

Treasure Island Pedagogies Episode 24

Podcast Transcript

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Tunde Varga-Atkins

Hi, this is Tunde Varga-Atkins and this is episode 24 of our Treasure Island Pedagogies podcast series from the Centre for Innovation in Education at the University of Liverpool, where we share our light bulb movements, teaching props and pedagogies. As we cohabit our treasure islands, the space for contact time with student. So today I'm very happy to introduce 3 guests. Dr Denise Preece, Roger Saunders and Professor David Webster. And we would love to hear if you all please introduce yourselves by name and your role, your original discipline and how you did arrive into way. Think do you know where you are today? So let's Denise shall be calling first.

Dr Denise Preece

OK, so I am Dr Denise Preece. I work at the University of Liverpool Management School. My department is work on organisational management. My passion probably is inclusive teacher so I really I lead on the diversity. Slash disability academic support at the. School. And really it's. Probably come from I am also. Neurodiverse so I have dyslexia and ends. A little bit. Of ADHD and interestingly, recording it this week. This is neurodiversity week. And and as a a more senior academic, I'm starting to realise. That holding on to that mask is is. Becoming quite challenging. It's quite tiring and it's just interesting that we're making space now for discussion of difference and recognising that there is a lot of difference and and what is neurotypical to neuro activity. So that's that's my my on on on today's discussion.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

What about you, Roger?

Roger Saunders

My name is Roger Saunders. I work at the Business School at the Montfort University in Leicester. My current role is associate professor and university teacher fellow and my subject areas are marketing and advertising and a

long and very tortuous route to get where I am. But I guess the things that I'm interested in are gamification and playful. Learning simply because I have an interest in uh games, both board games and card games, and also ways of engaging students within classrooms. So my subject in particular has frequently in the past tended to be quite text based, and when I first started. Teaching it wasn't. Unusual to have a cortex that you effectively talked to or talk around and even doing things like using case studies and at the ends of chapters. And the the questions that were there. And you know, reflecting on my own experiences as a student, that was just a bit boring. So I was very fortunate in meeting a lot of people who had some very creative ideas about different ways of, of, of teaching. And I certainly realised that there was a great deal of flexibility for identifying new and different. And interesting and exciting and thought provoking and insightful things that you could get students to do that would hopefully make the whole experience bit more engaging for them.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Great. I'm sure we will love to hear more on those things as well. Roger. So can I pass to David now?

Professor David Webster

Thank you. Yeah. And Dave Webster, I am the director of education quality and enhancement here at the University of Liverpool. And I've been in post about 9 days so I'm just getting out. Just get here. It's a normal hand as this now and I spent the last couple of decades at least teaching philosophy and the study of religion. And a variety of different contexts and institutions. And also during that time have done it. In a sideways step into learning and teaching. Partly out of like where kind of fellow Members in this podcast and partly our acts and partly just out of sheer interest in what seemed to work and not work in the cluster that was in things that I thought would work failed. Thought the things that I didn't give a lot of thought to suddenly became really effective. And those are kind of rabbit holes and interest that I can have followed up. And became really intrigued with what works and what doesn't. Some are current preoccupations. Around how we can ensure greater equity and. Inclusion for students using. Process and regulation and that actually in many ways, these are the things that stand between students and prejudice and bias in many ways, and can outlast individual enthusiasts in terms of members of that moving on. And we've been posting things, so I'm really interested in how we. How we have? A hard. Wire better processors that are better and ensure equality and inclusion for our students into institutions as. A whole will have to talk. About that, but also something I. Think really there's something. Really enchanting about teaching our educational other context as well, and that you never know what's going to happen. And the steel for the green phosphor. He never teach the same class twice, no

matter how fixed your your syllabus might be, because students surprise you. You're not surprised yourself, and I think that is what's really exciting about the teaching and why I think it's something that I never really tyre as you perhaps tell us, talking about with colleagues.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Really. Yeah. Lots to pick up there as well, Dave, thank you. So let, let's moment again, you you identify the number of overlapping areas there. Let's pick up. Ever think about light bulb moments you had with the students? So these are moments when you felt you were getting it, and then you just mentioned about the excitement of how. That can happen in so various ways, even if you're teaching the same class. And Roger, you were talking about teaching for a number of years. So yeah, so let's. Let's just choose one because I know you will have a money based on what you just said. So what made this happen? What made this lightbulb moment happen? Anyone wants to come in first?

