

Game On!

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150 Activities
for English
Language
Learners



Express Publishing

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Photocopiable Material 132



Simon Says (Class)

Focus: Instructions, vocabulary

Level: Beginner

Time: 10i+

Materials: None

Procedure:

Revise common action verbs if needed.

Have students push their desks back and stand in a circle in the middle of the room.

Ask students to perform an action ñ saying: *Simon says Ö í* before the action.

e.g. *Simon says touch your noseí*

If Simon tells them to do it, then they perform the action.

If, however, they are told to perform an action without hearing the words: *Simon says Ö í*

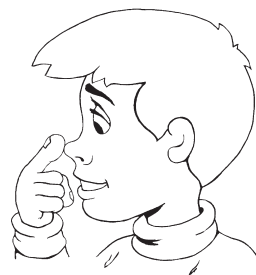
e.g. *Touch your noseí* - they shouldn't do it.

If a student performs an action without hearing *Simon says Ö í*, that student is out and takes over the role of Simon. The game continues until there is only one student left.

Sample instructions:

Touch something red
Touch your toes
Point to me
Stand up
Sit down
Stand on one leg

Tickle the person on your right
Stretch as far as you can
Close your eyes
Laugh
Go to sleep
Clap your hands



Drawback (Pairs)

Focus: Spelling, guessing

Level: Beginner

Time: 5i+

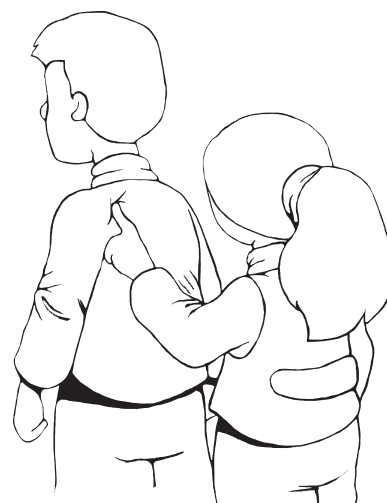
Materials: None

Procedure:

Students work in pairs.

Student A draws a letter [A], a word [HELLO], or a little picture [SUN, BOAT, HOUSE] on their partner's back with their finger.

Student B has to guess what has been sketched. If student B can't guess, they can ask for student A to repeat the action.



With higher levels, students can draw short phrases or messages.



Slap, Clap, Click, Click. (Class)

Focus: Learning names, story telling, concentration

Level: Beginner - Pre-intermediate

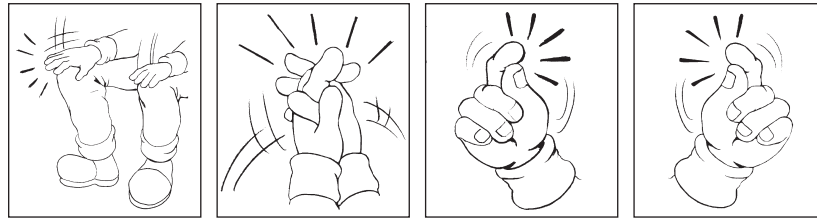
Time: 10i+

Materials: None

Procedure:

Have students push their desks back and sit in a circle.

Tell the students to put their hands out and on your signal - slap their thighs with both hands, then clap their hands, then click their fingers - first right hand, then left. The class must do this all together at the same time and then keep the rhythm going.



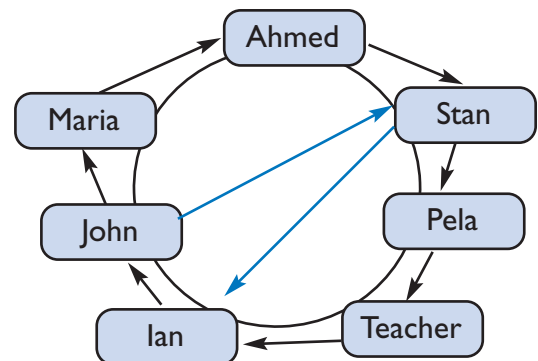
The first student [e.g. John] on the right hand click says his name and on the 2nd click the name of the person to his left [e.g. Maria]. Keeping the rhythm going, Maria now says *ãMariaí* on the right hand click, then the next person's name ñ *ãAhmedí* ñ on the left hand click. This goes on round the circle as shown by the black arrows.

e.g. John: slap, clap, *John, Maria*.
Maria: slap, clap, *Maria, Ahmed*.
Ahmed: slap, clap, *Ahmed, Stan*.

After this first round, the first student (John) says his name on the right hand click and then says the name of anybody else in the class on the 2nd click. That student must be alert to say their name after the usual SLAP, CLAP, and on the 2nd click say the name of another student.

The game continues in this way as shown by the blue arrows.

e.g. John: slap, clap, *John, Stan*.
Stan: slap, clap, *Stan, Ian*.



A student who does not respond or responds incorrectly is *outí*, but stays in the circle and continues to keep the rhythm going. The student next to the one who has just become *outí* continues the game. Students have to remember who is out of the game. If by mistake a student, e.g. John says, *ãJohn, Ahmedí* and Ahmed is already out of the game, then John drops out too.

