

39 ESL REVIEW GAMES AND ACTIVITIES



**For Kids
(6-13)**



JACKIE BOLEN + JENNIFER BOOKER SMITH

39 ESL Review Games and Activities: For Kids (6-13)

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Jackie Bolen & Jennifer Booker Smith

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About the Author: Jackie Bolen

I've been teaching English in South Korea for a decade to every level and type of student and I've taught every age from kindergarten kids to adults. Most of my time has centered around teaching at two universities: five years at a science and engineering school out in the rice paddies of Chungcheongnam-Do, and four years at a major university in Busan where I now teach high-level classes for students majoring in English. In my spare time, you can usually find me outside surfing, biking, hiking or on the hunt for the most delicious kimchi I can find.

In case you were wondering what my academic qualifications are, I hold a Master of Arts in Psychology. During my time in Korea I've successfully completed both the Cambridge CELTA and DELTA certification programs. With the combination of almost ten years teaching ESL/EFL learners of all ages and levels, and the more formal teaching qualifications I've obtained, I have a solid foundation on which to offer teaching advice. I truly hope that you find this book useful and would love it if you sent me an email with any questions or feedback that you might have (jb.business.online@gmail.com).

Jackie Bolen around the Internet

ESL Speaking (www.eslspeaking.org)

Jackie Bolen (www.jackiebolen.com)

Twitter: [@bolen_jackie](https://twitter.com/bolen_jackie)

If you can't get enough ESL games, activities and other useful stuff for the classroom in this book, you can get even more goodness delivered straight to your inbox every week. I promise to respect your privacy—your name and email address will never be shared with anyone for any reason. [Sign-up here.](#)

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39 Awesome 1-1 ESL Activities for English Teachers of Kids

ESL Classroom Management Tips & Tricks

49 ESL Writing Activities for English Teachers of Kids and Teenagers

About the Author: Jennifer Booker Smith

I have a Master of Education in TESOL and have spent fifteen years teaching students of all ages in Korea, from two-year-old preschoolers barely out of diapers to businessmen and even a semester as a teacher trainer at an education university. However, my greatest love is the middle primary grades—I left a fairly cushy teacher trainer position to return to the elementary classroom. In that age group, I've taught all ability levels from false beginner to near-native returnees.

During my time in the classroom, I've created countless board and card games and other resources. In this book, you'll find some of the vocabulary activities that I have used successfully (I've tried plenty which weren't successful!) in a variety of settings; these are the ones I've used again and again because they actually work.

When I'm not teaching, like Jackie, you can often find me hiking. I've taken up running recently and will soon be running my third half marathon. Teaching takes up a lot more “free” time than non-teachers will ever realize, so it's important to recharge the batteries and being outside is my favorite way to do just that.

You can get in touch with me by emailing jenniferteacher@gmail.com. I'd love to hear from you and help you with your classes in any way that I can.

4-Skills Review Activities

Ball Toss

Skills: Reading/Writing/Speaking/Listening

Time: 5-10 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: Lightweight ball (such as a beach ball) with questions written on it

This game has many variations. One variation I have used with great success is writing questions on a beach ball. I use a whiteboard marker to write on the ball, but let it dry thoroughly before class, so it doesn't smudge but it can be washed clean and reused with different questions later.

Students gently toss the ball to one another and read aloud and answer the question under their right thumb. A more complex variation is: Student A reads/asks the question, tosses the ball to Student B, who answers that question, then asks the question under their right thumb, and tosses the ball to Student C, who answers Student B's question.

If it's a "getting to know you" activity, use questions to elicit name, age, and basic information. Otherwise, it can be used to practice likes/dislikes, 5 W/H-questions, etc. It is quite a versatile activity and can be used with just about anything that you're studying.

If you don't have a ball handy, you can crumple up a piece of paper to use as a ball. Ask a question and toss the ball to a student. That student must answer and ask a question (the same question for true beginners or related question, if higher level), then toss the "ball" to the next student. If you want the students to ask different questions, you should give them a topic (daily routine, hobbies, etc.) or grammar pattern to use.

If you want to make sure all students have equal turns, have students sit down after catching the ball. If you have more than 10-12 students in your

class, you may want to divide them into groups, each with their own ball, so students aren't waiting long periods between turns. This will also increase student talking time.

Teaching Tips:

At the end, you may want to ask students questions about other students' answers. Let students know before they begin that they need to listen closely to each other's answers. This will make them more likely to pay attention between their own turns and, of course, provide additional listening and speaking practice.

Generally, this activity can be used with all ages. You can even use it with younger students as long as their ability is high enough to answer the questions. The same for class size: you can use it for larger classes, as long as their level is more advanced, simply because they will be better suited to working in small groups with less attention needed from you. If you have a class of 30 beginners, you might want to simply toss the ball and ask a question, rather than require them to read it, and have each student repeat the same question as they toss the ball. After 10-12 students have asked and answered the same question, take the ball and toss it to a different student, asking a new question.

Procedure:

1. Prepare a beach ball by writing questions on it. Allow enough time for the ink to dry before class. Low prep version: crumple up a piece of scrap paper with the questions written on it.
2. Have students stand in a circle (as much as possible). If your class is large, divide students into groups of 10-12.

Variation A:

When a student catches the ball, they must read out the question under their right thumb. They answer their own question and toss the ball to another student.

Variation B:

When Student A catches the ball, they ask the question under their right thumb to Student B. When Student B answers, A tosses them the ball. Student B asks Student C the question under their right thumb and so on.

No Prep Variation:

The teacher asks a question and tosses the ball to Student A. Student A answers, asks Student B a question, and tosses them the ball.

Categories

Skills: Speaking/Listening/Writing

Time: 5 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: None

Optional Materials: Butcher paper/A3 paper

Students can review by brainstorming words they know in a given category, such as food, job, hobbies, etc.

Variation 1: Students work in small groups, making a list of all the words they can think of for that category. The group with the longest list wins.

Variation 2: Students take turns adding one word at a time to the list. If a student repeats a word or says a word which doesn't fit, they are out. This variation is better suited to small classes or groups working independently.

Procedure:

1. Begin by dividing students into groups of 3-5. Small classes can work as a whole.
2. Give each group a piece of A3 or butcher paper. (For a speaking/listening activity, have students take turns adding a word. If students can't add a word, they are out.)

3. Give the class a category, such as jobs or animals and a time limit (about 3 minutes) to brainstorm and write as many words that match the category as possible.
4. The group with the most correct words wins.

Dictogloss

Skills: Speaking/Listening/Writing

Time: 10-15 minutes

Age: 8+

Materials: A short story

This is a simple activity for higher level students that helps them practice their listening and memory skills, as well as substituting vocabulary words if the original word can no longer be remembered. You can find a short, interesting story of some kind or make up one yourself. Dictogloss lends itself extremely well to grammar and vocabulary review if you use things you've recently taught in class in the story.

Tell the story 1-3 times, depending on the student level and of course you can also vary your speaking speed to make this activity easier or harder. Once you are done telling the story, students will have to go in groups of 2-3 to retell the story. Emphasize that they won't be able to recreate the exact story that you told, but that they should try their best to keep the meaning the same. Each team can pair up with another team to compare. Then, tell the original story again so students can see how they did.

This activity works well as a writing activity too.

Teaching Tips:

It's very helpful for students to compare answers with a partner before they have to say anything in front of the class so be sure to put them in partners or groups of three to work together on this activity. It's useful for the weaker students to have a stronger student getting them up to speed. It also gives

students confidence that they're on the right track and they're less nervous to share their answers with the class.

Procedure:

1. Prepare a short story which you'll read to your students.
2. Put students in groups of two or three and read the story to them.
3. Students try to remember the details of the story and compare with their group. I usually only allow them to do this by speaking.
4. Read the story again and students attempt to recreate the story more closely, again by speaking.
5. Read the story again (depending on level and difficulty of story) and students again attempt to recreate it, even more closely.
6. Elicit a couple of teams to tell their story to the class (in a small class). Or, put two teams together and they tell their stories to each other (in a larger class).
7. Read the story one final time for students to compare their own versions.

