in a circle and throw a ball to each other. As they throw, they call out their own name. After everyone has thrown the ball at least once, they change to saying the name of the person they are throwing the ball to. However, if it is likely that they may not remember all names, so that someone will never be thrown the ball, an alternative is to have them throw the ball and the rest of the group shout out the name of the thrower. When that works okay, you can switch so the group calls out the name of the person the ball is thrown to.

Movement Leading

Have the students stand or sit in a circle. Allocate one student to start the process and then go round the circle. Each student in turn calls out their name (not needed if they already know each other) and does a movement (e.g. bends over, raises an arm, etc.). As they do that, the rest of the groups call out their name (if needed) and they all copy the movement. Each student needs to choose a different movement that has not already been done.

Changing Places

For a more energetic activity, put out a circle of enough chairs or mats for all but one student to occupy. The one in the middle calls out some code word that you have explained e.g. 'river' means everyone leaves their place and attempts to go to a chair or mat on the opposite side of the circle, 'mountain' means move three places to the left, 'ocean' means move three places to the right. As they all do this, the person in the middle takes one of the places so that someone else will be in the middle for the next round. Instead of river, mountain, ocean, you could use the names of local landmarks, or the names of famous people (authors, film stars) or even the names of teachers the children will know.

Part 3: Learning Activities

General Teaching Aids

Some low-cost teaching aids can be created using string or knitting wool, such as marking out the life positions, the drama triangle, the three or more cornered contract, etc.

Students can then stand in the various spaces and act out the appropriate behaviour, or they can add sheets of paper on which are written the clues or the contents.

Example: for drama triangle, they could act out a game, with two players at least, moving from position to position, or they could draw or write notes about what happens and place it alongside the triangle.

Example: for contracting, they could stand and talk to a student on another corner, and also write down what is agreed across each pair of corners.

Circles can be marked out for ego states, maybe using different colours of wool, or hula hoops could be used if available. For transactions, make out two sets of stacked circles and then have students diagram transactions by adding lengths of wool between the two sets. Again, you could use different colours to indicate crossed, parallel/complementary, and ulterior/hidden transactions. Or the students can stand in the circles and then move to demonstrate transactions, or add notes on paper about what happens.

Contracting

This is probably best done with the whole class, or with small groups who then combine their outputs.

Talk about rights and responsibilities in a school – for instance, that the Headteacher is responsible for making sure that there are good teachers and that children are learning, the class teacher is responsible for being the best teacher they can be and for helping the children to learn, and the children in the class are responsible for paying attention and completing the learning activities. All of those involved have a right to expect that the other parties will carry out their responsibilities, and that they will be polite and courteous to each other while they are doing that.

Have the students then identify some of the specific behaviours that the parties to the contract will usually be exhibiting, such as the headteacher coming around the school to check what is happening, the teacher arriving with prepared lessons and also giving students feedback about their work, and the children doing the activities that the teacher suggests during the lesson and also doing any homework that has been set.

Prepare some flipchart sheets with the names of the parties shown on the corners of the triangle is an invite the students to add stick it notes near to the relevant corners to indicate the various behaviours.

Have them think about whether there is enough evidence for them to see how the various responsibilities fit together along the sides of the triangle e.g. student does their homework on time and the teacher assesses it and gives feedback on time; student gives homework in late so that the teacher has a problem because they are already busy with another lot of home works to mark.

As an optional extra, you can invite students to pretend to be the headteacher, another teacher and a student, and to role-play some of the interactions that happen along the sides of the triangle.

You could also add pictures of eyeballs in the corners of the triangle, to indicate that each party at a corner should have some understanding of what the contract is between the other two corners. If you do this, you need to explain your working relationship with the headteacher if the students ask questions about this. You may also need to be prepared to speak to the headteacher if the students identify any problem areas in the relationships of the headteacher to the students, unless the problems are being caused by the students, in which case you will need to prompt them to consider how they can change to more constructive behaviours.