The game ends when half the students are out.

The game can then be played again, with a different focus (see below).

Variation 1:

The game can be played with words belonging to the same lexical field or numbers to revise vocabulary.

e.g. the letter **C** ñ *cap, car, cat, cow*
Animals ñ *dog, cat, cow, goat, kangaroo, panda*
Numbers ñ *One, two, three, four*
ñ *three, six, nine, twelve*

In the above variation, students have to repeat the last word said by the previous student before they say their new word.

Variation 2:

Student A says two words, one on each click to start a story. Student B continues the story, by saying a word on each click. This goes on around the circle until no one can continue.

e.g. Story Telling - *One day... I went... to school... and I... found that... my teacher... was away... so I..., etc*



Circle Stamp (Class)

Pointer:

To help students with the stress and rhythm of English it is useful to exaggerate such features.

Focus: Simple sentence stress, rhythm

Level: Beginner - Elementary

Time: 10i+

Materials: None

Procedure:

Have students push their desks back and put their chairs in a circle.

Students stamp their feet: left, right, left, right to get a rhythm going. As they stamp, students count **1, 2, 3, 4** to the rhythm. This rhythm doesn't stop.

Think of simple phrases such as: **What's your name? My name's Pedro.** Clap the rhythm of these phrases - one clap for each syllable. Then say each phrase and get the class to repeat it while you continue to clap the rhythm.

e.g. Clap clap clap

What's your name?

1

2

3

4

My name's Pedro.

For longer sentences slow the rhythm down as there will be more syllables between the stresses. The basic 4/4 stamping rhythm must not change.

e.g. **What would you like to do tonight?**

1

2

3

4

I'd like to go and see a play.

Lower levels: practise useful classroom language, e.g. **open your books, look at the board, talk to your partner, speak in English.** Higher levels: more complex language, e.g. Students describe what is happening in a picture: **The girl in the corner is wearing a hat. The man with the suit is crossing the road.**

Extension:

Students play in pairs. Give them a particular piece of language to practice.

e.g. **Can** for ability. Pairs start the stamping rhythm. Student A: **Can you swim?** Student B: **Yes, I can. / No, I can't.**

Student A: **Can you ride a bike?** etc

e.g. **WH** questions. Student A: **Where can you swim?** Student B: **In the sea.** Student A: **Where can you drive?** Student B: **On the road.**



Word Box (Class)

Focus: Storing vocabulary

Level: Elementary-Intermediate

Time: 10i+

Materials: Cards, box

Procedure:

At the end of each week, students pick new vocabulary from their course books and note books which they write on cards and put in a box kept handy in the classroom.

The cards can be colour-coded according to parts of speech or topic area.

Allocate a time to revise these items. Students come up, choose a card and give a definition, translation, opposite, mime or synonym and ask the class to guess the word.

Variation (for collocations):

Students play in groups of three.

Three boxes are provided - one for verbs/adjectives, another for prepositions and a third for nouns.

The cards are divided equally among the students. The students match them to make collocations.

e.g. **INTERESTED + IN, MAKE + INQUIRIES**

Students then use the collocations to form sentences and read them out to the class. The one to use all of their cards is the winner.



Mirror Image (Pairs)

Photocopiable Material: pp. 132-133

Focus: Observing, acting, describing

Level: Elementary-Pre-intermediate

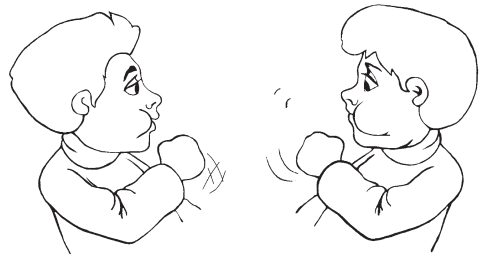
Time: 10+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

Students play in pairs, facing each other. Photocopy and give each pair a mime card. Student A begins the mime and student B mirrors every action student A performs as closely as possible. Pairs practise together and then each pair performs their mimes in front of the class. Students write down what they think the action is.

Each correct guess gets a point. The student with the most points is the winner.



Sample Cards:

Brushing your teeth

Making a pizza

Watching a horror film

Making a cake

Ironing a shirt

Planting a small tree

Making a cup of tea

Washing the dishes

Washing clothes by hand

Standing in a queue for a long time

Watching an exciting football match

Frying eggs



Slow Motion (Class)

Photocopiable Material: pp. 132-133

Pointer:

As in Tai Chi, where movements are slow and fluid, students perform actions slowly and continuously.

Focus: Following instructions, observing

Level: Elementary

Time: 10+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

Have students push their desks back and sit in a circle.

Start with simple actions for the whole class to do. e.g. *Stand up. Pick up your books and put them in your bag. Shake hands with the person on your right. Raise your left knee as high as it will go...and raise your right arm as high as you can. Now, bring them both down.*

Give each student a card with a different action on it. Students take it in turns to perform the actions in front of the class.

e.g. *preparing, eating and clearing away breakfast*

While the student is miming the action, the others note down exactly what that person is doing or provide a commentary: *you're preparing breakfast* *you're eating cereal* *i*

Alternative:

Students note down what the mimer missed out. e.g. *you forgot to clear away the dishes*

Sample Cards:

Getting dressed

Cooking a meal

Making a brick wall

Making a cup of tea

Putting up a tent



1

Starters and Fillers



What's my line?

(Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p. 134

Focus: Jobs, actions

Level: Elementary-
Pre-intermediate

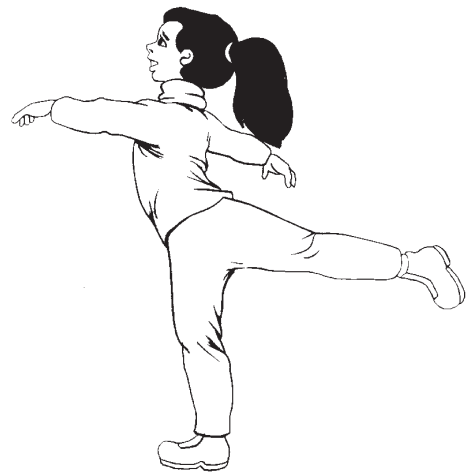
Time: 10+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

Divide the class into two groups.
Students write down various types of jobs on cards.
Collect and shuffle the cards. Place them face down on a desk at the front of the classroom.
A member of group A picks up the first card and mimes that job for their group to guess.
Each group has 3 guesses.
If they guess correctly, they keep the card. If they don't, group B can guess and take the card.

Then a member from group B mimes for their team.
The winning team is the one with the most cards at the end of the game.
Instead of jobs, the cards can be of different activities.
e.g. *eating spaghetti, taking the dog for a walk,* etc



Sample Cards:

doctor

teacher

model

dentist

ballet dancer

singer

cook

air steward

fireman

hairdresser

baker

policeman



Just imagine ...

(Groups)

Focus: Listening,
describing, writing

Level: Elementary-
Pre-intermediate

Time: 10+

Materials: Music

Procedure:

Divide the class into two groups.
Students close their eyes and listen to a piece of instrumental music with the lights off/dimmed.
Ask the students to concentrate on the music and the feelings and images it brings to mind.
Stop the music after a few minutes.
Have the students draw or write down what they felt or thought of while listening to the music.
Students share their impressions with the rest of their group and try to find another student who had similar impressions.





Gestures (Class)

Photocopiable Material: p. 135

Focus: Gestures, facial expressions, feelings

Level: Elementary-Pre-intermediate

Time: 10+ +

Materials: Cards, toothpicks

Procedure:

Students take it in turns to pick up a card and mime a gesture/facial expression.

The class guesses what they think the gesture/facial expression is.

The first student to guess correctly wins a toothpick and it is now their turn to play.

The winner is the student who has collected the most toothpicks when the time is up.

Start off with well-known gestures or expressions, then players can make up their own.



Sample Cards:

frightened

bored

Keep quiet!

Don't move!

tired

cold

sad

What's the time?

surprised

Come here.

hungry

sleepy



What am I doing? (Class)

Focus: Listening, recognising sounds

Level: Elementary

Time: 10+ +

Materials: Objects which make noise

Procedure:

Have students face the back of the classroom so they can't see you.

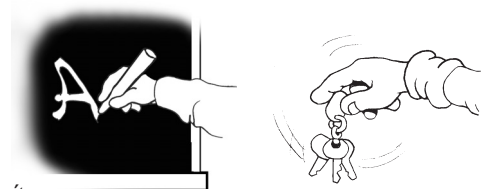
Use objects to make various noises.

e.g. **bounce a ball, sharpen a pencil, write on the board, pick up some keys, tear a piece of paper or cough, sneeze,** etc.

After 5 actions, students open their eyes and write down the actions in the order they think they were completed. Each student passes their paper to the student on their right.

Read out the actions in the right order and students mark the paper in front of them.

Pick one of the students who had all 5 actions in the right order to repeat the game with different noises.



12

If I were an animal...

(Groups)

Focus: Asking questions**Level:** Elementary-Pre-intermediate**Time:** 10i+**Materials:** Pencil, paper, toothpicks,**Procedure:**

Divide the class into two groups.

Give each student three toothpicks.

Ask students to close their eyes and imagine: *If they were an animal, what would they be?*

After 10 seconds students open their eyes and write down the name of the animal, making sure not to show it to the other members of their group.

Student A begins by asking: *What animal am I?*

The group has a maximum of ten yes/no questions they can ask to identify the animal.

e.g. *Do you have a tail?**Do you have four legs?**Are you bigger than I am?**Are you a tiger?**Do you eat other animals?**Do you live in Asia?**Do you have stripes?**Can you swim?**Can you climb trees?*

Each time a student gets a yes answer, they win an extra toothpick. If a student thinks they know what the animal is and names it and the answer is wrong, they lose a toothpick.

If a student guesses the animal correctly, they gain a toothpick. If nobody identifies the animal after ten questions, student A gives a clue and the group can ask five more questions.

If students have still not identified the animal, student A gets a toothpick and play goes to the next student in the group.

The winner is the student with the most toothpicks after everyone has had a turn.

