



How our Trainee Teachers are adapting their Teaching during a national lockdown

"I have just finished my first online lesson with Year 7. We were doing an introduction to 'The Tempest' and students were given 10 minutes to create their own mind map on Shakespeare and then we would all reconvene to share interesting facts. When we did, in the chat function there was a lot of debate about whether Shakespeare wrote the film 'Gnomeo and Juliet' ("Yes cos it's ancient") and, if so, does that mean that the actual Romeo gets killed by being mowed down by a lawnmower!

Even in dark pandemic times, pupils can be counted on to raise a smile and get things in perspective which is why I am loving my teacher training despite all the challenges!"

Helen, English Trainee Teacher

"I feel incredibly lucky to be on the Teach South West programme. Despite the changes to the course caused by Covid-19, the support and reassurance offered by the team has been constant. The shift to online learning has been a steep learning curve but everyone has stayed optimistic and been quick to adapt. As such, I have been able to continue to develop as a teacher. The current circumstances have emphasised the importance of the teaching profession and I feel proud and excited to be part of it!"

Ruth, PE Trainee Teacher

"I came into the term with so many plans for active Shakespeare lessons: students up and acting, reading out lines together, forming their own creative responses to the play. In the first week, all of this went out of the window. Adapting these for online lessons that are of the quality that our students deserve really challenges us to be innovative with how we use the resources available, for example, I have used interactive online slides to create class retelling of The Merchant of Venice. I have been so impressed by the resilience and creativity of our students. Whether they are acting out characters in their own living room or writing diary entries as a groundling, their desire to learn is inspiring. So I've learned to use this time as an opportunity to find out what motivates students and what engages them in learning. I've also learned to never be so wedded to a plan that you can't scrap it and start again!"

Bathsheba, English Trainee Teacher





“During the lockdown, even with travel restrictions imposed, I have taken the pupils from a volcano in the Caribbean to the rainforest of Brazil. Teaching is dynamic and challenging and never boring. I have enjoyed the challenge of adapting to online lessons and making online learning as fun as possible. I have been fully supported by all the staff. It has been rewarding receiving some amazing independent work pupils have submitted following my lessons. A teacher gave me encouraging feedback during this constantly changing pandemic, 'it's clear you've got the resilience for teaching'.”

Rachel, Geography Trainee Teacher

“Most people know that teaching is simultaneously one of the hardest and one of the most rewarding professions. But something I didn't know about the teaching profession is that it is one of the most humanising experiences. You are getting this unique insight into real lives, not just those of the students you interact with, but the teachers too—there's a real sense of community and honesty. When a student says something beautiful or profound that makes you scream “YES!” internally, it makes your day and makes all the challenging bits worth it. Yes, you get to have an impact on students, but I didn't realise how much students would impact me! I'm so glad I chose to train even in such difficult COVID times, it has kept my faith in our abilities as humans for sure!”

Ellie, RE Trainee Teacher

“What an experience! I have just finished my first week of blended lessons with 80% of students logging in from home and 20% in the classroom. The network keeps dropping out, some children don't have microphones or cameras, some can't hear me, and some can't see my slides...but, somehow, amazingly, we summoned our 2021 lockdown spirit and we got through it. My year 7 class now know how to form algebraic expressions and my year 8 class now know how to convert between fractions and decimals. I don't quite know how we did it, but we did! Roll on next week”

Matthew, Maths Trainee Teacher

“I am very grateful to be part of the Teach South West training programme; the team's response to the recent lockdown typifies their proactive and supportive ethos and, as trainee teachers, we have always felt valued throughout. Remote learning has been a steep learning curve but I have been so impressed by the students' desire to learn and this has been hugely motivating, especially as they practise their French accents out loud at home! I have also really enjoyed getting to know those students who are currently in the classroom - understanding their needs on their learning journey has been a real highlight and confirms the importance of teaching as a career. If you are considering a career in teaching, please do make Teach South West your first port of call!”

Sarah, MFL French Trainee Teacher