Roger Saunders

What I will do if nobody else is going to so the thing that I identified in advance, although I I could have picked from loans and. By lightbulb moment I I. Wouldn't mind to think the point at which students were suddenly flooded with knowledge and understanding of a particular thing so much. As the point at which they realise that. They could arrive at a conclusion that was valid based on their own experiences and learn to question things, because that's one of the other difficulties. I think that we often encounter that, you know, a student will really sit there and go well. Tell me what the answer is and and with the disciplines that I teach in there frequently. It's an annoyance. There are a number of different, so I did a blind taste test. Uhm, I bought a whole load of little miniature bottles of water and then went out and bought FIG for big bottles of water. Everything from the supermarket owned brand up to the first time I did this. I bought Voss, which I encountered actually via student, which comes in a tall cylindrical glass jar. With a with a cap, it looks like the kind of thing that you might keep spaghetti in otherwise. So the range in in pricing and and we do it per litre was something like 3 pence to. Thing was about £2.50, which is, you know, an enormous range. And then we just did a a blind test. Let's say we had each group. Had 4 bottles and they all had their own cups and the bottles were just marked ABC. And they tasted them, and then they had to decide which one they liked from from nicest to at least. And then also they had to decide which one they thought was most expensive, and then we would compare the group. See if there was any consistency and then I would show them the actual box themselves and then they would be really surprised. And over the years that I've done this, only once has the second cheapest not come out as the one that they most preferred. And quite often the most expensive water is the one that

they like least. And then that helps them to sort of, you know, particularly because it's water. So it's a fairly fundamental product. You know, there are certain things that you can do to it, but otherwise, you know it's it's a pretty basic product and they can talk about. You know, brand image uh quality perceptions, value perceptions, pricing strategies and so you can pretty much hang the whole of marketing if you want to around this one activity. But it's a real, physical, tangible they talk to one another. They all have their own opinions based on experience, whether they're like what? They don't like water and so it creates a a really quite dynamic and engaging environment that's.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

That sounds quite exciting for the student, and as you say, it's very immediately in engaging them into the various concepts that you can talk to. Then about Denise and David, they're similar things that you you might do in the classroom that might be similar to this.

Dr Denise Preece

If I if I. Go next. So one of the things I teach is I teach a formal debate. And I make it very clear to the students that this formal debate is exactly as close as they will ever get to being in a workplace. And presenting a set of ideas where their ideas are interrogated. Questioned. There's a completely different parallel going on in in other people around the tables, views and how they need to learn to hear, but to debate but with authenticity, but also with humility and and so. So I get them. This whole set of skills that. They don't realise they're developing overtime and and they have to turn up very formal suited and booted because it's your best self. On that day, you're working with a team you know and and you find over the the the 8-10 weeks they've they've become best friends. They're seeing each other and so they they they do this. Debate and and if that light bulb over, you can see they're just like this is real. This is how it's going. To be in my real job. And it's that transition, it's the transition from I'm it's almost the fake it to make it I'm playing. It This I'm. I'm. I'm in this nice safe too. Gosh, this is what it's gonna really be like. And then we talk about this is. You know you're gonna be going for either. A year in industry or getting? A job. All of that. Preparation that you know you would not turn up for that debate without practising no new stuff. It leads to the final. You're gonna need to interview and and from that debate. Then I get. Off they'll they'll. They get in touch with me on LinkedIn and they become, you know, they they they be friends on LinkedIn. And the number of of quick messages I've had from LinkedIn. I've got an interview. I've managed to get this person in this place. Can I you just give me a bit of interview technique? Can you just cheque them all right. And and and it's that that buzz of they realise it's real, they they've, they've they've joined the grown up world. This is real stuff. They want to do their very best. I mean, and from me all of a sudden

it's over the last few years, especially probably since COVID. You realise they're not the partying group of students we had 5-10 years ago. These are very, very sensitive. Very sincere young people who are quite vulnerable, sometimes who really want to do their very best and and for me it turned the light bulb from teaching. Stuff and questioning and challenging to this is real world. These are adults and we need to respect them and give them the dignity. And so that's probably me in a nutshell. That's why I'm props, so passionate about debates in university settings.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

So can I just explore you mentioned authenticity and can you just expand? On that a bit.

Dr Denise Preece

Yes. So so to and quite often if you give a student a presentation, they present one view. This is the world view, this is access. Did in a debate they have to sit back and think there's lots of of alternative realities going on here. I have to follow my own judgement, my own beliefs set. I have to be passionate about this, so they bring their own self into the assessment and they've had to then learn to harmonise with the five people in their team. And before I see. Them they will have practised on each. So they're learning this. I have to bring their authentic self. They can't be a synthetic. I'll give you this answer and therefore I've won. It's actually I have to believe in it because they actually are more rigorous questioning each other than I could ever be in a debate. You've never seen anything like it. They, you know, they're really push and challenge, and it makes them realise that. Actually they are good enough. Good enough is good enough and that they are ready and they're ready to step out. So it's that authentic self. In that assessment, I think just gives them the confidence and and you know, I see second language students who are thriving because they've had to practise their second language right the way throughout. They feel like they've fully contributed, you know, so everybody is really gelled into getting success from this and it doesn't mean one will wait. You know, one will lose successes. They've given their best authentic self on the day.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Dave, I think I caught in before you want. We're gonna say something. Go on.