Students can play the game using other topics. e.g. *colours, drinks, places, plants, foods* etc



13

On the train

(Class)

Photocopiable Material: p. 136**Focus:** Feelings**Level:** Elementary-Pre-intermediate**Time:** 10i+**Materials:** Cards**Procedure:**

Have students make a train at the front of the class with the chairs facing each other.

Photocopy or prepare cards with different feelings on them and place them at the front of the class.

Select a number of students to be passengers.

Passengers pick a card from the pile which tells them how they are feeling.

e.g. *bored, in a hurry, worried, sick, irritated, happy, uncomfortable, depressed, sad, hot, cold, scared*, etc.

The adjectives may be written on the board as well.

The watchers write down the names of the passengers in a list. Passengers wait on the platform. The train arrives and they get on and sit down. The train starts and the watchers have 30 seconds to guess how each of the passengers feels and write it next to their name. e.g. *James-bored, Kate-uncomfortable*

The watchers take it in turns to ask the passengers questions and tick off the ones they got correct.

e.g. *James, did you feel bored?**Kate, were you uncomfortable?*

The passengers then switch places with the watchers who pick different cards.

Sample Cards:

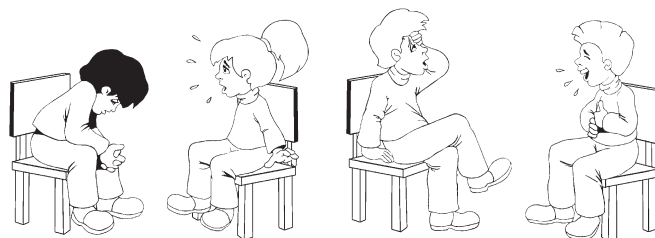
bored

worried

happy

scared

cold





Funny Walks (Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p. 137

Pointer:

Play some non-intrusive instrumental music in the background.

Focus: Guessing types of people

Level: Elementary-Pre-intermediate

Time: 10+

Materials: Cards, pencil, paper

Procedure:

Divide the class into two groups.

Have the students push their desks back and stand in a circle.

Photocopy or prepare role cards and place them on a desk at the front of the room.

Group A chooses role cards from the pile, reads them and places them on the bottom of the pile.

Group A now walks around the classroom in that role for one minute.

Group B watches and tries to guess what type of person each *öwalkerí* is miming.

Group B writes a description of the type of person next to the name of the *öwalkerí* on a piece of paper.

e.g. John - a policeman Maria - an old man

The student with the most correct matches win.

The groups now switch roles.

Sample Cards:

a busy businessman

someone carrying heavy shopping

a policeman on patrol

a clown

a two year old

an army officer

a famous singer

an old man



Find the word (Groups)

Focus: Guessing words from clues

Level: Elementary-Pre-intermediate

Time: 10+

Materials: None

Procedure:

Divide the class into two groups.

A student from group A goes to the front of the class and sits with their back to the board, facing the class.

A member of group B writes a word on the board. The members of group A call out words, one at a time, to help the student at the front guess the word written on the board.

After each word is called out, the student makes a guess. If the student can guess the word in 30 seconds or 5 clues, group A gets a point. If it is not correct, group A gives another clue.

Now it is group B's turn to guess a word written on the board by group A.

e.g. A member of group B writes the word **WATER** on the board.

Group A: **wet**

Guessing student: **sea**

Group A: **drink**

Guessing student: **tea**

Group A: **river**

Guessing student: **water!**



Fawlty Towers

(Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p. 138

Focus:

Communicating non-verbally

Level: Elementary-Intermediate

Time: 10i+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

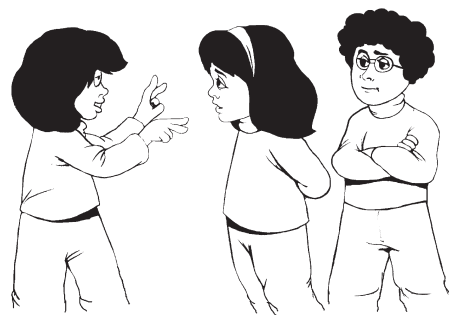
Students play in groups of three.

Each group writes three cards with a problem that a guest in a hotel might complain about on each one. Groups pass their cards to another group.

Student **A** is the guest, **B** the hotel manager and

C, is the translator. The guest and the manager do not speak the same language. Student A picks up a card, reads the complaint silently and hands the card to student C. Student A mimes the problem to student B. When student B thinks he knows what the problem is, he writes it on another card, and hands it to student C. Student C compares it with the original.

If they match, student B gets a point. Students switch roles and play with a different problem card.



Sample Cards:

There's no hot water.

The shower doesn't work.

There is a nasty smell in the room.

The room is freezing.

The lift is broken.

The bathroom mirror is broken.

I want a double, not two single beds.

You have given me the wrong key.

The telephone does not work.

There is no shampoo.



Manchester

(Groups)

Focus: Word finding, spelling

Level: Elementary-Intermediate

Time: 10i+

Materials: Pencil, paper

Procedure:

Divide the class into two groups.

Students try to make as many words as they can from a given start word.