Human Logic Puzzle

Skills: Listening/Speaking/Writing

Time: 5-10 minutes

Age: 7-11

Materials: Flashcards, answer grids

You probably remember logic puzzles from when you were a kid. It begins with a short story followed by clues and a grid for keeping track of the information. In this activity, there are clues but no short story.

In advance, prepare a grid with the terms you want to review. The terms should be listed across the top while blanks for student names should be along the side. With lower-level students, you may want to use this for jobs,

animals, actions or other terms the students will be able to provide clues for fairly easily. With higher-level students, you can use a broader variety of vocabulary and they can give synonyms, antonyms and/or definitions.

Before you begin, you need to select student helpers/clue providers to go to the front of the class. Give each two flashcards, and tell them not to show anyone. Give the rest of the students the answer grid and tell them to write the student helpers' names.

In turn, student helpers/clue providers should give one clue about one of their flashcards. For something like jobs, they can describe where the person works, what they do, etc. For animals or actions, they can act it out and/or make noises. Let the students give the first round of clues themselves while subsequent rounds will include audience participation. That is, the “audience” asks questions. Continue until one student has correctly completed his/her grid.

Variations:

To make it more challenging:

1. Limit students to two turns, i.e. one turn per flash card. If no one has correctly completed his/her grid, students could then work in pairs or small groups.
2. Have two columns on the answer sheet, rather than a grid, so students will write the names of the students and the vocabulary they are describing.

To make it less challenging:

1. Have students continue giving more clues until everyone has completed their grid.
2. Have students work in small groups or pairs. Give them 15-20 seconds between clues to discuss.

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare a grid with the terms you want to review.

2. Select student helpers/clue providers to go to the front of the class and give each of them two flashcards.
3. Give the rest of the class the answer grid and tell them to write the student helpers' names.
4. Have student helpers/clue providers give one clue about one of their flashcards in turn. After they have given one clue about each flashcard, the clues should be responses to student questions. (You may want to make rules about the questions they can ask.)
5. Give the class time to think and write between each clue.
6. Students continue giving clues until one student has correctly filled out their grid.

Picture Prompt

Skills: Speaking/Listening/Writing

Time: 5 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: Picture/PowerPoint image

Show students an image and have them generate questions or speculate about the picture. For lower level students, this can be purely descriptive:

Q: What do you see?

A: I see a house, a car, and some people.

Q: What color is the car?

A: It is blue.

For high beginner/low intermediate students, have an image which can generate questions such as:

What is happening in this picture?

How does that person feel?

Why do you think so?

For more advanced students, have an unusual image. Encourage them to create a narrative to explain the story. This activity can also be done as a Quick Write.

Teaching Tips:

You can find collections of unusual images online which are perfect for advanced students to create their narratives. If you want to use this as a writing activity with beginner or low-intermediate students, give them a worksheet of questions to answer.

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare an image, either PowerPoint or a picture large enough for the class to easily see.
2. Divide students into pairs or small groups.
3. Depending on the level of the students:

Elicit descriptive sentences about the image. Encourage them to make their own questions to ask a partner.

Have them discuss what they think is happening in the picture, how the person/ people feel and why they think so, etc.

Have them create a narrative about the image. (Unusual images work well for this.)

4. Optionally, have them write their responses.

Running Dictation

Skills: Writing/Listening/Speaking/Reading

Time: 15 minutes

Age: 8+

Materials: The “dictation” + some way to attach it to the walls or board.

This is one of my favorite activities which covers reading, writing, listening and speaking. There are a wide variety of English styles you can choose: poems, song lyrics, a short story, famous quotes—the list is almost limitless. For example, you might make up a story or conversation a few sentences long (no more than ten). Put each sentence on a strip of paper, and you can also put another strip of paper on top to prevent cheating. Put these around the classroom in various locations.

The students will be in teams of two. One person is the reader and one is the writer. The reader gets up and reads a bit of the passage and comes and tells it to the writer. They go back to remember more of it and so on and so on. At the end, the students have to put the song or conversation in order. If you have beginner students, make sure it's obvious enough what the correct order should be. Intermediate and advanced students can handle something with a bit of ambiguity. When they're done, I'll check their writing and if there aren't many mistakes plus the order is correct, that team is the winner. How many mistakes you allow depends on the level of your students.

Tell your students before the activity starts that standing at the strip of paper and then yelling to their partner instead of walking over to them is not allowed or they will be disqualified.

Teaching Tips:

Make sure you let your students know what cheating is (yelling, the “reader/speaker” touching the pen, using their phone camera) and if that happens their team will automatically be disqualified.

Make sure you move beyond simply dictating the sentences down onto the paper into dealing with meaning as well. You can do this by requiring students to put the conversation, song or poem in the correct order. They can simply write “1, 2, 3, 4” beside each sentence instead of re-writing them. Make sure whatever you choose has some sort of logical order to it. Alternatively, if you choose something that doesn't really have an order, you could skip this step.

Procedure:

1. Prepare a simple story or conversation and put each sentence on a strip of paper.
2. Put the papers around the classroom on the wall, equally spaced out.
3. Divide the students into pairs: one writer and one reader.
4. The reader stands up, walks to the station and reads a paper, then goes back to the writer and tells what they read to the writer, who must write it. The reader can go back to a single paper as many times as required.
5. This procedure of reading, speaking, listening, and writing continues until the team has all the sentences down on their paper.
6. The two students put the story or conversation in the correct order.
7. The teacher can check for accuracy and meaning and decide if it's acceptable, or not.

Speaking & Listening Review Activities

120-90-60 Fluency Activity

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 15 minutes

Age: 10+

Materials: None

If you want to help your students speak more quickly and fluently, this is the perfect ESL speaking activity for you. Give your students a topic that they know a lot about. For example: good or bad points about their school or hometown. I often give half the students one topic and the other half another just to make it a bit more interesting to listen to. Give your students 3-5 minutes to prepare, depending on their level. But, emphasize that they should just write one or two words for each point, and not full sentences because it is actually a speaking activity and not a writing one.

Then, with a partner, the first student has to give their speech and talk continuously for two minutes, while their partner listens. I use an online stopwatch so that the students can see the clock count down. Then, I give the students another two minutes and they switch roles.

After that, the students have to find a new partner and the activity repeats, except they have to include ALL the same information as before, just in 90 seconds. Then, switch again, with 60 more seconds. One way that you can help your students make the transition to less time is by giving them 30 seconds between rounds to think about how to say something more concisely, go over in their head the part of their speech where they had to slow down for some reason or to think about where they could use conjunctions.

You could give an example of something like this: “I like watching The Simpsons. It's funny. It's interesting. My mother, father, brother and I watch

while we're eating dinner almost every night of the week”—>”I like watching The Simpsons because it's funny and interesting. I watch with my family almost every night while eating dinner. ”

For lower level students, you can adjust the times to make them shorter and easier because talking for two minutes can be quite difficult.

Emphasize that students must include all of the key information even though they have less time to say it. Speak more quickly or more concisely!

Teaching Tips:

It can be really difficult to find good speaking activities that are focused on fluency instead of accuracy, but this is an excellent one and I try to use it a couple of times per semester.

Emphasize to your students that they must include all the same information they included the first time, so they'll either have to say things more concisely or speak faster. Present it as a difficult, but attainable challenge that they can achieve. At the end of the second and third rounds, ask your students how much they were able to include as a percentage. If they did well, tell them to pat themselves on the back for achieving something that wasn't easy. A small motivational moment in your class!

Something that you can remind your students of is that spoken speech is more informal than written discourse, particularly in the areas of sentence length and connectors. When we write, things like “however,” “although,” and “moreover” are common but in spoken speech we mostly just use simple connectors like “and,” “but,” and “or.” Also, in spoken discourse the length of an utterance is much shorter and we don't need to use complicated grammatical constructions.

Procedure:

1. Give students a topic and some time to prepare their “speech.”
2. Students give their speech to a partner, talking for two minutes without stopping. Switch roles and the second student gives their speech.