Professor David Webster

That's fine, now I. Just need myself just in case, but that's actually fine.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

I was going to keep.

Professor David Webster

A completely different example, but then you just talk about debates they made. It reminded me of something I also like, whose idea of the cheapest but one which has. Always been my kind. Of ethos. Buying things like domestic appliances. You always get the cheapest but one not the cheapest, but we'll look from it and it seems to be pretty much it's done right for. Me so far. But the the. Thing example I was thinking of is probably not that good example in terms of affecting me as an interactive student LED. But more more can we think about debate and students having a kind of lightbulb moment, which may or may not reflect well on me. I team talked with a colleague in philosophy few years ago. One thing we wanted to do was model disagreement about source, so we would often disagree. We often disagreed anyway. We often disagree, so we have a debate which didn't really trail numbers. Of the students I. Think that we chose and we chose the end the death penalty. So he would argue against death penalty, and I'd argue for it and would have a debate. That assumes would vote beforehand. What their original position was. And I think about 80% of students. Were against death penalty. They would have. A debate and my colleague did a lot of. Work and preparation. Yes, statistics. He had a PowerPoint and handouts. He had really good, solid evidence and papers. And I just made. Them sort of cry by talking about their murdered. Mothers or whatever, you know, whatever. Awful, persuasive marketing style pointers were tools that had over disposal and in terms of emotional manipulation and persuasion, and I would really. Lay it on. Really thick with your debate. And then and they would then vote again, and I would normally convert about half those who voted against. The death penalty to the death penalty and much the annoyance of my colleague who was like. This is a trust. Because how dare you? Not you. Numbers and data and evil. And it's, well, it's about debate. And then the the revealed the student. So actually I didn't think this, this wasn't my own belief and that was the moment that half of them at least were were just genuinely outraged that I've been able to be so precipitous and so earnest and so. Seemingly authentic and for something that I completely didn't believe. Leave. So this idea that you could argue and you could adopt A position for the sake of argument, but literally do so argument and really be successful. In some terms. It can lead a life and maybe they sort through some of kind of my personality, but also I think they just saw through how arguments work, how you might take arguments. In the piece of work in an essay or in writing, because sometimes you need to really inhabit a position before you can refute it, or steak to refute it. And that kind of doing a. Kind of mealy mouth. Version of your opponents to you before. You dealt with them, wasn't? Good enough. But I do I still remember. You could have

someone really felt that that. Somehow been lied. To or cheated and. And it was, you know, so. It was kind of performative thing, but it. Was it was intriguing. Also, potentially how much authority they were placing. In this institutions. And how much faith they had in the veracity of our comments and more so than we present, I suspect, which you know in itself. And reflectively interesting from his educators. So yeah, he's completely different example about something positive, but then talking about debates. Suddenly we think about. This one incident.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, that that's brilliant. And I I recall one of our lecturers doing a similar but similar but slightly different thing where what he was doing is going modelling it but just himself. But modelling 2 perspective going from one side of the lecture room to the other and then he actually his his. Strategy was not to be there. What he thought, and the students were getting really impatient and they really wanted to know what he was thinking. He wouldn't give it away. He was not in the sense modelling that that that idea of not not having that individual perspective or not revealing his this idea that his words shouldn't be the counting. It should be the students making up their own minds based on the evidence. So that I mean. But you said they would works on so many levels. Really really interesting.

Roger Saunders

There's a couple of things that David's mentioned which resonate. So the the first one is the. For various reasons, because we were, uh, trying to provoke the students. Uh a colleague. And I who used to work together and had the rare opportunity to have the same timetabled lessons used to go in and spend the 1st 5 minutes of a lesson arguing with one another over something that was relevant to that week, and you could see the look of confusion on the students faces because they expected us to stand up and say. This is how it works and we were trying to get them to see that, you know, as Denise said earlier, there are multiple points of view and you've at least got to. Understand. You know, other people's points. Of view, even if you. Disagree with them. If you're gonna try and argue against them, David, we use a slider intriguing that you chose the death penalty. We used slightly easier ones, so a recent marketing group where we were actually talking about the impact of AI. So I gave them this. An example that. Used with electric vehicles, which is based on the. The tram car example, which I believe comes from philosophy. So you've got a tram car. That's that's sort of running away on its own and it's it's gonna run over three people or you can divert it to only run over one person. But you would then be responsible for that one person's death. And what should you do and and getting them to think about that and and just think about it. And then realise that in essence, that's what you're asking AI to do is to, you know, is to make those decisions for you. But somebody still gotta

programme it as to how it works. So yeah, that kind of debate and that kind of. Going than I think just to think a little bit more rather than simply absorb and then regurgitate an idea is always good, whatever the subject matter.