For each word made, letters can only be used as many times as they occur in the start word.

e.g. **MANCHESTER**: man, chest, ten, team, chat, rat, tree, meant, tram, match, etc

The group who comes up with the greatest number of words in a given time is the winner.

Possible start words on the theme of places:

ALEXANDRIA, NEWCASTLE, MELBOURNE, MONTEVIDEO, BUDAPEST, MARAKESH



Buzz (Class)

Focus: Counting 1 to 100, concentration

Level: Elementary-Pre-intermediate

Time: 10i+

Materials: None

Procedure:

Have students push their desks back and sit in a circle.

Choose a number to be the buzz number ñ e.g. 5

Student A starts off by saying *oneí*, student B says *twoí* and so on until they come to a student whose number is a buzz number [or multiple of it, 10, 15, 20 Ö].

That student, instead of saying what their number would be (e.g.: 5), says *buzzí*.

If they do not say *buzzí*, but *fiveí*, they are out of the game.

The counting goes on until 100 and should be rapid.

Variation:

Students can choose to say *beepí* instead of *buzzí*. If they say *beepí*, the direction of play changes from clockwise to anti-clockwise.

Variation for high level groups:

Choose 2 numbers [say 3 & 7]. 3 is a buzz number, 7 is a beep number.

e.g. S1: 1	S2: 2	S3: BUZZ	S4: 4	S5: 5	S6: BUZZ
S7: BEEP	S8: 8	S9: BUZZ	S10: 10	S1: 11	S2: BUZZ
S3: 13	S4: BEEP	S5: BUZZ	S6: 16	S7: 17	S8: BUZZ
S9: 19	S10: 20	S1: BUZZ, BEEP			



Pass the ball (Class)

Focus: Word associations

Level: Elementary-Intermediate

Time: 10i+

Materials: Ball (soft toy)

Procedure:

Have students push their desks back and sit in a circle.

To start the game, throw a ball (bean bag or cuddly toy) to student A. As you throw say a word. Student A then throws the ball to another student and says a word that begins with the same letter. This continues around the circle. If a student can't think of a word, repeats a word already said or hesitates more than 5 seconds, that student loses a point. The next student then continues the game with a new word.

e.g. Teacher: *car*

Student A: *coat*

Student B: *cup*

Student C: (can't think of an answer, so loses a point)

Student D: *fox*

The winner is the student who has lost the fewest points at the end of the game.

Variations:

Words beginning with the last letter of the previous word. e.g. yellow, whale, egg, green, nest etc.

Word Associations/Opposites: e.g. day, night, sleep, dream, remember etc.



Surveys (Class)

Photocopiable Material: p. 139

Focus: Finding out information

Level:
Pre-intermediate - Intermediate

Time: 10+

Materials:
Questionnaire

Procedure:

Photocopy and hand out the questionnaire to the students.

Students ask each other yes/no questions. If they get a no answer, they move on and ask another student.

If they get a yes answer, they write that person's name on the form and ask a follow up question to get more information.

e.g. Martin: *¿Ahmed, have you been abroad?*

Ahmed: *¿No, I haven't.*

Martin: *¿Peter. Have you been abroad?*

Peter: *¿Yes. I have.*

Martin: *¿Where have you been?*

Peter: *¿I've been to Russia.*

Find someone who...	Name	More information
has got a brother. has eggs for breakfast. has been abroad. rides a bicycle. lives in your street/area.	Sally Peter	scrambled Russia

Allow 5 minutes for the students to get as much information as they can.

Call out a student's name, and the rest of the students take it in turns to say what they have learned about that student.

Extension:

Students write their own questionnaires.



Imagination (Groups)

Focus: Imagining, writing, speaking

Level:
Pre-intermediate - Intermediate

Time: 10+

Materials: Pencil, paper

Procedure:

Students play in groups of three.

Ask students to close their eyes and imagine they are looking at a lighted candle.

Ask them to think of a colour they can see in the flame and to imagine as many things as they can that are that colour, including personal possessions, memories and associations.

Ask students to open their eyes and write down what they thought of.

In groups they share with each other what they remember.

e.g. *¿When I thought of white, I thought of snow, confetti, and my white Persian cat; long robes and fluffy white clouds.*

Pointer:

Not all games have to be competitive or scored. The fun can come from simply doing and sharing.





Why? (Class)

Photocopiable Material: p. 140

Focus: Finding out information

Level: Intermediate

Time: 10+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

Students write different questions on cards to which they would like to know the answer.

Collect the cards, shuffle them and place them face down at the front of the class.

Student A picks a card and reads the question to the class. Students take it in turns to answer the question. The class votes on who gave the best answer and that student gets the card.

The winner is the student with the most cards.



Sample cards:

Why is the sky blue?

Why does the sea have waves?

Why do we get colds?

Why do letters in a mirror go backwards but not upside down?

Why do the British drive on the left side of the road?

Why is the sea salty?

Why are stop signs and fire engines red?

Why can't penguins fly?



Tell me a story (Class)

Pointer:

Place a time limit on how long each group has to guess the story so it doesn't drag on.

Focus: Writing stories, miming

Level: Intermediate

Time: 15+

Materials: Pencil, paper

Procedure:

Divide the class into two groups.