3. Students find a new partner and give their speech again, this time in 90 seconds. Switch roles.

4. Students find a new partner and give their speech again, but in 60 seconds. Switch roles.

20 Questions

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 20 minutes

Age: 8+

Materials: None

This is a “20 questions” style game based on whatever you’re studying such as animals or jobs that is particularly effective for working on yes/no question forms and also logical thinking. If you have higher level students, this works well as a warm-up or icebreaker activity. You can leave it open and allow the students to choose any person, place or thing. The teacher starts the game by thinking of a secret thing and the students can ask the teacher yes/no questions. Keep track of how many questions are asked and incorrect answers count as a guess too. Students can then play the game in small groups or in pairs, which will significantly increase the student talking time.

Teaching Tips:

It is especially important to do a demonstration of this game because in my experience, it isn't played in many parts of the world. You can also coach students a little bit on what good and bad questions types are, such as a guess right at the start of the game is a terrible as is a too specific type of question, but a general question which eliminates a lot of possible answers is a good one (animals: “Does it have 4 legs?”, or jobs: “Do I need to go to university to get it?”).

This game is easily adaptable to make it much easier or much more difficult. To make it very difficult, just say that the secret word has to be a

noun. If you want to make it less difficult, specify either a person, place or thing. Finally, the easiest version is to choose a more specific category such as animals or jobs. If you choose the easiest version, you might want to reduce the number of questions from 20 down to 10. For absolute beginners, it's useful to write some example questions on the board for them to refer to throughout the activity.

This is another one of those absolutely nothing required in the way of preparation or materials games which can be played with a variety of levels and class sizes (from 1-40). Keep it in your bag of tricks to pull out in case of emergency.

Procedure:

1. The teacher chooses a secret thing for the example. Students ask a yes/no question. The teacher answers the question and puts one tick (checkmark) on the board.
2. Students ask more questions and the game continues until the students either guess the secret thing or they reach 20 questions/guesses. If you have a small class, it's easy to monitor the activity to ensure that each student gets to ask a question. If you have a larger class, you can make a rule that once a student has asked one question, they cannot ask another one until five more questions have been asked. If the students guess the secret thing, they win. If they reach 20 questions without guessing, the teacher is the winner.
3. Each guess also counts as one question, in order to prevent random guessing.
4. Students can play the game in partners or small groups of 3-5. Whoever guesses the correct answer gets to choose the next secret thing.

Chain Spelling

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 5 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: None

If you want to practice spelling some vocab words that you're been studying, use this game. Have all the students stand up and the teacher says a word. The first student says the first letter, the next student the next letter, and on and on. If someone makes a mistake, they sit down and you start with the next student and new word. Continue until you have only 1 or 2 students standing. This is an excellent "filler" game if you have a few minutes left-over at the end of class—just use whatever vocabulary you had been studying that day.

Teaching Tip:

Spelling is an often neglected skill in many classrooms but it's an important one. I now teach academic writing at a major university in South Korea and some students have atrocious spelling which really hampers their ability to write well. Nobody will take you seriously, no matter how good your ideas are if you make basic spelling mistakes.

Procedure:

1. All students stand up.
2. The teacher says a word.
3. The first student must say the first letter.
4. The next student must say the second letter, etc.
5. If incorrect, the student has to sit down. The teacher says a new word and the game continues until there are only one or two students remaining.

Flashcard Sentences

Skills: Speaking

Time: 5-10 Minutes

Age: 6-8

Materials: Flashcards

You can use this for whatever grammar and vocab points you're studying. Go around the room asking each student or pair a question. Pull a flashcard from your pile and then the student has to make a sentence using the grammar point with that card. A correct sentence gets the card; not correct, and the card goes back at the bottom of the pile. The winner is the person or the team with the most points.

Teaching Tip:

This works best in small classes of eight or smaller. If you have bigger classes, it's possible to put students in groups of four and have two teams of two competing against each other. You can act as the referee if required.

Procedure:

1. Get a flashcard from your pile.
2. Ask one student or pair to make a sentence with that card.
3. If correct, the student keeps the card.
4. If incorrect, the flashcard goes to the bottom of the pile. Continue until the cards are gone or the time is up.

Hot Potato

Skills: Speaking

Time: 5-10 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: Flashcards, timer, “potato” (an object for students to pass around)

This is a simple vocabulary review game, spiced up with a timer. There are plenty of phone app timers, but a kitchen timer works well. To play, start

the potato, which can be a whiteboard eraser, ball, or any lightweight, easily-seen object, moving around the class from student to student. If there is not a practical way to play in a circle, have a contingency for the last student getting the potato back to the first student, such as pausing the timer.

When the timer goes off, the student holding the potato is shown a flash card. If they can correctly identify the word, they stay alive, but if they are wrong, they are out and must sit down. Vary the length of time for the timer, generally 5-15 seconds, with an occasional longer or shorter spell.

A variation is to have two potatoes which look different. The person holding potato A must ask the person holding potato B a question about the flash card, and that student must answer. For example:

A: Do you like oranges?

B: Yes, I do/No, I don't.

Teaching Tip:

If the class is large, this can be a very long game and the students who are out will lose interest quickly. So, I would break large classes into groups of 10-15. All groups use the same timer and flash card—I simply say, “Three, two, one,” and the students holding potatoes all say their answers together.

Procedure:

1. If possible, move students into a circle. Simply have them stand around the edge of the classroom. If the class is very large, divide into groups of 10-15 and make the appropriate number of circles.
2. Begin moving a “potato” around the circle.
3. Set a timer for a random (brief) amount of time. Five to fifteen seconds is good, with an occasional shorter or longer time.
4. When the timer goes off, show a flash card (or PowerPoint image).
5. The student holding the potato must correctly identify the image or sit down. If playing with more than one group, count 3, 2, 1, and have them

answer together.

6. The winner is the last person standing.

Memory Circle Game

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 5-10 minutes

Age: 7+

Materials: None

This is a game that I often use in classes with a maximum of ten students. To set it up, you need to make a rule about what kind of words or grammar that the students can use. Base it on whatever you are teaching that day in class. For example: animals or past tense. You'll need to adjust the rules and criteria according to the level and age of your students. You want to make it challenging, but not impossible so that everyone can have a chance to play at least once in a round. I'll use past tense for my example.

Everyone will stand up, in a circle, and I will start the game off, "I ate pizza." The next student says, "She ate pizza, and I studied English." The next student says, "She ate pizza, he studied English, and I watched TV." And so on it goes, around the circle. If someone forgets someone or gets it incorrect, they are out and have to sit down. I usually let it go until there are 2-3 people left and then I give them a prize of some sort and start over with a new set of criteria.

If you have very low level students, a single word works better. For example, they can say "Cat," "Cat and dog," or "Cat, dog, and fish."

Teaching Tip:

You should participate in the game as well to impress students with your memory skills. It's a good way to end the game if it's taking too long—you go and declare the game finished!

Procedure:

1. Assign a topic or grammar point.
2. All the students stand up in a circle.
3. The first student says a word related to the topic.
4. The next student repeats the first word and adds a new word.
5. The third student repeats the first two words and adds a new one, etc.
6. If students miss a word, they sit down and are out of the game.

Mystery Box

Skills: Speaking

Time: 5-10 minutes

Age: All

Materials: Several small objects, a box

I like to use this activity just after studying adjectives. I'll make sure we have learned words that describe texture as well as the usual size and shape words. This is a fun activity, but it is best with small classes due to the time it takes for each student to have a turn.

Before class, you will need to prepare a large shoe box or similar, by cutting a hole slightly larger than fist-sized and covering the hole. You can use garland or tissue paper, but a handkerchief is fastest and easiest. Whatever you use, the students should not be able to see inside the box, but they should be able to stick their hand inside.

One by one, have students take turns feeling inside the box. As they feel, ask them questions about the size, shape, texture, etc. Once everyone has had a turn, review the answers students gave while feeling and elicit guesses as to what is in the box. As students guess items correctly, pull them from the box. If no one can guess some items, end by showing them to the class.

