

## **My Celta Experience: Charlie Trotman**

Teaching English as a Foreign Language is all about communication; how you express yourself; both through your words and actions, has a ripple effect on any students understanding of a particular word or target sentence; it all begins with doing something physical; You need to get up off your butt (or *pigu* as my Chinese students say) and actually show that you have the confidence to stand out from the crowd.

CELTA is a great gateway to language teaching abroad; because it shows that you are unafraid to take the first step into the world of English Language Teaching; you will most certainly be required to stand up, elucidating concepts that were maybe strange and unfamiliar even to yourself (trust me, I once had to grapple with explaining Augmented reality to a Japanese man)

What makes CELTA at Swansea University such a rewarding experience; is that you'll be given the opportunity to work closely with students of a wide range of backgrounds; both in your team of teachers and your students; trust me; there's no greater thrill than the repeated words of encouragement from grateful students at the end of a class and learning about their lives is just as valuable as many of the grammar points you'll learn along the way...

Personally, I came from a three-month charity project in Ikorodu, Nigeria where I worked closely with students, which required me to consider how I communicated with people of different cultures and certainly helped me in understanding that patience is a virtue when teaching English as a foreign language, most importantly; you have to be patient with yourself and learn that it's okay to make mistakes;

You will have time to discover so much about yourself through teaching English as a foreign language that it could change literally your entire direction and place in the world. In each class; you'll be instructed to teach one segment to a group of students; helping to further their knowledge to a set curriculum; the fun part comes in planning your lesson with your fellow CELTA trainers and incorporating your experiences as well as your students.

I now work as a Foreign Trainer with Disney English China, living and working in the big wonton melting pot of Guangzhou, famous for its tropical climate, dumplings and some of the most endearing students you'll ever find in Asia;

It's a long way from teaching adults through the CELTA: but you'll pick up so many ideas on how to model context; in a fun and engaging way that with a little handiwork you can adapt for younger learners; Only in the past week; I've dressed up as a grocer; a yoga instructor and in various wigs; each time resulting in the kids howling with laughter; while also importantly practicing the target language.

What advice would I offer budding English teachers who are thinking of taking on the CELTA? I'd say have an open mind; don't be afraid to express your ideas and make sure to ask questions!

Get to know your students and incorporate their experiences into the class; for example; in one of our classes; I was instructed to teach the idiomatic language of 'close shave' which resulted in many personal stories being told throughout the class; it's moments like these that make you stick with language teaching and also; get to know your trainers too!

I was lucky enough to have a supportive group of teachers; all with a wide background of experience in language teaching and studying at Swansea University; you are blessed with one of the most multicultural campuses in Wales and you will meet so many people if you try hard and it will help you get the dream job abroad; So remember to study hard, have a social life and get to know your students; it's a position that you'll feel proud of and gain so much from; believe me; it's worth the essays!