Dr Denise Preece

Yeah, I that's why I do it, to be honest. So I teach from a I start with the positives and then go to the negatives and then at the end of the day, I give them 10 minutes of questioning and ask them, you know, you were given this position. You didn't necessarily agree, whose shift? Did and and and. It just makes you realise how respectful and insightful students are that they they can shift but keep the same position. You know, they can appreciate research and data and that helps them make decisions differently. And and I and this is the whole sometimes I think we underestimate some of the brilliance that we have in front of us. It's the whole the the we're not and we don't want them to see us as that white coat, the the idealist. The right answer we want. Then really ready for industry and and that's why for me, it's like I'm so I'm absolutely passionate about inclusion is about how do we get inclusion going on in the classroom. Well, we get them to think differently because if we get them all to think. The same we. Won't end up with inclusion. It's almost an exclusive. Club, isn't it? And and that's what we're all doing is trying to. Get them to really. Really question what they're thinking and it just shows you what universities give, doesn't it that they would not get that necessarily in in their if if they went to do an apprenticeship whilst they love apprenticeships, it does? Garner a different way of thinking.

Professor David Webster

Yeah, on the. Screen so I was just thinking about the criticality. I'm I'm I think getting students in to be critical and in that sense in terms of bit of questioning is really is so. But also I think a look at the reflective way, so we need to really both teams opportunities to. Think about reflection. We also think about people with different. Views and the the. Some of the holes views that are different. Phone doesn't do so because they're idiot. Normally, and they hold them for for for a set of reasons. That doesn't mean that they're right. I still. Think I'm right. I wouldn't think I wouldn't hold of you if. I didn't think was. The right view. And I've changed it. So I still think that wrong, but I don't need to come and think, well what is underlying then being. Wrong. Think about. Persuasion and discussion and conversation and soft and ethical sense. And I think you've still got. To have some sense. Of what you need. To discuss with them in order to move. Them you know that. So I think there's, yeah. But I think the question of AI in the trolley problem is really gonna affect more lives than death penalty in terms of how many lives it's going to save or not save depending on the programme into. And the next generation of electric car

self driving cars, but ultimately that would be will it save the driver who's paid for it? Or will it save the innocent pedestrians who it's? Got no stake in other than moral 1. It seems like kind of it's gonna make a. Massive difference where. You know how many cases of? Death penalty in the UK will like to have. As opposed to, that's probably those are probably actually more pressing ethical problems for students to think about and much more pressing than people think about. And I think all issue cars. That's great. Well, that's cool. That's interesting. We're all self driving cars. But actually we've got to make some. Quite fundamental decisions about whose whose lives count. And in a. You know, in a potentially like capital economy where? Some people are paying for the technology that gets to decide who likes count, other people aren't. And others. So sorry, that's really interesting, Roger.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Yeah. No, it's something. Yeah. No, I think that's. But that's, yeah, it's. We could also talk on that. For ages and ages as well. Maybe relatedly, it I I will just move us on to the second question and this might come back in in different guys. So we you've shared amazing lightbulb moments with students when so let's go. To our treasure. Islands to create more of these light bulb moments for students. So what would be a teaching prop or pedagogy that you would bring with you in addition to the ones you mentioned before to create this inclusive, exciting? Debating critical classroom that you've all started talking about.

Roger Saunders

Is it OK for us to mention brands cause I'm about to Lego, although I actually think you could do this with a whole host of different things mobile have just introduced something called Mobile Pro which is their equivalent of Lego Serious play. I've used Stickle bricks, I've used plasticine. I've used clay. I've worked with lots of colleagues who use lots and lots of different craft materials like pub cleaners and create paper and all those kinds of things. But but for me it would be Lego for its versatility as much as anything, so I've used it for ice break. Because I've used it sort of help with students where they've been developing new products and we talked about. New product development. But I was first introduced to it or 16 years ago, maybe more, actually, by a lady called Rossanley at Winchester, who used to run. These conferences, which were actually a series of micro teaching sessions, and she must have been one of the first people in the country, I think to have done the Lego Serious play training and she was using it in management to actually talk about and hopefully sort of this might resonate with David. It was actually. Do with philosophy, management philosophies and and sort of quite abstract ideas. And in order to help the students to be able to talk about those things, she asked them to create something that expressed an idea or an emotion or a

feeling or a thought or a, you know, something which was quite abstract and then talk about. And that's kind of 101. Of the the. The training that you get for the use. Of of Lego. Serious play and seeing students who might be quite uncomfortable talking about themselves being able to build something and talk about the model because the model existed and then actually talking quite. You know, detailed and. And comprehensive and and often, you know, emotional ways about something and for other students to actually be able to make Connexions because they could also see the model and the model have an impact on them, whether they, you know, they liked it or didn't like it or whatever. And then that started them on conversations because it was much easier to talk about their models than it was to talk about themselves. So yeah. Mine would be like.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Right. So we've got Lego on our. Boats. Anything else that you want to add?