Due to the time involved with each child feeling inside the box, this activity is best suited to small classes. You can use anything (not sharp), but children's toys are good for this, as well as letter magnets.

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare a large shoe box or copy paper box by cutting a hand-sized hole and then covering it with a handkerchief, so students can reach in but can't see inside.
2. Place several small (not sharp!) objects inside. The class should know the names of the objects.
3. Have students take turns reaching in the box and feeling the objects.
4. As students feel the objects, ask them questions about the size, shape, and texture of the items.
5. When everyone has had a turn, elicit guesses from the students about what they think the objects are.
6. As students correctly identify items, remove them from the box. If the class cannot guess some items, end the activity by showing the remaining items to the class.

Passive Dice Game

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 10 minutes

Age: 10+

Materials: For each pair/ group of students: 1 vocabulary die and 1 time die made from two milk cartons each

This activity requires quite a bit of preparation, but you can make it a pre-game activity if you wish and get the students to help you make it. Before playing, you will need to make the pairs of dice:

- four milk cartons, washed and completely dry

- clear tape

- six time words/ phrases and six vocabulary words printed and cut to fit the side of the carton

1. Cut the tops off of the milk cartons and join two together by indenting the sides of one at the opening and pushing the open end into the open end of another. Repeat to create all pairs of dice.

2. Secure the two cartons together with tape.

3. On die one, attach one vocab word per side. On die two, attach one time word (for example, yesterday or last year) on each side. Tape securely.

In class, divide students into groups of 2-4. Each student will take turns rolling the dice and making a passive sentence using both of the words or phrases showing face up. Students should continue to take turns until time is up. If you wish to include a writing element, you can have students write the sentences they make.

Teaching Tips:

If you do not have access to a large number of single serving milk cartons, you can easily find printable dice templates online. Print, enlarge to the size you need, fill in the squares, assemble, and cover with wide, clear tape until sturdy enough to withstand repeated use. You can use clear contact paper or self-laminating paper, but I find it to be quite difficult with an empty paper cube.

Procedure:

1. In advance, make the milk carton dice according to the directions above.

2. Divide students into groups of 2-4.

3. Have each student take turns rolling the dice and making a passive sentence using both of the words or phrases showing face up until time is up.

4. If you wish to include a writing element, you can have students write the sentences they make.

Q&A

Skills: Speaking/Listening/Reading/Writing

Time: 10 minutes

Age: 7+

Materials: None

This is a simple variation on having students make example sentences using their vocabulary list. Students work in pairs of teams, creating a list of WH questions (to avoid yes/no answers) using their vocabulary words. When they have five questions, teams should alternate asking questions to another team and answering the other team's questions.

You can extend the activity with some reported speech practice, which will give teams an incentive to listen to the responses to their questions.

Procedure:

1. Divide students into an even number of teams of 2-4. Then pair two teams together.
2. Give students a few minutes to create five WH questions using their vocabulary words.
3. Have the paired teams alternate asking and answering each other's questions.
4. Optionally, extend the activity by having teams briefly report the other team's answers.

QR Code Hunt

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 15-60 minutes

Age: 8+

Materials: Internet access, printer, tape/Blu-tack, student phones with QR code reader apps installed

This activity requires a bit more prep than others, but (as of writing) the novelty factor is high enough to draw some students in who might otherwise be too cool for school. Classtools.net makes it easy to put together a QR code hunt, so don't worry if you haven't used QR codes before—if you can type, you can do this activity.

Teaching Tip:

You can go in a few different directions with this activity, and a pub quiz is a light-hearted way to get students talking, just make sure the questions aren't so obscure that your students spend the entire class Googling the answers!

Procedure:

1. In advance, write your questions in a Word document. These can be discussion questions, trivia questions (pub quiz), or you can pre-test student levels, particularly if you are teaching a subject class.
2. Go to <http://www.classtools.net/QR/> and copy and paste.
3. Create the QR codes and print.
4. Post the printouts in various places around the class, or better yet, a larger area.
5. Before dividing students into groups, make sure at least one member of each group has a QR code reader on their phone. If not, give them a minute to download an app—there are plenty of them and most older students will already have one.
6. Divide students into groups of 3-4 and give them a time limit to find and answer all of the questions.

7. Particularly if you plan to assess student levels, as an option you can have students write the questions they find, and their answers.
8. Wrap up the class with a group discussion of the answers.

Quiz Circles

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 5-15 minutes

Age: 9+

Materials: Timer or buzzer, index cards with questions and answers

Optional Materials: Noise control app

This is a spoken review exercise which gets students up and moving in a controlled way. It's a good alternative to mingling if your students tend to choose the same friends every time you have a mingling activity. This activity can be done sitting if you have movable chairs and the space to put them in circles, but standing is easier. In advance, you will need to prepare one index card per student with a quiz question and answer written on the same side, so their partner can't read it. Alternatively, you can begin class by giving each student a blank index card and having them create one question and answer.

Create the circles by dividing students into two groups. One group will be the outside circle, which will be stationary. The other will be the inside group, which will rotate. If you have an odd number of students, you can either join in or have the left over student join the outside circle and work with a partner. Have the outside circle face inward and space themselves out as much as possible, then have the inside circle stand in the middle facing a student in the outside circle. Let the students know that each time the buzzer rings, the inside group should shift one student to their right.

When you start the timer, each student in the outside circle should ask their partner in the inside circle their question. The inside circle should answer, then ask their own question. If either answers incorrectly, their partner

should tell them the correct answer. They should continue moving around until each person has answered each question.

Teaching Tips:

Set the timer according to the level of the students and the difficulty of the specific task. If they are giving definitions to vocabulary words, they will need less time than if they are answering a question about a story you have read in class. Lower level students will also need more thinking time. In any case, keep the maximum time to about a minute to keep things moving.

You may want to let students know when time is half through, so they can switch, or you can have the outside circle ask their questions on the first pass and the inside circles ask theirs on the second pass.

If your class is quite large or the pool of questions low, have two sets of circles.

Keeping in mind that literally half of the class will speaking at any given time, you may want to use a classroom noise control app, especially if there are nearby classes which may be disturbed. The older the students, the more awareness they will have of “inside voices”, so some gentle reminders may be all that is necessary to keep things to a dull roar.

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare one index card per student with a quiz question and answer written on the same side, so their partner can't read it.
2. In class, create the circles by dividing students into two groups.
3. Have the outside circle face inward and space themselves out as much as possible, then have the inside circle stand in the middle facing a student in the outside circle.
4. If you have an odd number of students, you can either join in or have the left over student join the outside circle and work with a partner.
5. Let the students know that each time the buzzer rings, the inside group should shift one student to their right.

6. When you start the timer, each student in the outside circle should ask their partner in the inside circle their question. The inside circle should answer, then ask their own question.
7. If either answers incorrectly, their partner should tell them the correct answer.
8. They should continue moving around until each person has answered each question.

S-O-S Game

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 10-15 minutes

Age: 8+

Materials: Whiteboard and a list of questions

I like to play the S-O-S game as a way to review whatever we studied in the previous class. For example, maybe the grammar point was countable/uncountable nouns. It can get quite complicated, so it's something I'd for sure want to review before moving on with new material.

I'm sure you know the game S-O-S from when you were a kid. Draw a 6x6 grid on the board. Give the grid numbers and letters to make it easier for the students to pick what box they want. Then, divide the students up into teams of 4 or 5 and give them each a symbol (triangle, square, star, heart, etc.). Then ask review questions, going from team to team in order. Simple, easy questions with a definite right or wrong answer are best to keep this game moving quickly. A correct answer gets them a square on the board, where you will put their symbol. You can do 6 or 7 rounds, and by this time the good teams will have 2 or 3 points. The top team gets a prize of some kind.

Teaching Tip:

This game gets boring after 15 minutes or so, so don't plan on playing this for an entire class. It works best as a warm-up review game. You can also teach the students the rules and have them play in groups of 4-5, which will make this activity far more student-centered. Give each group a list of review questions that you write up and print out and act as a referee, if necessary.