Working Styles

Group Tasks

Engage students in an activity that has a slight degree of stress, such as complexity or a time limit – not too stressful, just enough to be fun. For example, several tasks to be done so that they must share out the workload – e.g. write a poem, draw a picture, complete some sums, colour in some pictures, put some playing cards into order, and so on.

If possible, have another group of students as observers, watching out for examples of the various working styles. Give this group simple observer sheets that have space for them to write down examples under the 5 working style headings.

Optionally, have the groups change places – for this, have a different set of tasks (or the same tasks but different content) to avoid competition over how the groups achieve the tasks.

Have the observers give feedback about what they noticed for each working style, especially about how each style contributed to the activity. Use any 'driver' feedback to 'normalise' that we all overdo our strengths sometimes.

Story Characters – Children

Tell a story about a group of 5 children who go on a holiday, or a school outing, describing what happens so that there are examples of working styles and driver behaviours.

For this, invent a child for each working style/driver and then tell a story where each one does at least two helpful things and one unhelpful (driver-like) thing:

Example: Chris – Be Perfect – makes sure everyone knows when and where to meet for meals, keeps their shared bedroom tidy, but makes the group late by insisting they all check they have everything they need before they go to the swimming pool even though they could go back to their room if they've forgotten something.

Example: Lee – Please People – makes sure everyone is having a good time, looks after another child who is upset when they spill a drink, but fusses so much about whether everyone is happy that another child tells them to stop interfering.

Avoid the usual stereotypes – don't make the Please People style a girl or the Be Strong style a boy.

Story Characters – Grown Ups

Use the same idea as above but make the story about adults. This might be any adults e.g. a shopkeeper, a customer who has an accident in or near the shop, another customer who observes the accident, a police officer and an ambulance driver.

This story could also be about fictitious teachers – but in this case make sure there is not much resemblance to real teachers.

Design a bedroom

Have the students design a bedroom that represents each working style. They might draw these or provide them with small models and some material to represent clothes.

Ego States

As above, you can mark out the shape of three stacked circles on the floor and invite students to stand within them and role-play typical behaviours. This can lead on to introducing them to the concept of transactional analysis proper – see below. You may also want to divide the Parent into Controlling and Nurturing, and the Child into Adapted and Natural (or whatever way you prefer to subdivide these).

Story Characters

Tell a story, such as about a teacher in school or about a family, so that you can include stereotyped behaviours that will illustrate Controlling Parent (perhaps a very strict grandmother), Nurturing Parent (perhaps a very caring uncle), Functional Adult (perhaps a very logical brother or sister), Adapted Child (who might be a very polite sibling) and Natural Child (who may be a very fun grown-up who doesn't seem to care about what other grown-ups think about them).

Such a story could also be told using animals for the various ego states – with a human hunters who want to trap the animals to put them in a zoo - perhaps a fierce lion as Controlling Parent who wants to be in charge and orders the animals to run away; a gentle elephant as Nurturing Parent who wants to look after the other animals and wants to keep them all safe behind itself in a cave; a wolf as Functional Adult who is good and thinking and suggests ways to outwit the humans; a very polite bear as Adapted Child who obeys every instruction from the lion, the elephant and the wolf ; and a frightened rabbit as Natural Child who wants to run away even though that is more risky than staying in the group.

Part 4: Evidence of Learning

We have suggested activity options that can be conducted with minimal costs for materials and without the use of IT – however, you may well have access to IT and to forms of software that will make your job easier e.g. for free jigsaw/puzzle making software