Professor David Webster

I mean I I put one thing in my notes beforehand that I'm now. Kind of revising this is becoming a pattern. Excuse me, thing that I put my notes, which is slightly. Skills really, which was kind of. Stale magician kind of approach is blank playing cards which are awful and you shouldn't be allowed near them. And that kind? Of problem but I have used it before, mostly to. Stand there indeed, Paul Daniel's impressions and things in front of the staff longer. Sessions but the. Real version of you is. Slightly cheesy, but I think I had the most success with was people. The props in the sense of probably 5-6 years before the pandemic using post registrants had met their computers. Elsewhere who are doing pH. D's on topics to Skype in Skype into seminars. I'll talk to my undergraduates. So I was doing module time on unusual contemporary Spiritualist, so I know a bit about some of them. And you know that, you know, he extends the board as a fake. You really are an expert. But I met at conferences, lots of PhD students who. Was still in the middle of depth and I got in touch with them. And so when I was doing UFO religions, for example, which is interesting, fascinating, sometimes very deadly topic, people think about headings, gating, things. And I was able to Skype and a guy. From Sweden, right? Halfway through a postgraduate work on it and hand him talk about and do QA machines in the seminar. And I think for. That module I. Had about 6:00 AM. PH D students and postgraduate students or Skype into my undergraduate class from around the world and and they would talk to my students. My students will. Have read a sample of their writing that they're. Doing a pre. Thing, but actually it was it was. A really interesting to this. I wasn't just making this this stuff up. That seemed like you really weren't making. Up some of it. But I think having a. It was really interesting, the students. Were much closer in age than to. The people I.

Skyped in much closer age to the graduate students. And they kind of model where they could. Be in three or. Four years time, if they really. Want to take some of these subjects? That, uh, so these are serious subjects and it was. Just kind of it was an alternative. Voice to mine. Which there were more than happy about. But it was, you know, as a prop, it was. It was a kind of a gimmick at the time. It was rather. Unusual to be able to Skype somebody. Remotely, but it was other than me buying copies. For the people. Concert that was worth to be free. They really benefit to the PhD students and says that their profile and their CV, and we often do things. To kind of. Write references and kind of get involved in projects, but it was a real.

Professor David Webster

Nicely, often little video podcast recordings on them as. Well, we stick on. The BLE. And stick on noodles. We used it and build up an archive of, but it was some using other people kind of Skyping in from elsewhere or even colleagues in the universities, and I'm doing reciprocal 10 minutes here. And there just to pop in. A real conversation for the students. Obviously, that's my kind of secret. So if if you stuck to our treasure Desert Island, I would hope we had a good broadband connexion. So we can Skype in some experts who we knew what they were talking about and some of the subjects.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Really and definitely ahead of of the time technologically as well and. And we do. Have Wi-Fi but purely solar panel Wi-Fi on the island. So yeah, that that will be possible.

Dr Denise Preece

For me it's it's it's, it's as much tech as I can. If I'm absolutely honest. Being neurodiverse for me, and that's what levels the playing. It goes from equality to equity to inclusion because it removes any of the the tendencies I've had not to, right. Because I can speak to it, I I it gives me access to the outside world because I I think some others are different types of thinkers. I'm I'm. I'm a big. Thinker. So I like the to think globally. What's? Happening on a global level. To bring it nationally. So for me, if I didn't have tech. You know, and I think it it works for a lot of neurodiverse I think. The world becomes much too small. It becomes too insular and almost claustrophobic. So. So for me, I I love, I love tech AI. You know, this ChatGPT has been absolutely groundbreaking in in getting me very quickly and to understand things without having to write to read 8 pages of some very dry articles. I can now get it to do a synopsis. You can load up the the, the, the you know the article, ask it for a synopsis, ask it where its its challenges are its weakness. Now and and it just starts me off. But then I

think right, well, I'll go and read that and that's of. Interest to me now. Whereas before I was I talked to you about getting older and and neurodiversity. And the mask is is is is taking its toll. It helps with that removing the mask. It just gives me access to so much more and. You know, I see the, that's why. I'm very open with all the. Students that me being, you know. Give us the they're more comfortable they are. About me being able to talk. About autism and ADHD. And and dyslexia and and how we bring it into the workplace. Because I'm teaching about work and management, and the more we talk about well to what we can do to remove all of the barriers and bring us all in, I think. It it it helps the student in the classroom. It helps them think about the student going into the workplace and also. It makes the. Question some of the policies and. The practises that we've got going on. And it just thinks beyond today it gets you to think way into 5101520 years time. So. So for me, I I I almost couldn't exist without it, so I need. Your solar panels. I'd probably be stealing yours as well, David, to make sure I'm fully powered.