Procedure:

1. Prepare a list of review questions.
2. Put students into groups of 4-5 to play as a class, or have them play in small groups with each other.
3. Students do rock-scissor-paper and the first student answer the first question. If correct, they mark their symbol on the board. If incorrect, there is no penalty but they don't get to mark the board.
4. The next student answers the next question and follows the same procedure.
5. The goal is to get as many 3-in-a-rows as possible with their symbol.

Steal the Eraser

Skills: Listening/Speaking

Time: 10-15 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: 2 chairs, a table or desk, eraser

Divide the students into two teams. Have two desks at the front of the class, facing each other with an eraser in the middle of the two desks. One student from each team comes and sits in the hot seat. Rotate through the class so that all the students get a chance to play at least once. You then ask a question of some sort, which you should prepare beforehand (one round = one question/2 students. Two rounds = one question/student. Include a few extras for a "bonus" round). The first person that grabs the eraser can try to

answer the question. A helpful rule is that the student can take the eraser whenever they want, but the teacher stops talking as soon as the eraser is touched. The student then has ten seconds to answer as you count down on your fingers. If correct, they get one point. If not, the other player gets a chance to answer the question after you repeat the full question one more time.

To make it even more exciting or if one team is behind by a lot of points, have a "Bonus Round," where the teams pick their best three players and each question is worth three points.

Teaching Tips:

Emphasize that the first student to touch the eraser must take it in order to prevent any chaos. I also require students to keep their fingers on the edge of their desks when I begin the question. It's really important to stop talking the instant one student touches the eraser. If not, students will just grab the eraser and wait for you to finish the question, which is really unfair. It's best to use questions that have very well-defined answers so you don't have to make any judgement calls because half the class will be unhappy with you no matter what decision you make.

Procedure:

1. Prepare two desks facing each at the front of the class, with an eraser in the middle.
2. Divide students into two teams.
3. Each team sends up one person to the front and they sit at the desks. I don't let students choose the person for each round but simply make them go in the order that they are sitting.
4. The teacher asks a question (prepare the list beforehand), but stops speaking once the eraser is touched. Alternatively, you can have each team appoint a captain who takes turns reading the prepared list of questions in order to increase student talking time.
5. The first player to touch the eraser must answer the question within ten seconds. Count down the time on your fingers.

6. If correct, he/she gets one point and the next two people come up to the front for another question.
7. If incorrect, the teacher reads the question (in full) one more time and the opposing player gets a chance to answer the question within ten seconds.
8. If correct, they get one point. If incorrect, both players sit down and the next pair comes up. You can share the correct answer with the class before saying a new question.
9. Continue until all students have had a chance to play at least once.

Tic-Tac-Toe

Skills: Listening/Speaking

Time: 15 minutes

Age: 8+

Materials: Whiteboard

This is a review game for students to play in small groups. I usually make groups of four and then within the group, there are two opposing teams. Have students make a regular tic-tac-toe board in their notebook or on some scrap paper. Put up a list of review questions in a PowerPoint, or give students a handout. The teams take turns answering the questions and if correct, they get to mark a square on the grid with X or O and the first to get three in a row is the winner. The teacher can act as the referee in case of uncertainty about an answer.

Teaching Tip:

This game isn't fun if your opponent doesn't know how to answer any questions or has never played tic-tac-toe before so in order to prevent this, I put students in teams of two, trying to match a higher level student with a lower level one. Hopefully, at least one of the students will be able to answer questions and has some sort of tic-tac-toe skill. If you know that

many students will have a difficult time answering the questions, you can put some answer prompts up on the whiteboard or PowerPoint.

Procedure:

1. Put students in groups of four, two teams of two.
2. Students can make a normal tic-tac-toe board on a piece of paper.
3. Put review questions in a PowerPoint, or give students a handout with them.
4. One person from each team does rock-scissor-paper to determine who will go first.
5. The first team has to answer the first question and if correct, gets to mark the board with either an X or O. The other team answers the next question and gets to mark one spot on the board if correct.
6. The first team to get three Xs or Os in a row is the winner.
7. You can play numerous games and even have the “winners” move up and the “losers” move down like in King's court until you have one final team that is the “King.”

Typhoon

Skills: Listening/Speaking

Time: 20-30 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: Whiteboard and questions

This is a fun review game that any age group of students will love that requires a little preparation but no materials. Every single time I play it, my students always want to play again and talk about it for the rest of the semester. Draw a grid on the board, marking one row with numbers and one with letters. 5x5 works well for a 30 minute game. Put in two or three of

each of the special letters (T/H/V), secretly on your master paper, but not the board. On the board will just be a blank grid.

T = typhoon: lose all your points

H = hurricane: pick 1 team for minus 5 points

V = vacation: get 5 points for free

E = easy question: 1 point

M = medium question: 3 points

D = difficult question: 5 points

Fill in the rest of your grid with these easy, medium and difficult questions. Then depending on how big your class is, make 4-5 teams. They pick a square, (B-6 for example), then you write the letter in the box and ask them the question or reveal the “special square” that corresponds to it. Have a list of easy/medium/hard questions prepared beforehand. If they get the question correct, give them the points and if not, erase the letter in the box and another team can pick that square if they want and get the same question.

Teaching Tips:

If one team is running away with certain victory, you can adjust it on the fly by switching some squares around but don't be obvious about it. For example, if the team who is in the lead gets a vacation or hurricane, you can easily switch it with an easy question. Then later in the game, hopefully one of the last place teams will get the vacation or hurricane instead (remember a hurricane is where that team can choose another team to lose points, therefore reducing the gap).

If you want to make it more fun, you can be kind of dramatic when writing the letter up in the grid on the board. For example, just do the single line-stroke to start off T, H, E, etc. and students will be anxious to know what it is (because the horizontal strokes of each letter are missing). I also often say things, “Oooooohhhh, bad weather is coming.” Or, “Hmmm . . . the sky is getting very dark.”

Make sure that all the students get a chance to participate by saying that once a student on a certain team has answered a question, they can't answer again until all the other team members have. However, their teammates can help them by giving some hints if necessary so that the lower level students won't feel embarrassed or like they're letting down their teams.

Procedure:

1. Prepare review questions beforehand, as well as a “grid” with the appropriate letters marked on it (T, H, V, E, M, D).
2. Write the corresponding grid on the whiteboard, but be sure not to reveal the letters. It should just be blank at this point.
3. Put the students into 4-5 teams. They can rock-scissor-paper to decide who goes first. The first team chooses a square and then you reveal which letter it contains. If a special square, perform that action and if a question, ask the appropriate level of question. If the answer is correct, they get the points and that square is finished. If incorrect, nothing happens and that square remains in the game.
4. The next team chooses a square, performs the action, and so on it goes with the next team.
5. Keep track of the total points and continue the game until all squares are revealed.

Vocabulary Checkers

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 10-15 minutes

Age: 9+

Materials: For each pair of students: 1 Checker board marked with vocabulary words, 12 checker pieces in each of two colors

This game is played just like regular checkers, but each square a player might land on has a vocabulary word written on it. The student must give

the definition to their partner in order to land a piece on a square. If they do not know a definition, they can buy it from their opponent for one piece. As with regular checkers, the player with the most pieces at the end is the winner.

Procedure:

1. In advance, create, print, and laminate checker boards with a vocabulary word written on each square a student might move a piece to. If you don't have access to a large number of checker pieces, laminate colored circles or squares to use instead.
2. In class, divide students into pairs and give each pair one game board and twelve game pieces in two different colors.
3. If your students are not familiar with checkers, explain and demonstrate the game.
4. Explain that in this version, they must give the definition of the word in a square before they can land on that square. If they do not know a definition, they can buy it from their opponent for one piece.
5. As in regular checkers, the player with the most pieces at the end wins.

Teaching Tips:

If there is a large pool of words, use the spaces initially covered by pieces, since a player might move another piece onto those spaces later. If there are only twelve words, use the spaces not covered by the initial set up. Don't put words on the spaces pieces cannot land on.

