

Icebreaker – PosterMe!

Edmond Behan

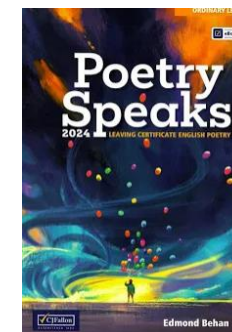
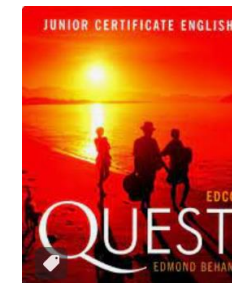


A little bit about me!

- Teacher of English Language & Literature at second-level – students from age 12-18 years
- Lecturer in English Methodology with student teachers at Maynooth University in Co. Kildare
- Professional Placement Supervisor with UCD (University College Dublin).
- Member of the European Film Factory group, creating resources for teachers on the free media platform for schools across Europe
- Director of Adult Education at Scoil Mhuire Community School in Clane, Co. Kildare (www.clanesm.com)
- Author of several best-selling school textbooks including *Quest* (Edco), *Make the Transition* (Edco), *Poetry Speaks* (Fallons), *Chrysalis* (Fallons).
- Current project – podcast 24 English Teachers



Scoil Mhuire
Community School





Step 1 – Teacher models poster

- The teacher has prepared a sample poster about him/her-self.
- Similar to the ‘Opening-day letter’ activity, this is a great way for the teacher to ‘break the ice’ with the class by sharing some information, thoughts, opinions and feelings with his/her students.
- After sharing the poster, the teacher then asks the students if they would like to know more about any feature of the poster or any ideas shared with the students from the poster, for example:
 - *‘You mentioned that you loved visiting Venice. What did you like most about the city?’*
 - *‘If William Shakespeare is your favourite writer, is there one particular poem by him that you really enjoy?’*
 - *‘You said that you always wanted to be a teacher. Can you tell me one really rewarding thing about teaching and one thing that is challenging?’*
 - *‘Climate change is a global issue that you seem interested in. Do you feel hope or despair when you think of how the world is responding to climate change?’*

Step 2 – Teacher introduces the task

- Clear instruction:
 - Each student must create a Poster about any aspect of their life or their world that you can share with the class.
 - Include information, opinions, feelings on topics, events, memories, relationships that are important or memorable to you.
- Additional scaffolding:
 - Some students may need some prompts to get started.
 - Ask them to answer/address any 5/8/10 of the following prompts

- My name
- My family
- My village/town
- A happy memory from Primary school
- My favourite place
- My best holiday ever
- My favourite month of the year
- My favourite meal
- My favourite sport, hobby, pastime
- How I spend my Saturdays
- What I look for in a good friend
- How I feel about starting school
- One celebrity I admire
- One of my best qualities
- Music and me
- A school subject I enjoy
- In the next year I want to. . .
- In the next five years I'd like to. . .
- One skill I'd like to improve on in school this year
- My favourite soccer/basketball/volleyball team
- What it means to be a hero
- What I can do to make this school year a great year

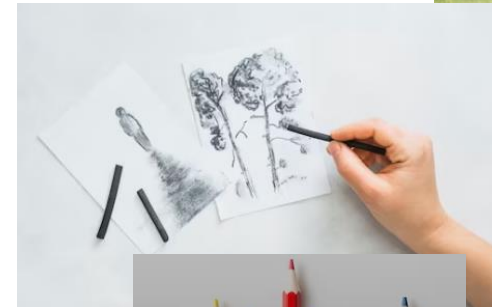


Step 2 – cont'd



Things I am grateful for

- Next, the teacher explains the process.
- Students create a Poster to capture the shareable content about themselves.
- They can add headings, sub-headings, use colour, vary the typestyles, add sketches/drawings, etc
- Teacher may also have some generic images prepared for students who may not like to draw and can glue in images such as a football, or a person swimming, or two people cycling in a park etc.
- Teacher can also have a supply of coloured pencils etc. for those who need them.



I feel safe when. . .



To relax, I . . .

A photograph of a female teacher with blonde hair tied back, wearing a white shirt, leaning over a desk to assist a young girl with brown hair in braids, wearing an orange shirt. They are both looking down at a book or paper on the desk. The teacher is holding a green marker. The background is a green chalkboard.

Step 3 – teacher circulates, supports and affirms

- Apart from ice-breaking, this activity can create a very positive and supportive atmosphere in the class so that students leave the lesson feeling they were listened to, they were given an opportunity to speak to one or two other, they asked questions, and perhaps most importantly, they leave feeling they were **valued as a student and as a person**.
- After taking any questions from the class, the teacher moves around the classroom and supports the students as they begin their work.
- This is a great, informal way for the teacher to sow the seeds of a collaborative, caring relationship with students.
- Be positive – find something in the poster to commend the student on and encourage them to do their best, affirm good work and perhaps add a few suggestions where appropriate.