Roger Saunders

If it's any help, David.

Dr Denise Preece

And then I I'll let I'll let you use my computer David to access your people. If you let me use your solar power. To get to them.

Roger Saunders

If there's any help, David, I would have snuck on blank playing cards myself. I've got about 600 downstairs that I'm slowly converting into a a number of different card games for myself and colleagues, so I was quite excited when you said you had thought about that. Definitely second on my list.

Professor David Webster

Well, it's definitely, yeah. It's definitely a deal, Denise. I'm sure we can swap our kind of Wi-Fi and take turns in it, but yeah, Roger, the blank playing cards. I think I used them within national Social Sciences Department for Staff Development Day when I made them all, filled them in their shuffled them and I shouldn't really be allowed because it was just too much licenced to. Behave like you kind of want to be fair. We just. We couldn't actually do any tricks. But there are, you know. Things that I you know, I. I think if you are willing to really invest. It can carry it. Off things like props that really work. The problem is when people try and. Do them but. They're not, actually, they're not. Willing to go all the way in. Terms of performative. Kind of. Certainly get to it. They can. They come off as slightly embarrassed

of what they're doing. I think you need to inhabit it and have no. Shame in order. To get away with it, which is great.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Brilliant. In the spirit of games, one of the things I prepared for you is some previous props and pathologies and luxury items as well. Because I was going to ask, you already started doing it how you might use each other's teaching props and pedagogies, so I'm going to just share with you now is a wheel of names that I just. Customised for the purpose of today. And uh, so the your task will be that I will spin the wheel and see what you get. And then I'm just interested in is there a way that you could think about using this for teaching and now let's just see if I can spin this wheel. Lego is already on it. Roger. So if it comes out of that we can't.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Who played on glitter, I think.

Roger Saunders

I've I've previously used play dough with some funny advertising students. We were actually looking at UM window design, uh. So uh uh for retailers and also in store displays. And because they're three-dimensional, I didn't. I didn't want them to just Draw Something on a piece of paper. So I actually took in some craft support. I I can't remember what the other thing was that I took invite. I definitely took in some play dough and they loved it and I don't know where the part of that even for for my students. And there's a big age gap between me and my students, but they were saying, oh, I remember this from school and obviously it's got a very distinctive smell. And and they were moving it about. And I have never seen final year students have quite so much. Done in a classroom and I'm a big believer that, you know, fun can definitely be an aid to learning. So yeah, Plato's very, very good for three-dimensional things, as indeed is any other craft material.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Any want, anything else that you might based on what each other brought to the island? So we've got Lego for play people and sports and tech. Anything else that you might think? Oh, we could do with that.

Dr Denise Preece

I love stories tunned. I think students love stories as well. It gives them that hook. So I tend to use a lot of my stories because I've been worked on over Europe and America. In industry, I will bring in probably other people and

use their stories we've got. I do include ability, so we bring in some exceptional speakers, but it's so interesting how students love to learn through stories and it's probably through our storybooks from from childhood that they have that. Reminiscent thing, but I do think that's that that stories, whether people have failed or succeeded, whether you know it's a sad story or a happy story, it helps them just realign where they are. And it's it's OK to be OK because I think. The we've got so much pressure. On everybody right now to. Be perfect to be right, there's. Wrong stories give us the the the segue into. Do you know what? I've studied high performance for years and then the the highest performing teams are the. Ones who fail together. Well, they they learn, they use it as stories too. And so for me it would be stories as well. Any type of stories.

Roger Saunders

I like Denise's idea of tech. One of the things that came out of the pandemic was effectively we. We had to use lots and lots of online things, and I had previously used post. It notes quite like in my classes, but pad. That is a really good quick. I mean you can use a QR code as well as a sort of web link. It's anonymized so students can participate. They can all post at the same time, and it it's a great way of dealing with questions that some students might otherwise be reluctant. To broach, you know, even. In a small environment, certainly. In a a big lecture theatre, which is where I tend to use it. Most so yeah, definitely the. Tech has provided lots of advantages.