I am a frugal person by nature, so I have only played this when teaching at schools with large supply closets of games and games paraphernalia. I was able to borrow enough checker pieces and simply made a checker board with the vocabulary on my computer and printed and laminated enough copies. If you don't have access to a large number of free checker pieces, I would suggest laminating paper circles or squares in a variety of colors to use as inexpensive markers. Each pair will need twelve in each of two colors, but if you print different colors for each pair, you will have a store of game markers to use for board games.

Whatever kind of pieces you use, have extras on hand, because you can count on at least one getting lost.

Vocabulary Pictionary

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 10-15 minutes

Age: 7+

Materials: Whiteboard, marker, eraser

Optional Materials: Flash cards

This is a great review game with no prep required. Simply divide students into teams and choose which team will go first. That team will choose a representative to go to the whiteboard and he/she will have to draw pictures (I use a pile of flashcards) that their team guesses. The goal is to get as many points as possible in a specified amount of time (two minutes). Then, the next team does the same thing. You can play as many rounds as you wish.

I use this with classes of up to 40 students and it works well as long as no one gets too rowdy. In those large classes, have students sit at tables, rather than individual desks, so that they can work together easily. If you have a large class seated at desks, you should arrange them into groups of 4-8 desks depending on class size. If you have a class of ten or fewer, just divide them into two teams.

Procedure:

1. Divide students into equal teams of 4-8. Have each team choose a representative to draw.
2. Demonstrate by drawing a picture representing a familiar term on the whiteboard and elicit guesses from the students.
3. The team that correctly guesses the word will go first. The other team representatives will play rock-scissors-paper to determine their order.

4. Have the drawer from the first team go to the whiteboard and show him/her a flashcard. He/she has to draw it.
5. As he/she draws, his/her team guesses the correct word. The drawer takes another card and the team continues to guess. Continue until the specified time is up.
6. Continue until each team has had at least one chance to play.

Vocabulary Poker Face

Skills: Speaking/Listening

Time: 10 minutes

Age: 10+

Materials: For each pair/ group of students: 1 deck of cards with a vocabulary word and T (true) or F (false) written on it

This is a variation of Two Truths and a Lie. In this version, you should prepare a deck of cards with at least two of each vocabulary word (unless you have a large pool of words.) Each card should also be marked as True or False (T or F.) So, you should have at least one of each vocab word on a True card and also on a False card.

To play, divide students into groups of 3-5 and give each group a deck of cards. Each player should be dealt 3-5 cards, according to the deck size, time you have to play, etc. The remaining cards can be placed aside.

The first player chooses one card and places it face down in the middle, creating a discard pile. At the same time, they make a statement to their group using the vocab word. If they have played a True card, the statement should be true and vice versa. The other players can ask up to four questions total to determine if the statement is true or not.

If another player decides it's a lie, the speaker must turn over the card to display the T or F. If the challenger is correct, the speaker must take the discard pile. If the challenger is incorrect, they must take the discard pile. If

no one challenges the speaker, the play continues with the next student. The first person to run out of cards is the winner. You can extend the game by having students use the undealt cards to replenish their hands until the deck has been exhausted.

Procedure:

1. In advance, create a deck of cards consisting of at least two of each vocabulary word (unless you have a large pool of words.) Each card should also be marked as True or False (T or F), so you have at least one T and one F card for each word. If you plan on using the cards more than once, laminate them.
2. Divide students into groups of 3-5 and give each group a deck of cards. Each player should be dealt 3-5 cards, according to the deck size, time you have to play, etc.
3. The first player chooses one card and places it face down in the middle, creating a discard pile.
4. That player makes a statement to their group using the vocab word. If they have played a True card, the statement should be true and vice versa.
5. The other players can ask up to four questions total to determine if the statement is true or not.
6. If another player decides it's a lie, the speaker must turn over the card to display the T or F. If the challenger is correct, the speaker must take the discard pile. If the challenger is incorrect, they must take the discard pile. If no one challenges the speaker, the play continues with the next student.
7. The first person to run out of cards is the winner.
8. You can extend the game by having students use the undealt cards to replenish their hands until the deck has been exhausted.

Reading Review Activities

Board Games

Skills: Reading/Speaking

Time: 25-40 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: Board game sheet and token for each student (a coin or eraser)

Board Games often come in the “teacher’s resource book” that goes along with your textbook and if this is the case, you're in luck because no preparation will be required, but you'll have a solid activity that your students will probably love and it has the added bonus of being extremely student-centered. However, don't worry if there isn't a pre-made game in the textbook because it's easier than you might think to make your own. It will only take 5-10 minutes once you get a bit of experience doing it.

Use questions based on the grammar and/or vocabulary that you’ve been studying during the previous classes. Have some fun squares, such as, “Switch positions with the person on your right” or, “Go back 5 spaces.” The style I typically use is a question of some kind where the student has to speak one or two sentences in response to it. The other students in the group listen for incorrect answers, in which case the student has to move back the number that they “rolled.” You can use dice (which gets loud), two coins (2 heads = 5, 1 head + 1 tail = 3, 2 tails = 1), or a number sheet where students close their eyes and move their pen to choose a number.

Teaching Tips:

Board games have their own lexical set and it may be the first time many of your students have ever played a board game in English so it's useful to do some pre-teaching. Before you play, you can teach them some key phrases and encourage them to speak only English (it's your turn, go ahead, your roll, pass the dice, let's ask the teacher, etc.).

Dice are my least favorite way to “roll” because they fall off the desk, roll around the room and they can also be very loud. Using coins or a paper sheet with a pen is much more controlled.

If students disagree about whether an answer is correct or incorrect, you can make a joke and tell them not to fight but just to ask you to be the referee. You should think carefully about your game though and make most of the questions easy enough so that there are obvious correct answers. If not, your class time will be very stressful if you have a big class and many groups demanding your attention at the same time.

Before I give the winner of each group a little prize, I'll often make them answer one or two final questions, which I usually take from the game board. It's a good way to review correct vocabulary and/or grammar use with the class in case any group has been off-base but you didn't catch it. A key component of learning language is hearing it and using it again, and again, and again. Help your students do this in class by doing quick reviews together at the end of activities.

Procedure:

1. Hand out the “game boards” as well as dice or coins to groups of 3-5 students. Have each student provide their own token—it can be an eraser, a key or a small piece of paper.
2. The students can do rock-scissor-paper to see who goes first. The first student uses the dice or coins to find the number of spaces they will move ahead. That student answers the question and if correct, they stay on that space but if incorrect, they move back the number of spaces that they rolled.
3. The next student rolls the dice and answers a question and so on.
4. The game continues until one student reaches the final square on the game.

Concentration

Skills: Reading

Time: 10-15 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: Concentration cards

This is a memory game designed to help students remember vocabulary words and definitions. Make up sets of cards with words on half the cards and the matching definition on the other half. A total of 16 cards (8 sets of words and definitions) works well. Make enough cards so that there is one set for each group of four students.

Students mix up the cards and put them face-down on the desk in an organized fashion. The students play rocks-scissors-paper. The first student chooses two cards and places them face up on the desk so that everyone is able to see them. If they make a set, the student keeps the cards (they're removed from the game), gets one point and is able to choose again. If they don't make a set, the student places them face-down in the **same spot** (it's a memory game!) and the game continues with the next student.

Procedure:

1. Make concentration card sets of words and definitions (16 cards per set, one set per four students).
2. Have students mix the cards and place them face down on the desk in an organized manner.
3. The first student chooses two cards and places them face up on the desk. If they make a set, the student keeps the cards and get one point. If they don't make a set, the student places them face down in the same spot and the game continues with the next student who reveals two more cards.
4. The winner is the student with the most points.

Correction Relay

Skill: Reading/Writing

Time: 10+ minutes

Age: 8+

Materials: Worksheet

This is an activity that uses speed and competition to make something old (error correction) new again. Students of all levels should be quite familiar with finding and correcting errors in sentences. By adding a relay aspect, it will (hopefully) make an important but sometimes tedious skill new and more interesting.

