



Student Transitions: Example of transitions practice

Title: Referencing with Lego

Transition(s) the practice supports: This case study is an example aimed at transition into the institution – settling there. While relevant for all levels of students, it is particularly valuable for first year or direct entrants who may not be familiar with the process of referencing.

Abstract: QMU students are taught the principles of referencing using lego bricks to symbolise the practice of putting together an essay. Their output - the lego animal - represents their essay. The individual bricks represent the references in the essay.

Description: This activity was inspired by the following blog post:

<http://official.blog.solent.ac.uk/succeed-at-solent/referencing-with-lego/>

At the start of the session, students are asked to make a “referencing buddy”, a small toy, animal or ‘thing’ which they can interact with during the session to help aid their concentration. They are given five minutes to pick a maximum of 10 pieces of lego from a variety of different coloured pots. They must use at least 3 pots for their pieces.

The session then commences and we show them the principles of referencing with examples.

Ten minutes before the end of the session, the session leader approaches one person and asks them which pot they got one of their lego pieces from. If the student cannot say which one, the session leader removes the piece and keeps it. A second, then a third person is asked as well about this. They can very often start making up the pots they got their pieces from in order to stop you breaking up their creation.

The point is made that if they don’t know where their references come from their marker will pull apart their essay in this fashion.

This activity really brings home to students the value of understanding the underpinnings of their essays, and the way in which an argument is built from the literature. It provides a memorable way of doing this at a time when they are being bombarded with information in print or verbally.

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All examples provided will be posted to the Enhancement Themes website with the intention of including them in the National Transitions map.