Professor David Webster

I'm really interested in that case. Every light paddle it, absolutely every. And as it does it. Say haven't used. It since the pandemic and prepandemic used to use. It sometimes alongside poster notes in reverse, I think. And post it notes and pencils also take deciding kind of context and you know so all those things are disposal. I'm always I'm always some sort of. What we're using the. Tech for we're probably using it sort of. In a sense, and and also I think what's interesting sometimes about technology. It is that it. Doesn't always end up getting used quite in. The way that. It's creators, designers, or salespeople and intended it to be used. And it's quite interesting, sometimes best not to always tell them quite how they're meant to be using it, but I I think technology in itself as to what I'd like to see with them. What I think's been really beneficial that I might have a bit of my life is willingness to not to kind of break him, Lord, to play with it, to see what can happen, to poke it with a stick, as we'll see what that kind of and it might come from. The generational thing have been kind of on the computers and. Home computers and. Computing plays universities were a bit broken. We're a bit sort of stuck in the duct tape when we want to make them do. It and get. To get. The pace off. And when you have to kind of repurpose things to actually make them work, gives you after a certain

amount of time, whereas the worst that can happen is that some of my tea comes. To shout you a bit and takes it away. You know, so actually that can approach technology machines. So it isn't just students being technically competent in one thing. I think they're having an attitude towards technology that is servant of theirs and they can break it. They can push it, they can repurpose it. And I think they have a kind of mindset or approach around that. They often much more creative than you might anticipate, and lots of my preconceptions might be prejudices or biases and preconceptions. We all carry. With us. They might find their ways into technology and we see how much bias is found on ways into all sorts of technology which talk about our. Own things or any of it. In all sorts of ways. Or I leave people to it. To use them to. Be like in the old Gopros or all sorts of bits of equipment or writing sort tables or post it notes. But. She's actually come up with things. And then you wouldn't think. Of I think that it's it's very easy not that easy, but it can be too easy to be overly prescriptive machines. I think sometimes they need guidance, but other times I. Think they, you know, being left? To play with things and to break. Them into usable in certain ways. Can be really liberating for students. As well, so I think. Is technology, but it's also a kind of what's most it's a kind of playful attitude to technology. This is a that treats it for what it is, rather than over over excessive sense of reverence. Something might be an expensive bit of technology, but in two years time with junk. So you might as well see. What you can crank out of it and there's. The performance or unusual use of it.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, and it. Comes back to what Denise was saying as well. That idea of new perspectives introducing new perspective, creating that space when things can fail, that experimentation and all sources of learning. So I I love the idea of a bit of rebellion in the use in in our use of of as we introduce students to things. Leaving things open and and let them do, and it discovered themselves. And and as you say, maybe create or miss create things that can be do brilliant things. OK, So what I'm going to ask. Sorry Danny. Is where you gonna?

Dr Denise Preece

I mean, the other thing that I've really found has found its home is teams since COVID as well. So I think a lot of of students have become quite introverted, shy and not quite as socially confident. And and I've always used teams, but I find teams now is really. Quite liberating for them. They get in touch when they want to. They share enough of what they want to when they want to they Co create and they, you know, they can edit into. Things and and and they can be offline. Online they can they you know. So having a bad day or a good day. And I found that in the absence of them not seeing each other as much as they used to on campus, I find it's it's

really helping them understand how there's different ways of forming friendships. But other than the. You know the. The their social media, I think it's it's it's recognising the friendliness of it, the supportiveness of it. They I can help them if there's someone missing out of a team. They let me know I can go. Really, that is, is really I think it builds bridges between us and the students and it builds bridges between each other because we we only issue, they know each other and and you know when when some of the the students are on on site so little that right now it is that way of them keeping in touch in an. In a nice safe environment rather than this very random. I don't know you. We're introducing them to the so so I like the the newer softwares which are more I think. It puts them in a little nest if you like. It's their safe nest. It's their grouping and they're OK with that. So I so. I I quite like some of the new tech that's coming along that lets them be groups and friendship groups and social groups. And they can set it up outside of me. So I found quite a lot. I give them a team. They go and create their own team as well, and I get invited to that. I think it's quite funny the whole come and. Join us and and. Then then they're trying to drag me into multiple teams. So I I think the tech that we're developing now is definitely more inclusive and supportive at the same time as challenging.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

That's brilliant, and you can probably follow it up with loads of analogies around the Treasure Island of students creating their own spaces and all own islands, and then inviting you to the at the same time, this coarseness of the islands connecting to each other. And yeah, I think, yeah, that's really nice.

Dr Denise Preece

And then some of them exclude me some. Of them, they've got their own. And then when they're ready to share with me, they'll. Take something from there and. They'll put it into the team. I can see and that that gives them their shows, their autonomous they're confident it. I just like that thing about we're all in it together. We're all at different stages as well, and that's fine.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Great. OK. So you've all been working hard. You're wearing masks and getting exhausted with working, so let's focus on and on relaxing. So when you're on this island in a little corner, when you can be yourself without behaving in any particular way, others may want to, what would be your luxury item that you would? You would bring with you.