Each group writes a story (short paragraph), in which a lot of action takes place.

Group A chooses one student to mime their story, phrase by phrase. Group B has to call out what they think is happening.

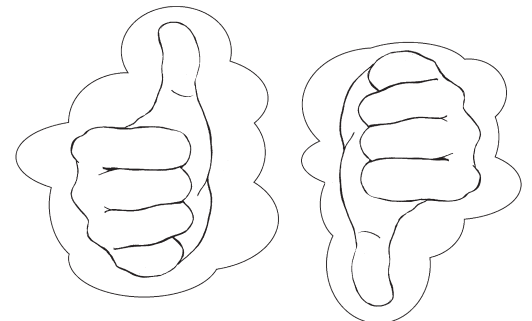
Group A gives the thumbs up sign if what is said is correct or the thumbs down sign if it is incorrect.

e.g. Group A writes:

It was raining. I went out for a walk and I saw a wolf. I was scared. I started running but I fell down.

Suddenly Tarzan appeared and hit the wolf on the nose. I was so relieved. I thanked Tarzan and asked him where Jane was. He laughed and said nothing. He couldn't understand me.

Group B now mimes their story.





1

Starters and Fillers



Word Pyramids (Groups)

Photocopiable Material: pp. 229-231

Focus: Spelling,
vocabulary

Level: Intermediate

Time: 10i+

Materials: Pencil,
paper, letter tiles

Procedure:

Students play in groups of three.

Give each group a bag/envelope of letter tiles, which contains the letters of the alphabet except: C, J, K, P, Q, U, V, X, Y, Z.

One student takes a letter from the bag and puts it down on the desk for their group to see. The rest of the letters are placed on the desk face up.

Student A has to pick a letter to add to the start letter to make a word.

Student B then adds a third letter to make another word.

The letters can be added at the beginning or end of the previous word.

Letters can also be rearranged as long as none are removed.

The winning group is the one which comes up with the longest word.

e.g.

A
AT
ATE
HATE
WHEAT
THAWED

In this example, **W** is added to the word **HATE** to make **WHEAT**. This involves changing the letter order.

If a student cannot proceed, they can change one letter of the last word down to make a new word.

e.g. change the **W** in **THAWED** for **L** to make **HALTED** - keeping the same number of letters in the new word.



Use them both (Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p.p. 229-231

Focus: Spelling,
vocabulary

Level:
Intermediate

Time: 10i+

Materials: Letter
tiles, pencil, paper

Procedure:

Students play in groups of three.

Give each group 25 letter tiles which they place face down on the desk.

One student chooses 2 letter tiles and turns them over.

The group has one minute to write down as many words starting/containing these letters as they can.

e.g. letters picked are **O** and **C**

Possible words: **occur, occasion, court, code, colour, clock**, etc.

The winner is the group with the most words made from their start letters.

Groups then pick two new letter tiles and play again.



Word to Word (Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p. 141

Pointer:

For lower levels, choose words with one or two letters that are the same and in the same place. e.g. good, foot

Focus: Spelling, vocabulary

Level: Intermediate

Time: 10+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

Students play in groups of three.

Cards with a start and finish word are placed face down in a pile.

A student from each group picks a card.

Students have to change the start word, one letter at a time, to get to the final word.

Each time a letter is changed it must form a new word.

The group who gets to the finish word first or in the fewest moves wins.

Examples:

BOY to MAN: [boy ñ bay ñ may ñ man]

GOLD to BOOT [gold ñ good ñ food - foot ñ boot]

HATE to LOVE: [hate ñ late ñ gate ñ gave ñ wave ñ wove ñ love]

Sample Cards:

BOAT TO SHIP

EASY to HARD

WARM to COLD

RAIN to FALL

DOG to CAT

SIX to TEN

FOOD to MEAT

SNOW to DROP

FACE to NOSE

CHAT to CLAP

RIDE to BIKE

CAR to BUS



No E (Pairs)

Focus: Sentence construction

Level: Intermediate

Time: 10+

Materials: None

Procedure:

Students play in pairs.

Set a time limit (e.g. one minute)

Students have to write a sentence in which a certain letter is not allowed. e.g. the letter e

e.g. Nobody knows what I want to do with my big car.

You must study hard if you want to pass your finals.

I cannot put such things in this box so I'm told.

The longest sentence which makes some kind of sense wins.



Anagrams (Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p. 142

Focus: Spelling,
word play

Level: Intermediate

Time: 10+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

Students play in groups of three.

Prepare and give each group 5 word cards. The word on each card must make at least one anagram. Groups try to find the anagram(s) by using all the letters of the word on the card.

e.g. **RATS** - **STAR** or **ARTS**

The first group to find an anagram for each of their cards wins.

Sample Cards:

STOP - **POTS**

RAMP - **PRAM**

NILE - **LINE**

STRAP - **PARTS**

LAMP - **PALM**

READ - **DEAR**

CARE - **RACE**

PLUM - **LUMP**

STONE - **NOTES**

POEM - **MOPE**

Alternative:

Clues could be given on the cards to help.

e.g. **RATS** - **STAR** **LIVE** - **EVIL**
It shines It's bad

Once an anagram has been found, students can try to link the pairs in a sentence.

e.g. I pushed the **pram** up the **ramp**.
Take **care** if you want to win the **race**.
The **Nile** is a long **line** of water.



