Table 10   Designing a task: Example 2

(for the description of the related task see Table 3 of the Guide)

1	Outcome oriented task design
2	Explicit communicative strategies
3	Interactional scaffolding
4	Clear expectations for participation

Discipline Area: Educational Psychology	
Level: PG	Mode: Blended (Flexible)

Learning Outcome(s)

- Understanding children's learning motivation in the classroom
- Differentiating between 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' motivation
- Understanding the advantages and disadvantages of these two types of motivation, and their interrelatedness
- It is essential to nurture intrinsic motivation so children are interested in learning

Is the task authentic? How is it linked to learning outcomes?

- The task is authentic as it portrays a school-based case which relates to the postgraduate education students' work environment
- The views of the characters in the case expressed in a detailed and practical way resembling everyday conversation

What is the 'controversial' element, issue or problem to solve?

- The students are asked to explain which character's point of view they will support. Because the points of view are opposite, this creates a controversy in the discussion
- The students have to support and/or critique each point of view

Anticipate / prepare for when you expect students will need steering (e.g. when the students do not address the concepts which you anticipated them to)

In their discussion I expect the students to address the following concepts:

- Intrinsic motivation lays the foundation for life long learning
- Extrinsic motivation (e.g. awards, points) should be used with caution and only when it supports the development of children's intrinsic motivation
- If not used properly extrinsic motivation can be detrimental to intrinsic motivation

If the students do not touch upon these points in their discussion, I would prompt them by questioning or providing an example ('interactional scaffolding')

What communicative strategies will students be focusing on?

In this forum students are explicitly asked to use the following strategies:

- Justifying their position through explanation
- Presenting alternatives
- Challenging the idea(s)

Language choices are provided for each strategy. Additionally, students are reminded to use the 'positive social interaction' strategies which they used in the introductory forum, including ' addressing by name', 'acknowledging' and 'supporting others' ideas'

Explicit instructions for student participation

- It is made clear to students that it is compulsory for them to participate in all the forums; however, their participation is not graded, but counted towards class attendance.
- Students have to contribute to each forum with at least 2 messages. Each message should be short, and written in a spoken-like manner. The suggested strategies should be used.

Planning for lecturer participation (e.g. what do you anticipate your own participation will be? How will you organise discussion structure to suit your class?)

My participation in the forums includes

- Reading all the messages which students post but responding only when necessarily
- Identifying the moments when the students need clarification or prompt to keep them moving towards achieving the identified learning outcomes
- Replying to students who did not receive any responses to keep them feeling connected
- Model the communicative strategies when posting my messages

The subject enrols approx. 50 students so I divide them in 5-6 discussion groups