Cylch Dysgu 2 | Teaching Cycle 2
Pass the Question Method

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CYCLE 2 – ‘PASS THE QUESTION’ METHOD

Poster Explanatory Information

I used this second method in my Family and Child Law course. The course generally deals with legal intervention in the private sphere. It tries to regulate relationships among persons in the family. Though some have argued that the law should keep out of the family, others see the intervention of the law as inevitable and indeed necessary especially were the rights of persons are being infringed upon. The aim of the course is therefore to make the student aware of the legally relevant issues surrounding the family and the role that the lawyer plays with relation to his client. Family and Child law covers aspects like divorce, adoption, marriage, child protection and domestic violence. (Please find a copy of the module description in the Appendix section). My role as a law teacher specifically in relation to teaching the Family and Child law module is to assist the students to appreciate the legal as well as policy considerations that underlie the main issues. I encourage them to appreciate the concerns of the government as well as the needs of more vulnerable individuals within the family like children, the disabled and the elderly. As can be seen, the nature of the course therefore requires critical discussions rather than mere regurgitation of facts. This led me to arrive at the ‘Pass the Question’ method. I present my findings in the form of a poster but offer a summary below.
Based on the nature of the Family and Child law course (requiring discussion) I felt that the seminar sessions for the course would provide a good opportunity to instigate discussion of the issues raised in the lecture. However I met with a problem. The discussions during the seminars were mostly dominated by students with more outgoing and confident personalities, leaving more reserved ones being less involved in the session. I thought about this and how to encourage such students to be involved. I therefore came up with the ‘Pass the Question’ method which involves rotating the question in a clock-wise or anti-clock-wise scheme around the room so that everyone would have equal opportunity to contribute. This led to more interesting and engaging discussions and particularly, it enabled students whose first language is not English (who would understandably be more hesitant to contribute) to have the opportunity to make valuable input. I found that the group as well as myself greatly benefited from this input because these students where able to give contributions based on the experience in their own countries. This was most interesting in discussions relating to the society’s treatment of gay, lesbian and transsexual members.

I evaluated the application of the method using feedback sheets and the responses were very positive. I have included a copy of the feedback sheet and also copies completed by the students. I found that attention was evenly given to all the students in the group. I also saw the confidence of the more reserved students increase with
each session. It also made the students prepare harder for the seminars as they knew that everyone would be required to contribute to the discussions. The method enabled me to better know the students and be able to engage with them one-on-one as well as in a group.

Personal Reflection on the Cycle and Implications for Future Practice

On reflection, I realised that the seminars of different law courses require different approaches. I realised that it is generalist to adopt the same method for seminars for all law courses. This is because each law course is different. It has different requirements with relation to skills development. As we saw with the Cycle 1, while a court method is more appropriate for the Contract Law module, a more discursive approach better reflects the nature of the Family Law course. Seminars should therefore be tailored to suit the needs of the courses and it is my role as a law teacher to reflect on the course and devise the best means for structuring the seminars in order to achieve the aims of the course.
‘Pass the Question’ Method

- **Problem** – I found that in my seminars only a selection of students (usually those with out-going personalities) would participate.
- **Plan** – This involves passing the seminar question in a clock-wise or anti-clock-wise rotation so everyone (including the usually more quiet ones) would have an opportunity to contribute.
- **Implementation** – Family and Child law seminars; 1hr 50 minutes in length.
- **Results** – All the students had equal opportunity to contribute in the seminars. Students whose first language is not English (that I find are usually hesitant in participating) were able to be more involved in discussions.
- **Evaluation** – I used feedback forms and the comments were very encouraging. There were comments on how interesting the seminars had become. One of the students commented that the seminar duration seemed to fly past. There were also comments that it helped them get to know the other members of their seminar group better.
- **Reflection** – I found that since everyone knew about the system, they seemed to come more prepared than was required by the seminar. It also helped me to engage with students one on one rather than as a group. This helped me to get to know each of the students by name.
Family and Child Law Seminar Feedback Form

Do you feel that you have benefited from the seminars? ........................................ Yes

How did you find the ‘pass the question’ approach to addressing the questions?
It helped me get to know other people’s opinions. I didn’t know there were so many Christians in the class!

Do you think that we should continue to use this approach for seminar questions?  Yes

Do you have any general comments – any other thing you would like to add?  No

Many thanks for the feedback and I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Nkiruka Ahiauzu
Family and Child Law Seminar Feedback Form

Do you feel that you have benefited from the seminars? Yes very much.

How did you find the ‘pass the question’ approach to addressing the questions?
It makes the time go really quickly!

Do you think that we should continue to use this approach for seminar questions? Yes

Do you have any general comments – any other thing you would like to add?

Many thanks for the feedback and I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Nkiruka Ahiauzu
Family and Child Law Seminar Feedback Form

Do you feel that you have benefited from the seminars? ...yes

How did you find the ‘pass the question’ approach to addressing the questions?
It like it because you can say your argument even where others don’t agree with you.

Do you think that we should continue to use this approach for seminar questions?
...yes

Do you have any general comments – any other thing you would like to add?

Many thanks for the feedback and I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Nkiruka Ahiauzu
Family and Child Law Seminar Feedback Form

Do you feel that you have benefited from the seminars? ...yes

How did you find the ‘pass the question’ approach to addressing the questions?
I found it interesting to hear different arguments though some people went on for too long

Do you think that we should continue to use this approach for seminar questions?
definitely

Do you have any general comments – any other thing you would like to add?
people should know when to stop

Many thanks for the feedback and I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Nkiruka Ahiauzu
Family and Child Law Seminar Feedback Form

Do you feel that you have benefited from the seminars? ...\textit{YES}\ldots

How did you find the ‘pass the question’ approach to addressing the questions?
\textit{IT WAS NICE TO HAVE EVERYBODY CONTRIBUTING IN THE SEMINAR}

Do you think that we should continue to use this approach for seminar questions? \textit{YES}\ldots

Do you have any general comments – any other thing you would like to add? \textit{NO}\ldots

Many thanks for the feedback and I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Nkiruka Ahiauzu
Family and Child Law Seminar Feedback Form

Do you feel that you have benefited from the seminars? .......................... Yes

How did you find the ‘pass the question’ approach to addressing the questions?
It was scary at first to have to say something but I have become more comfortable with speaking in seminars.

Do you think that we should continue to use this approach for seminar questions?
Yes

Do you have any general comments – any other thing you would like to add?
No

Many thanks for the feedback and I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Nkiruka Ahiauzu
Family and Child Law Seminar Feedback Form

Do you feel that you have benefited from the seminars?  

\[ \text{Yes} \]

How did you find the ‘pass the question’ approach to addressing the questions?

It was very nice. It made things very interesting and fun. I wish all my seminars were like that.

Do you think that we should continue to use this approach for seminar questions?

\[ \text{Yes} \]

Do you have any general comments – any other thing you would like to add?

\[ \text{No} \]

Many thanks for the feedback and I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Nkiruka Ahiauzu
Family and Child Law Seminar Feedback Form

Do you feel that you have benefited from the seminars? ..........yes

How did you find the 'pass the question' approach to addressing the questions?
Good. It helped me cover more than I did in my preparation. I also liked the funny stories about your childhood.

Do you think that we should continue to use this approach for seminar questions?
Yes

Do you have any general comments – any other thing you would like to add?
Maybe students could do short presentations during seminars?

Many thanks for the feedback and I wish you a Merry Christmas.

Nkiruka Ahiauzu