Step 4 – Poster Presentation

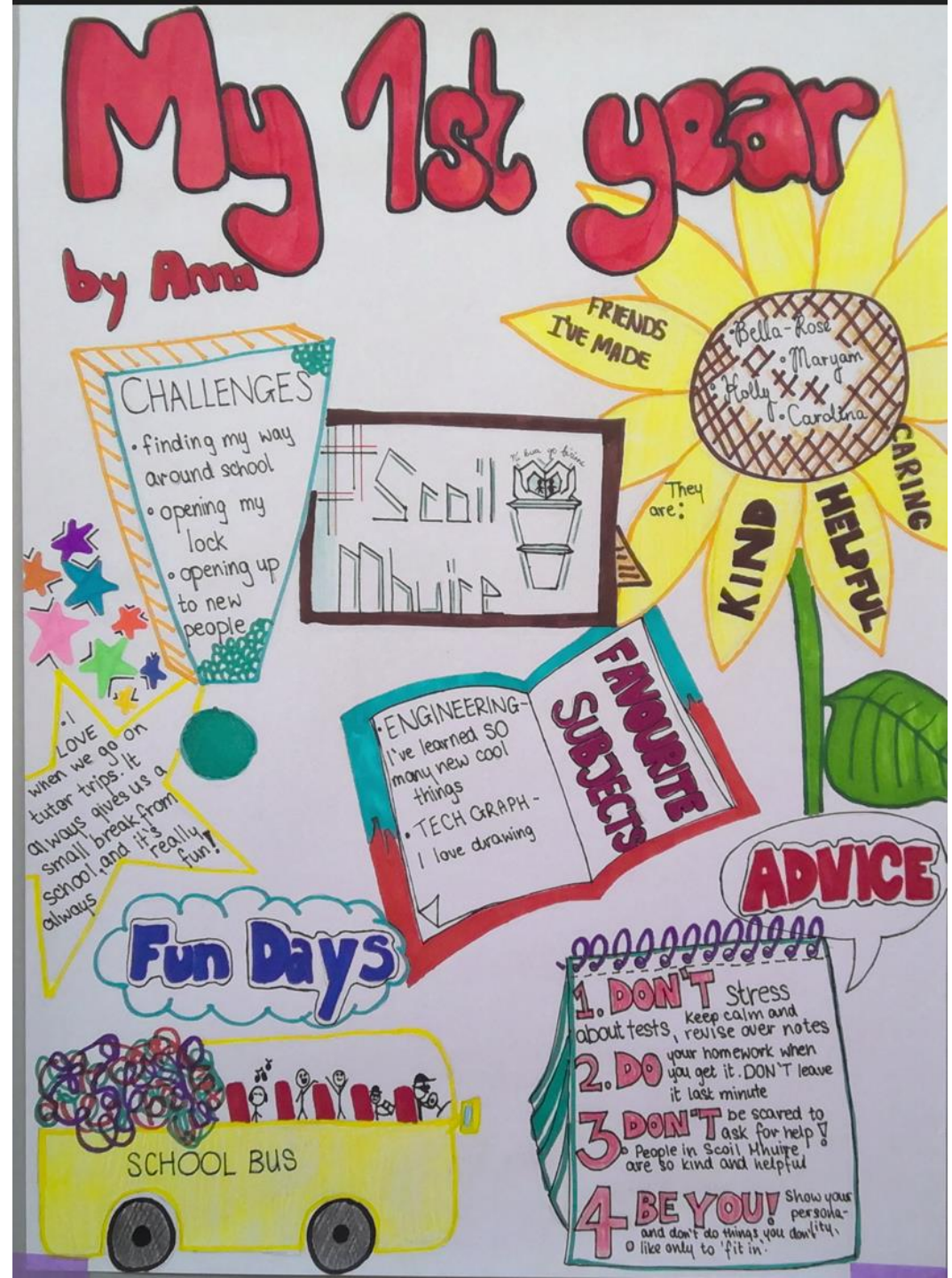
- Students now work in triads.
- Posters are displayed on the wall if appropriate and each student 'presents'/shares their poster to/with the others in the group.
- The presentation is informal, may be quite short and may involve simply responding to questions.
- When all triads have completed their introductions, the teacher could arrange the posters in a classroom display and everyone circulates around the '**gallery space**' to look at some other posters.
- After a discussion in which the teacher asks the students what was useful or interesting about the activity, students complete **a reflection sheet on the experience**.
- This sheet is prepared by the teacher with some questions.
- Finally, the teacher could display the posters in the room and for the next class **invite in the Year Head or school Principal** to visit the students to ask them about their posters and how they are settling into school.



- Did you enjoy this activity? Why?
- What did you think of your own poster?
- Would you change anything about it now?
- In your triad, write out three things you discovered about the two others in your group
- Write out one thing you liked about each of the other two posters in your triad.
- When you saw some of the other class posters, which one is your favourite? Why?
- Was there any poster that surprised you in any way?
- Can you name one person in the class who has similar hobbies to yours?
- Can you name one person in the class who loves listening to music?
- Can you name one person in the class who looks for the same qualities in a good friend as you do?

Step 5 – Optional – Extending the activity

- Invite a second-year student into the first-year class to talk about their experience of first year.
- Encourage the first-year students to listen carefully, to ask questions and to reflect on what advice they can take from the presentation.



Thank You for your time and attention!

Go raibh mile maith agaibh!