



THE  
BIG BOOK OF  
CLASSROOM  
WARMERS &  
GAMES  
for Kids

BY STUART ALLEN





زبانکده اَوَس

مرکز تخصصی تهیه آزمونهای مراکز آموزش زبان

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# TEFL Lemon



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# The BIG Book of Classroom Warmers & Games for Kids

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# Foreword

Games. They come so naturally to humans, especially children. If you watch children interacting together, they inevitably start to play games together with no outside influence - games they make up on the spot!

It has been said that developing the mental process for playing games was a key reason for the advancement of our mental capacity as human beings. It requires thinking beyond what is immediately present. One needs to think ahead, strategise, compare different alternatives, and make sure it all stays within the boundaries of the rules.

It seems natural then that games can play a big role in learning - and in this case - language learning.

Something teachers often ask is, "What is the difference between a warmer and a game?". They are both types of activity, but with a different specific purpose.

For warmers, it might be helpful to think of an athlete getting ready to perform their chosen sport. They know that their performance will not be as great cold as it will be warm, so they do easy activities that start to raise the heartbeat, get the blood flowing, and get the body ready for high performance action. These activities might not be directly related to their chosen sport, but they are there to warm the body and get it ready for focused action. In language learning, this means that a warmer is an easy, non-challenging activity to get the students brain and physical muscles (mouth, lips, tongue, jaw) warmed up and ready for the more intense activity of learning new content. A warmer should not introduce new content, but should use content that the student already knows well. Warmers should build confidence and can have a huge impact on the success (or failure) of the lesson that follows.

A game, on the other hand, is an activity that has an element of competition and winning involved. By doing the activity better, your chances of winning are increased. It is intrinsically motivating. Most people are not good at a game the first time they play it. But they learn about the game and how to do it better. This encourages repeat, but not just a repetitive drill. There is increased effort in each repeat, and with every repeat there is a slight improvement. This is why it is so useful for language learning. Students take on increased challenge with enthusiasm. But is it important that the improved language use is the element that contributes to success in the game, not a different element, like improved physical ability.

## Foreword cont:

TEFL Lemon has been helping teachers share motivating activities for years, so it's wonderful to see so many consolidated into a single book. Teachers are busy! This book provides them with quick access to tried and tested activities that will keep their learners learning and motivated for years. This book should be in every language teacher's library.



by Peter Rodda

*Peter Rodda is a language teacher and education consultant. He has taught English since 2012, teaching on three different continents (including the countries of South Korea, South Africa, Colombia, and China) at language schools, mainstream school, and universities.*

*His mission is for students in language classrooms around the world to receive the most effective and enjoyable lessons possible. Central to this is the passionate and skilled teacher who above all puts their student's learning first.*

*He is first and foremost a learner himself, and sees teaching as the facilitating of learning in others. He conducts needs analysis, teacher training and syllabus content workshops for institutions looking to deliver more results for their students. He also conducts TEFL related research. He is currently undertaking his DipTESOL.*

*Peter welcomes hearing from teachers and schools and can be contacted on his email: [peter.rodga@icloud.com](mailto:peter.rodga@icloud.com)*



# The BIG Book of Classroom Warmers & Games for Kids

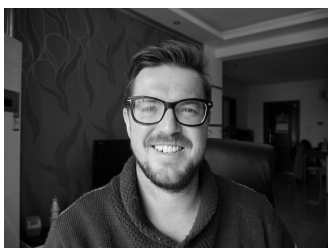
When I started out as an English teacher in China way back when in 2002, I was teaching in an English training school in Xi'an and had a ton of weekend and evening classes. As a new teacher, it was always a challenge to try to think of new ESL warmers and games to play and to teach the kids I taught. The children coming to learn English in the school loved to play games, however it was always difficult to find games that worked and to keep them new and fresh throughout the term.

Many of the language games I played were ideas from fellow teachers in the office and I often only learned of these new games on my break time between classes and quickly added them into my lesson plan. Sometimes these games worked, other times, they fell flat on their face!

I guess what I'm trying to say is that I understand the life of a busy ESL teacher and how difficult it is to source good language games which work each time, and every time. What I would have done to have this book back then!