To prepare the activity, create a worksheet with 10-15 errors. You can focus your errors on one aspect of vocabulary, such as synonyms and antonyms, or more simply, misuse vocabulary words in sentences. For lower level students, limit the errors to one per sentence. Higher levels can handle multiple errors in one sentence, and you can increase the challenge by having one vocabulary error per sentence and one or more other errors, such as grammar or punctuation mistakes.

The activity itself is straightforward. Students will work in teams of 4-5 to correct the worksheet as quickly as possible. Each student makes one correction and passes the worksheet to the next person who makes the next correction. They continue to pass the worksheet around until it is complete. You can make it easier by allowing students to choose any remaining sentence to correct, or you can require them to work from top to bottom.

Teaching Tips:

To prevent one student from carrying the rest of the team, do not allow other team members to correct another correction. That is, a sentence cannot be corrected by a second student once someone has corrected it. This also prevents more assertive (but not necessarily more able) students from incorrectly correcting others' work.

Also, to keep things moving along you may want to have a time limit for each turn before students must pass the worksheet along.

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare a worksheet with 10-15 sentences containing vocabulary errors.

2. Divide students into groups of 4-5. If possible, group the desks to facilitate easy passing of the worksheets.
3. Have students take turns making one correction and, passing the worksheet to the next student to make one correction. They continue passing and correcting until the worksheet is complete.
4. When all teams are finished, go over the errors as a class. The team with the most correct sentences wins.

Disappearing Words

Skills: Reading

Time: 10 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: Whiteboard

This vocabulary game is an easy way to force students to keep a set of new vocabulary words in their heads, or to review past words. Write down 10-15 words on the whiteboard and give students 1-2 minutes to study them. Then, if you have a big class, ask everyone to close their eyes as you choose one or two words to erase. Students open their eyes and have to tell you what is missing and where it was. If you have a small class, you can choose individual students to close their eyes and then tell you the missing word(s) after you've erased them. You can either write those words in their spots again or add new words to the mix and continue the game.

Procedure:

1. Write down 10-15 vocabulary words on the whiteboard.
2. Have student(s) close their eyes as you erase 1-2 words.
3. Students open their eyes and tell you which words are missing and where they were.

4. You can write those same words back in, or add new words to the mix in those same spots and continue the game.

Flyswatter

Skills: Listening/Reading

Time: 5-10 minutes

Age: 7+

Materials: Whiteboard, 2 flyswatters

This is a game that can really energize your class at the end of a long day or semester. It makes an excellent way to review any new vocabulary that you've taught or as a warm-up at the beginning of the next class. Write the target words on the board in a random fashion. You can use 10-20 depending on the age and level of students. Divide the students into two teams. One person from each team comes up to the whiteboard and each person is given a flyswatter. Give hints to describe one of the words and the first student to hit the word with the flyswatter gets a point for his/her team. If two students go for a word at the same time, the one on the bottom of the flyswatter stack gets the point. If a student makes an incorrect choice, he/she is out (no second chances). I usually start with a very general hint and progress to more specific ones where the answer is quite obvious. It's up to the student whether or not he/she wants to risk it and guess before the answer is apparent to everyone.

Procedure:

1. Divide students into two teams.
2. Write 10-20 vocabulary words on the whiteboard in random fashion.
3. The first two students come to the board and are each given a flyswatter.
4. The teacher gives hints for one of the words, starting with general ones and getting more specific.

5. The student hits the word with his/her flyswatter when he/she knows the answer.

6. If correct, his/her team gets a point and the next two students come to the board. If incorrect, the other student is given a chance to guess the word and the teacher can give more hints if necessary. If both students are incorrect, both will sit down and neither team gets a point.

Is that Sentence Correct?

Skills: Listening/Speaking/Reading/Writing

Time: 10-20 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: Blank paper, vocabulary words

This is a sneaky way to get your students to make grammatically correct sentences using the target vocabulary. Start off by giving your students 5-6 vocabulary words. They should be words that the students are quite familiar with already. The challenge in this activity is not the actual word; it's using it in a sentence. Give the students five minutes to make some sentences using those words (one sentence per word). Do not offer any assistance or correct any errors. You can also make some sentences using the same (or different, but familiar to the student) vocabulary words. Some of them should be correct while some of them should be incorrect.

The first student reads his/her first sentence. Discuss whether it is correct or incorrect and why. Read your first sentence and have a brief discussion about whether it is correct or incorrect. The activity continues until all the sentences are done. If you have a larger class (more than six students), you can put students into groups of 3-4 and have them make sentences together.

Procedure:

1. Give the students a few vocabulary words (and, as the teacher, you can use the same words or different words that the students are familiar with).

2. Instruct the students to write one sentence per word while you do the same with your words. Make some sentences correct and some incorrect.
3. Take turns reading sentences and discussing whether they are correct or incorrect.

Quick Read

Skills: Reading/Writing/Speaking

Time: 10 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: Worksheet

Give students a short passage, slightly below their level, and 3-5 comprehension questions. It should be short enough to be completed in 7-8 minutes. This is a good way to recycle previous material by summarizing a story or part of a story. You can also use this as a pre-test before beginning a new lesson to gauge their existing knowledge of a topic or the relevant vocabulary

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare a short passage using language slightly below the level of the class.
2. Include 3-5 comprehension questions and an example question demonstrating how to answer.
3. Give students 7-8 minutes to read and answer the questions.

Writing Review Activities

Got to Hand it to You

Skills: Writing

Time: 5-30 minutes

Age: 7+

Materials: Question sheet and answer sheet

This is a group quiz/ review activity. In advance, you will need to prepare a quiz sheet with the questions and a blank answer sheet. If you will be repeating the activity with several classes, laminate the questions sheets and reuse them. Each group will use one answer sheet, but you can give each student a question sheet or have the group share one or two. If this activity is for credit, be sure to include spaces for all group members on the answer sheet.

The activity is simple enough: each group races to be the first to fill in the answer sheet correctly and hand it to you. If there are errors, they must keep working. When all groups have finished or time is up, review the answers together.

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare a quiz sheet with the questions and a blank answer sheet. Each group will need one answer sheet and at least one question sheet.
2. Have each group races to be the first to fill in the answer sheet correctly and hand it to you. If there are errors, they must keep working.
3. When all groups have finished or time is up, review the answers together.

Haiku Activity

Skills: Writing

Time: 5-15 minutes

Age: 8+

Materials: None

Depending on your students' L1, they may have difficulty with English syllables. This is one activity you can do to practice. Since the only real rule of writing a haiku is the syllable pattern (5-7-5), they are a pretty low stress for students, compared to other forms of poetry.

Begin by showing the class several haikus and pointing out the 5-7-5 structure. If they are a bit more advanced, you can increase the challenge by having them write about nature, the traditional theme of haikus

As students work, you can mingle and check their syllable count. If it's off, it will be pretty easy to find the problem word.

Teaching Tips:

I like to use this one as a humorous example:

Haikus are easy,

But sometimes they don't make sense.

Refrigerator

(Credit: Internet and T-shirts everywhere)

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare a few example haikus to demonstrate the 5-7-5 syllable structure.
2. Have students write their own haiku.
3. Mingle to check their work and discuss errors as needed.

Make a Sentence

Skill: Writing

Time: 5 minutes

Age: 6+

Materials: None, or worksheet/whiteboard/PowerPoint

To practice current or review vocabulary, have students make 1-5 sentences.

No Materials Version: Have students use their books and choose a given number of words to make sentences.

Whiteboard/PowerPoint Version: Give students a list of words to use all or some of.

Worksheet/PowerPoint Version: Fill-in-the-blank or multiple choice with a word bank.

Procedure:

Begin with a brief oral review of the vocabulary words you want them to work with and elicit from the students what the words mean.

No Prep Version: Have students take out their books and notebooks and tell them a number of sentences to make using those words. For example, “Turn to page 53, and choose three vocabulary words. In your notebook, write a new sentence using each word.”

Whiteboard/PowerPoint Version: Either give students a word list to choose from, or for lower level classes, several sentences with a word bank. Have the students write the complete sentences in their notebooks.

