Why is September the ninth month of the year... and not the seventh?

When you discover the calendar, you learn the names of the months, but some of them are misleading: I hear "7" in September, "8" in October, "9" in November and "10" in December, yet these months are numbered 9, 10, 11 and 12. Why is this?

Overview "Why is September the ninth month of the year?"

Why do the names of certain months not correspond to their place in the calendar?

Context
Everyday life

Cognitive processes
Processing information
Reasoning
Critical thinking

Target group (incl. necessary prior skills and competences)

Foreign language learners discovering the calendar in a new language

Content
Number

Dispositions
Motivation
Collaboration

Outcomes and results

Learn and memorize the names of the months in a new language
Write short dates without errors

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Main information

Content	Identify numbers in everyday life Playing with numbers Classifying and ordering
Target group	Mainly for foreign speakers, but this session can also be used for other audiences.
Learning intention	– Numeracy for personal and private purposes – Numeracy for professional issues – Numeracy to understand society
Duration	1 lesson
Material and resources	Annual calendars (with the 12 months in a page)
Group size	10 to 12 learners
Problem statement	This session is an introduction to understanding the calendar, both in terms of vocabulary (memorizing the names of the months) and reading/writing a short date without errors.
Working questions	- How is the calendar constructed? - How many days, weeks and months? - What are the names of the 12 months? - How do the months correspond to their numbers?
Learning outcomes and results	The students are able to: - Say the names of the months orally and in order. - Write a short date
Reference to National Qualification Frame	Optional (country's decision)

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Working plan

Time (lessons)	Description of content/activities	Material	Methodical and didactic information[1]
	The teacher projects or displays an annual calendar. Ask the learners if they are familiar with this document and if they know how many days, weeks and months there are in a year.	Annual calendar	Questioning
	One learner says the name of a day of the week, the next says the day after that and so on. Then the same exercise in reverse (the day before). Same exercise with the names of the months.		Collaborative learning
	The teacher writes a long date (with the name of the month in full) on the board. He asks if this date can be written differently, with the intention that the learners will say that the name of the month can be replaced by its number. The learners are then asked to match the 12 months with their number, and then each learner sticks the month labels in their notebook in the right order, and writes their number opposite them.	Labels with the names of the months	

[1] for description and explanation of kinds of tasks, HITs and other background information please consult the teachers' guide

	The trainer then asks the question: what number do you hear in "September"? And yet what is its number? How do you explain this? Are there other months in the same situation? In pairs, the learners find out which months are affected by this question and then try to find an explanation. As the months of October, November and December are also affected, and their numbers follow each other but are 2 “steps” apart from their names, the explanation is that the start of the year used to be different: the year didn't start in January but in March. The teacher then asked if this could explain another oddity in the calendar? If the first month was March, what was the last? February If February was the last month of the year, that would explain why it had an extra day every 4 years - it was added at the end of the year.		Collaborative learning
	Transfer Each learner writes: - the current date in 2 formats (long and short) - their date of birth in the 2 formats The teacher gives each learner a short-form date, as if it were an appointment, and each learner says the corresponding long-form date.		

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Suggestions for the teacher

The example presented here should be considered as exemplary and inspirational material presenting a guideline with a high range of possibilities of adapting those suggestions to a specific group of learners or an individual learner with his or her very personal requirements.

In concrete terms, the example (TITLE) could be adapted this ways:

- Duration:
- Individualization:
- Further or additional material:
- Level of difficulty:
- Dispositions taken into account:
- Learning setting:
- ...

Our educational activities aim at numeracy skills being not only memorized, but first of all being practiced and functionally used by the learners in daily life or/and vocational situations. It is therefore recommended to implement the idea of HITS[2] (higher impacts of teaching skills) as far and often as possible: ...

- ... work with concrete and authentic material that learners will recognize from everyday life situations.
- ... ask the learners questions and let them raise questions themselves. It can be crucial to discuss numeracy themes, contexts and numbers.
- ... think of possible ways of transfer: give concrete hints for this example
- Complete with two (?) more suggestions on HITS

Optional: Further notes for teachers, concretely for this example

[2] For general information and explanation on HITS please see the teachers' guide

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