Ron is very frustrated. He has waited his whole life to attend the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. Both of his parents attended Hogwarts as did his grandparents and his grandparent’s parents. Ron’s older brother Bill had been a champion Quidich player at Hogwarts and now works for the Ministry of Magic using his expert broom handling skills to oversee the care of dragons in the Scottish territories. Ron’s three brothers currently attending Hogwarts are Quidich players who have for three years contributed to winning the Gryffindor House Cup because of their flying skills. Now Ron stood with Madam Hooch and all of the first year students trying with all of his might to get his broom off the ground. He could feel the warmth of flushed skin crawling up his face as his classmates one-by-one, conquered lift-off. Everyone was watching him. Some of the students were offering encouraging remarks while others, perched high above Ron’s head on their brooms, hurled assailing insults, defaming his brothers accomplishments in winning the House Quidich Cup. Ron felt his throat tighten as he made one last flight attempt. He straddled his broom and kicked off the ground as hard as he could only to fall to the ground, hitting his nose on a rock and rising with a bleeding nose to the laughing howls of the Slytherin House students. Madam Hooch excused him to the infirmary sending Harry with him as company, she then returned to the hovering brooms with eager students overhead. Later that evening Madam Hooch returned to her quarters. Ron was on her mind. “Why can’t Ron do such a simple exercise?” she thought. Broom flying has been a very important part of Ron’s childhood and an area in which he had much exposure. Even Harry, who had never seen a broom fly before in his life, had no difficulty using his broom to fly several laps around the castle yard. Ron could not even get his broom to float. She knew it was not the broom itself malfunctioning because, in her frustration with the situation, she rode it herself to make sure it was working. “What was going wrong?” she thought. She reached for a book by Mary Driscoll she had read a few months back. She found a section on the works of Lev Vygotsky on The Zone of Proximal Development. She read, “The lagging behind of development from learning is what results in zones of proximal development” (Driscoll, 2005, p. 255) and “…children learn
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to use the tools and skills they practice with their social partners” (Tudge & Rogoff, 1989, p. 257).

“Hmmm”, Madam Hooch thought, “I have an idea!”

Questions

1. What events from Ron’s past could help him with developing skills to ride a broom?
2. What guidance can Madam Hooch provide for Ron to bridge the gap between his current skills and his desire to ride his broom?
3. Who would be a good peer partner for Ron to work with to help develop his broom riding skills in a co-constructive way?
4. What type of dialogue would be the most beneficial between Ron and the peer while working together to help Ron?
5. Are there other resources that Ron could use to learn more about flying on a broom?

Possible Solutions

Madam Hooch has access to many books and video materials on developing Quidditch playing skills. Since Ron is an avid Quidditch fan she picked out a video featuring Victor Krum, a World Cup player, demonstrating the specific broom riding skills that have made him a hero in the game of Quiddich. She also found a “Broom Riding for Beginners” book in the Hogwart’s Library that illustrated various kick-off techniques and other helpful tips in mastering broom riding. She would give these to Ron prior to the next broom riding lesson and have him watch the video and read up on the techniques. This may give Ron better prior knowledge of broom riding and help build his confidence. Madam Hooch will ask a peer to meet with Ron to co-develop their skills. She will need to find a peer that will not dominate the process but rather work side by side with Ron in a co-constructive manner. She decided to ask Harry. He and Ron are new friends and Harry has had no prior experience with broom riding even though he was able to pick up the skill very quickly. Ron and Harry could begin their session by discussing what they know about broom riding. Harry, being a novice, would learn a lot from Ron about Quiddich and the World Cup. Ron
and Harry could watch the Victor Krum videos together to have a common beginning when they start their practice. Harry could explain to Ron how it felt to kick-off for the first time and ride his broom. Ron could reflect with Harry about the times his father took him for a ride on his broom when Ron was small. Ron could remember how he had to balance on the broom and lean to one side or the other to make the broom turn directions. Ron could recall what he had to do to help his father kick-off to get both of them off the ground and up into the air.

After Harry and Ron have worked together, Madam Hooch would meet with both of them to view their progress. She would let Ron demonstrate his new kick-off abilities and then provide guidance on correct posture and foot placement. She would help Ron reflect on his childhood experience and his work with Harry and would help Ron see the relationships between those experiences and his newly developed skills. At last she would step away and give Ron control of practicing and developing his new skills.

Resources