Proofreading/Editing

Skills: Writing

Time: 5-10 minutes

Age: 10+

Materials: Worksheet/whiteboard

To keep proper grammar usage fresh in your students' minds, they should practice frequently. This doesn't need to be a full grammar lesson; a quick warm-up activity can do the trick. You can give your students a variety of errors to correct: word choice, word order, punctuation, capitalization, etc. They should write the sentences or passage correctly.

Teaching Tips:

Begin by asking your student a few review questions about whatever rules he/she is practicing. (“When do you use capital letters?” or “What is a run-on sentence? How can you fix it?”)

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare a worksheet. You could even take a previous workbook activity and reproduce it.
2. The sentences or passage should practice previously studied points of grammar by having errors of that sort: word choice, word order, punctuation, capitalization, etc.
3. Have the students correct the errors.

Review Race

Skill: Writing

Time: 5 minutes

Age: 7+

Materials: Butcher or A3 paper (one piece per group) or whiteboard and markers (at least one per group)

Some students tend to look at each lesson as a discrete unit, forgetting that they are parts of a whole. This activity gets them using what they have

previously learned. It's a great warm up activity. I've also used it before a test, both to boost their confidence and to give them one last bit of review time.

To play, divide students into groups of 4-5 and give each group at least one marker. If you are not using the whiteboard, also give each group one piece of A3 or butcher paper. Give students a time limit of 2-3 minutes to list all of the vocabulary words they can remember from the previous lesson. With higher-level classes, have students add a synonym, antonym, or brief definition. The group with the most correct words wins.

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare markers, and optionally, a piece of A3 or butcher paper for each group.
2. Divide students into groups of 4-5.
3. Have students work together to list all of the vocabulary they can remember from the previous lesson within the time limit of 2-3 minutes.
4. For higher-level classes, have students add a synonym, antonym or brief definition of each word.
5. The group with the most correct words wins.

Textbook Part of Speech Race

Skills: Writing/Reading

Time: 5-10 minutes

Age: 10+

Materials: Textbook

Optional Materials: Scanned copy of the correctly completed page to display for students

This is a no-prep part of speech review activity. All you need to do before class is choose a page from the student textbook which is suited to the part of speech you wish to review, i.e. one that has a number of usages of that part of speech. If you are reviewing adverbs or passive, it will probably be a bit trickier than nouns or verbs.

In class, begin by reviewing that part of speech with the class—giving and eliciting examples, etc. Then, have your students open their books to the page you have chosen and have them circle each example of that part of speech on that page. Give them a time limit which will require them to work steadily but thoroughly—not so fast they need to rush, but not so long they have time to get off task. When time is up, elicit the answers from the class. If you have scanned a copy of the correctly completed page, display that for students to self-correct.

Procedure:

1. Choose a page from the student textbook which has a number of examples of the part of speech you are reviewing. Optionally, complete the activity yourself and scan the results to display in class.
2. Begin with a review of the part of speech, giving and eliciting example words, etc.
3. Have students open their books to the page you have chosen and have them circle each example of that part of speech on that page.

4. Give them a time limit which will require them to work steadily but thoroughly—not so fast they need to rush, but not so long they have time to get off task.

5. When time is up, elicit the answers from the class. If you have scanned a copy of the correctly completed page, display that for students to self-correct.

Vocabulary Roll and Write

Skills: Writing

Time: 5-15 minutes

Age: 10+

Materials: Dice, vocabulary list

This vocab review activity can be done alone, in pairs, or in small groups of 3-4. It uses the element of chance to make vocab review a bit more exciting. Each individual/ pair/ group will need one die and a vocabulary list.

To do this activity, students will roll the dice as they go down the list. According to the number rolled, they will complete one activity. They should repeat rolling and completing one activity until they get to the end of the list.

The numbers on the dice correspond to the following activities:

1. write the definition
2. write an original sentence
3. write a synonym
4. write an antonym
5. draw a picture
6. write a related word *

* “Write a related word” is pretty general. Students are free to write a synonym, antonym, category (for example, “orange”: color or fruit), or something they think of when they hear that word (for example, “desk” study, class, homework, etc.).

When everyone has completed one activity for each word, select a few volunteers to share an answer for each word.

Teaching Tips:

If you don’t want 30+ students noisily rolling dice, you can display an online dice roller on your class monitor and everyone can do the same activity for each word.

If you don’t want to use all six activities, have two or three numbers represent the same activity.

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare a list of words to review and enough dice for each student/ pair/ group to have one.
2. If having students work in pairs or small groups, divide them and hand out dice and word lists.
3. Have students roll their die and complete the corresponding activity for the first word on the list. (See above for the list of activities corresponding to the numbers on the die.) Have them repeat until they have completed one activity per word.
4. Select a few volunteers to share an answer for each word.

Worksheet Relay

Skills: Writing/Reading

Time: 10-20 minutes

Age: 8+

Materials: 2-4 worksheets, one of each per group; timer or buzzer

Worksheets are a necessary evil: students need the controlled practice with new material and textbooks and workbooks don't always provide enough practice in the areas of your students' specific weaknesses. However, their controlled nature makes them pretty boring. Some students will just rush through them with little regard to accuracy, completely wasting their time.

This relay activity tries to address these problems. First, it creates a sense of competition by having students work in teams. Second, most students are willing to work harder to avoid letting their team down than they would just for themselves. Third, the time limit keeps things moving along.

You will need to prepare the worksheets in advance. In class, divide students into groups equalling the number of worksheets. So, each group member will have one worksheet at all times, with no extra students or extra worksheets. Set the time limit for each turn to be long enough for students to answer one question. For each turn, each student will answer one item on the worksheet in front of them. They will initial their answer. When the buzzer rings, the worksheets should be passed clockwise to the next student. Repeat until all answers have been completed.

When the worksheets have been completed, finish by going over the answers as a class. The team with the most correct answers wins.

Variation:

You can do this activity with one worksheet. Have students sit in rows and complete X number of items ($X = \text{the total number of questions divided by number of students in the row.}$) When the buzzer rings, the worksheet is passed back to the next student. The students can choose which questions to answer, so the students at the beginning have the most choice and the last student has none.

Teaching Tips:

You will want to create the worksheets so that each activity takes about the same amount of time to complete. For example, don't have students creating original sentences on one worksheet and matching on another. Also, each worksheet should have the same number of items.

If you have an odd number in one class, have a lower level student be the extra in one group and have one group member sit out each round.

This is a good activity for an end-of-term review when students are preparing to be tested on a wide variety of material.

Depending on how competitive your students are, you may want to have groups switch papers to check answers.

As always, mingle during the activity. Some students may “help” their group by doing as much of the work themselves as time allows. You should set the time limit so that students have enough time to think then write, but not enough to fill in extra answers.

Procedure:

1. In advance, prepare several worksheets.
2. Divide the class into small groups. Each group will need one of each worksheet. Each group should have the same number of members as there are different worksheets.
3. Each round, each student will have one worksheet to work on. They should complete one answer and initial it.
4. When the buzzer rings, everyone should pass their worksheet clockwise to the next student. Repeat until the worksheets are complete.
5. When the worksheets have been completed, finish by going over the answers as a class. The team with the most correct answers wins.

Before You Go

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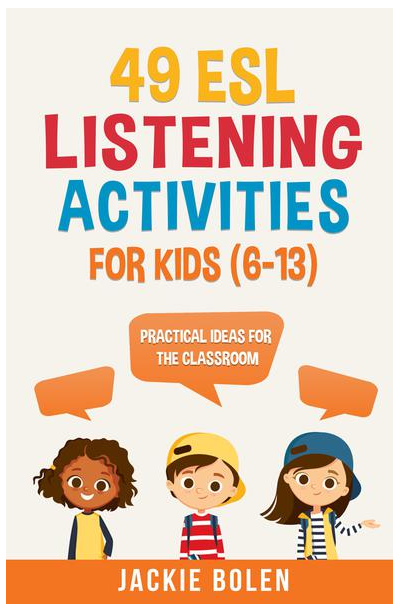
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