Text Message (Pairs)

Focus: Working out
written messages

Level: Intermediate

Time: 10+

Materials: Pencil,
paper

Procedure:

Students play in pairs.

Students write coded messages to each other by leaving out the vowels in words and using single letters or numbers as part of the message.

The receiver decodes the message and writes it out in full, then replies in code.

e.g. Student A: **h jhn. wht r u dng 2nght? d u wnt 2 cm rnd nd wtch th mtch?**

[Hi John. What are you doing tonight? Do you want to come round and watch the match?]

Student B: **sr, 8 k?**

[Sure, Eight OK?]

Student A: **grt. c u ltr.**

[Great. See you later.]



What can you do with it?

(Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p. 143

Focus: Verb
activation

Level: Intermediate

Time: 10/+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

Divide the class into two groups and appoint a question master for the class.

Have students prepare noun cards ñ e.g. **MEAT**, **CAR** etc

The question master picks up a card, tells the word on it to group A. Group A has to think of an action you can do with it (a verb).

Group A thinks of something appropriate, then group B has to add another verb.

The game goes on until neither group can come up with a suitable verb.

e.g. **MEAT** ñ **COOK, BOIL, ROAST, CHEW, FRY, BARBECUE, GRILL, SLICE, STIR-FRY, EAT**

CAR ñ **DRIVE, REVERSE, WASH, CRASH, PARK, RENT, REPAIR, WRECK, TOW, STOP**

The winner is the last team to have added a verb which the question master accepts.

Sample Cards:

water

wall

hair

ball

pen

dog

book

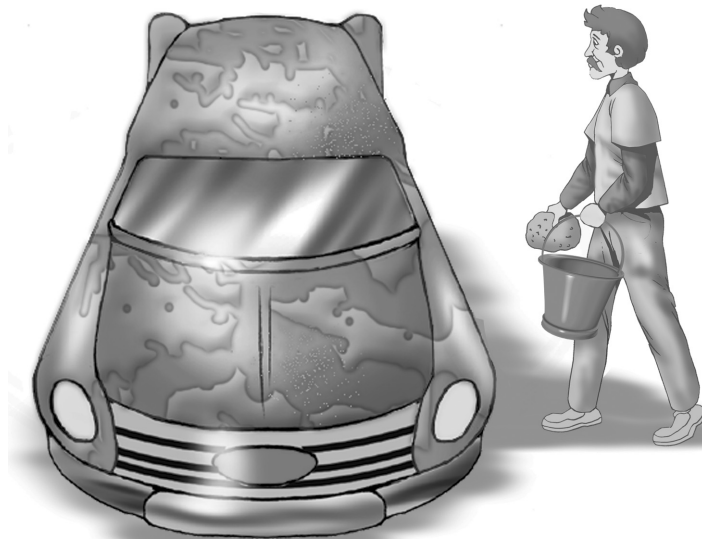
banana

hat

flower

photo

CD





Only Connect (Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p. 144

Focus: Creating logical connections

Level: Intermediate

Time: 10/+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

Students play in groups of three.

Unrelated noun word cards are put in a pile face down on the table.

Student A picks up two cards, shows them to their group and tries to make a connection between them.

e.g. If the words picked up are **BUTTERFLY** and **BATH**, the connection might be:

- both make you feel good
- both come in different colours
- a butterfly looks more beautiful than what it came from- a caterpillar, and a bath makes you look more beautiful

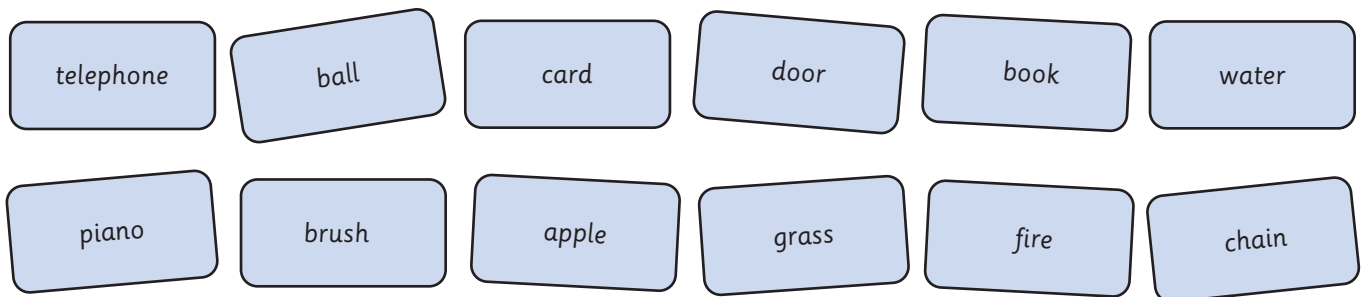
If the other students accept the connection, student A keeps the cards.

If not, the cards are returned to the bottom of the pile and the next student plays.

All students have the same number of turns.