www.online-stopwatch.com / www.mmlsoft.com/index.php/products/tarsia

Activity	Administration
Questions Have each student write a question about the topic and randomly assign these to be answered by another student; this can also be done by pairs or small groups of students writing questions and other small groups responding.	You will need a box in which to put the questions so that you can pull them out randomly; you could also treat this like a lucky dip and have the students pick each question.
Teaches Have individual students prepare and teach a topic to a small group so that each student takes it in turn in that group; or have individual or groups of students prepare and teach a topic to the rest of the class For older groups, you might also ask them to produce visual aids and maybe even handouts.	Allocate topics so that each individual student or group will teach something different
Fill the blanks Write out some statements with some words missing and ask individuals or groups of students to fill in the blanks.	E.g. When someone rushes about a lot and is impatient, they are likely to be in their ____ __ driver (indicate correct number of letters to be inserted by number of underlines or by putting e.g. (5, 2)
Quizzes Using pre-prepared questions, or questions that your students have written, run a quiz with individuals or teams of students	You will need a timer that signals the end of a round (e.g. alarm clock, egg timer). You can add more fun if you have buzzers for the contestants to use – these will need to make different sounds. Or you could ask each team to choose an animal and then to make that animal sound when they are ready to answer.
Back to front questions Write out some statements that could be a response to a question and ask individual or groups of students to work out a suitable question.	E.g. 'the person rushes about a lot and gets impatient'. - The question for this might have been 'What might we see when someone is in Hurry Up driver?'

Activity	Administration
Odd one out Provide individual or groups of students with sets of cards where you have mixed elements relating to TA concepts, and have them identify which card does not belong in the set. This activity can also be used as the basis for a quiz, with individuals or groups of students. In that case, you need several sets of cards.	Prepare sets of cards for various TA concepts e.g. a separate card for each driver, or cards relating to games which say, on separate cards, Persecutor, Rescuer, Victim, negative payoff. Then move one item from each set into a set where it does not belong. Mark the back of each card in a set with a code or colour so that you can easily sort them back and use the cards again.
Jigsaw puzzles Print a TA diagram onto enough cards for you to distribute to individual or groups of students. Before you distribute them, cut them up into random shapes so that they become a jigsaw for the students to put together. Use as much colour as you can to make the jigsaws look more interesting and so that you can cut through coloured parts of diagrams and the colours will help students fit the pieces together. For older children, you might want to give out 3 different TA diagrams, mixed together so that they have to sort out how to separate them.	Use simple diagrams for younger children; more complex diagrams for older children. You might want to use different coloured cards or mark each piece of a jigsaw with a coloured cross on the back, so that it will be easy for you to sort the jigsaws back into sets when the students have finished. *Note: some diagrams as Word documents are provided in English and also with blank spaces so you can add the appropriate words in your own language.*
Matching Provide individual or groups of students with sets of cards that contain some questions and some answers, and have them match each question to the appropriate answer.	Prepare one set of codes with questions and another set with matching answers.
Blogs Have students write blogs about what they have been learning; they can read these out to others, or pass them around, or you could arrange for them to be copied for distribution, or you could have them formed into a group or class blog.	Provide writing materials only, or let them use tablets or similar.

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Activity	Administration
Picture Reproduction Provide some of the students, individually or in groups, with a sheet containing a TA diagram. They are to describe the diagram to another individual or group of students who has not seen it and who is/are to reproduce it based on the instructions they are being given. Afterwards, for older students, they can review the reproductions and discuss the significance of any discrepancies; they might also apply TA concepts in order to review the process of this activity.	Produce several sheets, each containing a TA diagram.
Mind Maps Have students draw mind maps that pull together what they have been learning. These can be drawn individually or in groups. The mind maps can then be presented to the rest of the class. Invite students to learn from each other and add any extras into their own mind maps. This activity can also be used for students to draw mind maps about how they have applied their TA learning e.g. at school, at home, with friends etc.	Provide the materials needed to draw mind maps – paper, coloured pens – or maybe use mind mapping software.
Comic Books Have students, individually or in groups, produce comic books that illustrate TA concepts and/or how they have applied them. It is also possible with a comic book for the students to invent their own characters, and also to create an ongoing story with those characters.	Provide materials to create comic books – paper, coloured pens, perhaps magazines from which they can cut out or copy items, in which case they will need scissors and glue. Provide some way for them to fix the pages together into a booklet.
Posters Have students, individually or in groups, produce posters that illustrate TA concepts and/or how they have applied them. These could be displayed around the classroom, or photographed and combined into booklets for every student to take home and show to others.	Materials needed for creating posters. You will also need spaces in the classroom if you intend to display them, and ways of fixing them for display. Camera (mobile phone, iPad?) required if you want to take pictures and combine into booklets.