Roger Saunders

An MP3 player. As much as. I love books and I do love books. I've always got at least one book on the go. Pure physical constraints of how many books you can probably take with you in a in a suitcase would mean I'd I'd take an MP3 player and hopefully. And have through the tech that my UH-2 fellow treasure Islanders have brought with them access to download stuff to it. So I I listen to a lot of comedy podcasts. It's one of the things that got me interested in in podcasting because I have a 3 1/2 hour round trip from where I live to where I work. On the days when I have to go in, but it's also meant that I've listened to lots of programmes about. Science, history, geography, philosophy that I might not otherwise have, have listened to. And once you find a podcast that you really like, and then generally speaking, there's loads of episodes available that that could be really interesting and the the one I'd I'd really like to tip my cap at is something called we have ways. Which is Al Murray, who's probably better known as the public. And Lord and James Holland, who's an historian at Al Murray himself, studied history. And they talk about the Second World War and and apart from the, you know, amazing, horrific and and, you know, really unbelievable things that happen sometimes. There's also actually. A an awful lot of things that you can you can learn from that. That change your perception not just of of war as a, you know, an attritional thing between countries, but also of how people work together and and the things that people can achieve when they do work together. So yeah, that that. Would be mine in in MP3 player.

Professor David Webster

I'm I'm happy to. Connect to them, which was. I mean I think when I wrote down, which I'll stick with this, I think a number of bikes would be important. I don't think that one bike is the luxury that's a necessity for all human beings in multiple bikes might be seen as a luxury. And yes, we can use one of them to power the. Wi-Fi anyway, so I. Think it's it's useful. But only I would draw that in terms of form and thinking about work versus. Downtime from work in that I think although it's been not be stressed, do physical exercise. I think cycling is relatively low impact and is good good way. To do that. Also, if you get some nice bone conduction headphones, you. Can listen to. Podcasts. While you're doing it without it getting hopefully without on this the Treasurer, there won't be any massive buses. Or trucks to to the way you know. But anyway I. Feel the right headphones. You can really. Listen now for those. The next arriving set of people on. Their own work kind of knock you over. So I would think something like a bike or around machine or something. I think you need to you know that kind of mind body they only get over kind. Holding asserting anything about kind of holistic. Case, that's all. But nonetheless, I think being on the island, if we'd have to do too much physical work and if. All was provided. For us, as I'm presuming, then. You would be. You would need to be. You would need to. Become physically exhausted as well as mentally

exhausted. In order to be a kind of a rounded person or for many people to feel that they reckon of. Effectively functioning person, so I think something that allowed that buy to be ideal or some kind of inferior alternative, like promoting something we also do.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Great. Thank you, Denise.

Dr Denise Preece

And assuming I have my my laptop so I can be as curious and escape if I want to get my solutions on my laptop, I think. Mine would be family. And the dog. I I think it's for me is is that whole thing in my small community that's that's so important to me that I I that's how I operate. So they're OK. I'm OK if I've got the dog, the kids, the my husband. That's that's our unit. And. And and they haven't got to be with me all the time. But it's that thing about. What is it? Where do I belong? And that's where I belong and that's how I function better if if my sense of belonging is good, I can do almost. It's that whole super human. I can do whatever I want without that. I think I would. I'd really struggle. So I'd be kidnapping, kidnapping, my, my, my. Family and the. Dog and and and bringing them with me. Thank you.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Yeah, I think we might like. I think we have managed to get other people get away with any maths objects as in no objects and then he, so he might be able to get away with. That too.

Roger Saunders

I had assumed as it was a Treasure Island rather than a desert island, that we wouldn't necessarily have to be stuck on there forever. And and David, I, I wholeheartedly agree with you. My chair is currently over the top of my Rd. Machine. There's a cycle machine next to me, and after immediately after this podcast podcast that I should be going out listening to my podcast whilst going on a brisk walk. Yeah, I think a lot of people forget how important physical health is, especially in relation to mental health.

Tunde Varga-Atkins

Yeah. And it's very topical obviously with students as well. So I know our campus has changed with lots more sports opportunities inside outside sports Centre. So and definitely important. OK. Any final words any? Other luxuries to take with us. But I think things like we've got sorted, we've got the family, we've got exercise, we've got nice music and relaxing things. So

I'm sure we will have a great time. There will be very creative, curious students who all feel included. So Matt, thank you so much for the discussion. Really, really enjoyed it. I will be very happy listening back because there's so many things that you said that it's worth on talking still. But this is it from now. It's time to sail away to our treasure islands together. Thank you very much for our audience to, for listening. If you enjoy the episode, you can subscribe to our podcast. If you're interested in becoming a guest, you can find our expression of interest on our Liverpool. You may see IE podcast website where you can also. Access previous blogs and episodes, so goodbye for now. And finally a big thank you to our guests.

Roger Saunders

Thank you, Cindy.

Professor David Webster

Bye bye.

Dr Denise Preece

Thank you. Bye bye.