The winner is the student who collects the most cards.

Sample Cards:



Variations:

- Make a comparison. e.g. **A bath is heavier/ less colourful than a butterfly.**
- Mime the words for your group to guess
- What can you do with it? Find 3 uses for an object apart from the usual. e.g. **You could use a bath as a fish tank/ garden/ bed.**
- Combine the words with a verb. e.g. **Butterflies don't have baths.**
- Use 3 or more cards and make up a story



Lost Letter (Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p. 145

Focus: Guessing
meaning, spelling

Level: Intermediate-
Upper-intermediate

Time: 10i+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

Students play in groups of three.

The game uses sentence cards in which one word has lost a letter, changing the meaning of the sentence.

Each card has one sentence and the changed word.

e.g.

He stepped on the **rake** hard
to avoid a crash.

brake

Put sentence cards face down in the middle of the table.

Student A picks up a card and reads the sentence aloud to the rest of the group twice, at normal speed.

The other students decide which word has lost a letter and say what the changed word is.

If the group is unable to decide where the 'lost letter' goes, student A repeats the sentence at dictation speed for the group to write down.

If the group still cannot find the 'lost letter', student A says the missing letter, without telling the group which word it belongs to.

If nobody in the group can find the 'lost letter', then student A gives the correct answer and student B picks up the next card.

Students then create their own 'lost letter' sentence cards.

Sample Cards:

After the food, everything
was washed away.
FLOOD

She liked to have a
bat every day.
BATH

Remember to stain the
pasta before you serve it.
STRAIN

A former runner won the
Nobel peace prize today.
PEACE

She asked him round
for a hat.
CHAT

The planes go round the sun.
PLANETS

She told him to drive home
carefully.
DRIVE

We do not welcome idle
treats, they said.
THREATS

They promised to enjoy the
rest of their lives together.
LIVES

They protested against the
lad being taken from them.
LAND

The manager said the defence
has been sold all season
SOLID

She liked her fingers
after the meal.
LICKED



Animal, Vegetable, Mineral (Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p. 146

Focus: Word finding, asking questions

Level: Intermediate

Time: 10i+

Materials: Cards

Procedure:

Students play in groups of three.

Photocopy or prepare cards with various nouns on them. The cards should fit the categories: **Animal**, **Vegetable** or **Mineral/Object**.

Student A picks up a card and says what category it is in.

The other students in the group try and guess the word by asking yes/no questions.

The aim is to guess the word within 10 questions to win a point.

e.g. Student A: picks up **fridge** *mineral/object*.

Student B: *Do you use it every day?*

Student A: *Yes.*

Student C: *Do you have one in the house?*

Student A: *Yes.*

Student B: *Is it smaller than you?*

Student A: *No.* etc

Sample cards:

watch

telephone

shark

ant

cup

hat

rose

butter

monkey

ring

ear

fork

Variations:

- The word is stuck on a student's back with a pin and that student has to find it by asking questions.
- Students work in groups. A student from group A sits at the front of the class facing the others with his/her back to the board. A student from group B writes a word on the board and states the category. Student A, who cannot see the board, has to guess the word by asking yes/no questions of their group. A member of group B then takes A's place and student A writes a word for that student to find.



Near or Far (Groups)

Photocopiable Material: p. 147

Focus: Word relations

Level: Intermediate-Upper-intermediate

Time: 10i+

Materials: Cards, pencil, paper

Procedure:

Students play in groups of three.

- Revise - opposites e.g. **fast-slow**, **near-far**, **young-old**, etc
 - synonyms e.g. **happy-glad**, **quick-rapid**, **clever-bright**, etc
 - word associations e.g. **fast-food**, **near-sighted**, **young at heart**, etc

Photocopy or prepare starter cards. Give each group 10 starter word cards.

The first card is turned over and Student A has to find an opposite to this word.

Student B then has to find a synonym for either the word on the card or the one said by student A.

Student C then has to find a word associated with any of the preceding words.

e.g. Card: **fast**
 Student A: *slow*
 Student B: *quick*
 Student C: *sand*

e.g. Card: **near**
 Student A: *far*
 Student B: *distant*
 Student C: *horizon*

Sample cards:

high

strong

wet

sweet

happy

short

hard



One evening... (Class)

Focus: Quick thinking story making

Level: Advanced

Time: 15i+

Materials: Pencil, paper

Procedure:

Students make up a story - orally or written - one word at a time, going round the class.

The aim is to keep the story going as long as possible without ending the sentence.

Write the following words on the board: **which, when, with, while, that, and, but, by, from, to, after, of, though.**

Student A starts off a story and then each student has to continue the story by choosing a word which begins with the last letter of the previous word said.

If a student cannot think of a word, they can use one of the words on the board.

If one of these words is used, it is crossed off, and cannot be used again.

The next student has to begin their word as usual with the last letter of that word.

The game ends when a player cannot continue.

That player loses a point. The result can be quite funny and unexpected.

e.g. *One evening, George escaped daringly with hundreds of French hippopotami in nine enormous suitcases after realising that thirty yaks should damage English habits but too obvious sandwiches send dark koalas so obviously yelling good day.*