Activity	Administration
Role Playing After teaching a specific TA concept, have students design and enact a role-play of characters behaving in a way that illustrates the concept. If the role-play consists of behaviours that lead to negative outcomes, have the students then develop a second role-play in which one player changes their behaviour so that a positive outcome is achieved. Lead the class in a discussion of what they have observed. An alternative format is to have small groups design and enact the role-plays with alternate negative and positive outcomes; then as each group in turn presents they show their first role-play and this is analysed by the rest of the class before they show their second role-play, which can also then be analysed by the rest of the class.	You may prefer to suggest what the role-plays should be about, especially for younger children. You might want to have a range of dressing-up items available, including items that make it easy to indicate roles e.g. different kinds of hats, or props such as board writers/chalk for teachers versus pens/pencils the students. You could also suggest that the students organise these items.
Presentations Have the students create a presentation where they will demonstrate to an audience (other students, other teachers, parents, etc) their understanding of one or more TA concepts. Presentations may be done live and/or you or the students could make video recordings.	Provide presentation materials. Consider whether you expect the students to make use of IT for presentations. For an audience from beyond class, plan how you will organise this. Also consider how you will ensure that the audience provide positive strokes to the students and do not become overly critical.

PEOPLE ARE OK

Part 5: Evaluations of the Lessons

To emphasise that learning is a co-creative process, it is important to invite students to provide feedback on the lessons. Here are some ideas for doing that:

Happy or Sad

Decide what areas you want feedback about and make a list of them in a chart, with a smiley face at one end and a sad face at the other, so students can mark their responses on the line. For example, you could include: the session was fun, I learned a lot, I enjoyed the session – or specific concepts, such as ego states (or personal styles), working styles, strokes, etc.

Bull's-eye

Draw a bull's-eye on a piece of paper and give each student coloured stickers to put onto the target, with different colours for: fun, learning/interesting, creative, etc., or for specific concepts. You could also draw a big bull's-eye on flipchart paper and invite all students to add their stickers.

Traffic Lights

Give each student a red, a green and an amber (pale orange) coloured card, like traffic light colours. Tell them you would like them to hold up the colour card that matches how they feel about the lesson – green means keep going, amber means get ready to move onto something else, red means stop for a question.

Graffiti Wall

Put a long piece of paper onto a wall. Have plenty of coloured pens. Invite all students to write feedback on the paper – maybe prompt them to write what they liked and what they didn't like. Ask also for suggestions of ways to make future lessons better for them.
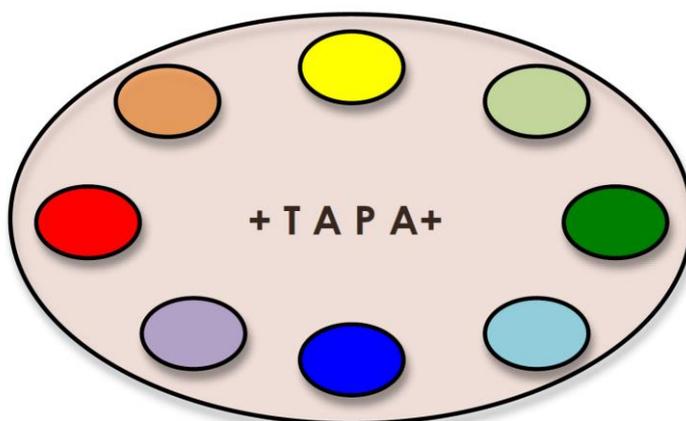
We welcome your feedback about this booklet – and we also welcome suggested additions for future issues.   Please email comments and proposed content to julie@juliehay.org