This is a book of ESL Classroom Warmers and Games, written especially for teachers who teach children. Each of these games is tried and tested and will work great in your classroom. Bringing games into the classroom is an important aspect in teaching children and keeping kids happy in their learning.

I hope that from this book, you'll have a constant and ready-to-hand source of teaching warmers and games, which will work each and every time. Thank you for buying *The BIG Book of Classroom Warmers & Games for Kids*.



Stuart Allen  
Author



# Snowball Fight!

This activity is good for kids who are elementary level and above. Before class, write down on a piece of paper the following:

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Favourite colour: \_\_\_\_\_

Favourite animal: \_\_\_\_\_

Favourite movie: \_\_\_\_\_

Favourite city: \_\_\_\_\_



Now make enough photocopies so that each student has a copy (I always print out one or two more in case new students turn up). Each student writes down their answers and screws their paper up into a ball. Now get your class into two lines facing each other. Have the two teams throw their snowballs at the other team.

Keep it up for 30 seconds, so all the papers are mixed up. Students now need to pick up a random ball, unwrap it and find the student whose paper they have by speaking with as many people as possible.

TEFL Lemon Tip: If you are worried that the classroom will get too manic, simply have each team facing away from each other and throwing the balls over their shoulders.



Also, kids will sometimes march around saying 'is this paper yours?' rather than asking questions. To avoid this, ask kids to memorise what they read and then put papers in their pocket. This way, they'll be speaking and listening much more.

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# WORD BOX

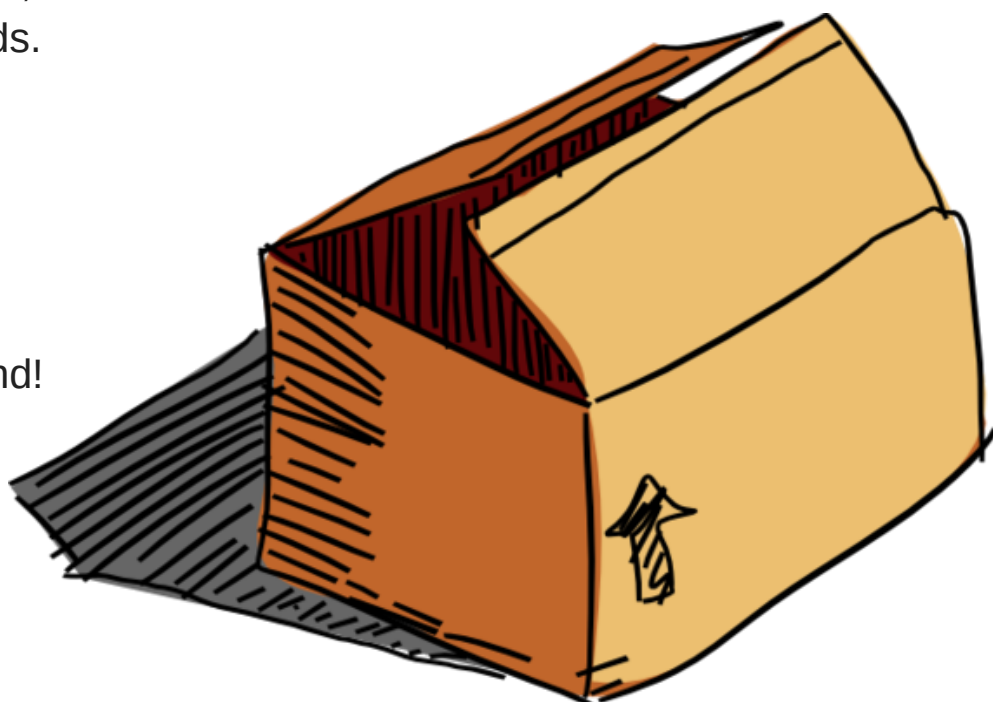
This is a fantastic review activity for your class and is perfect if you have an old cardboard box sitting around doing nothing in your house.

Choose some key vocabulary which the class has been studying in the last few weeks. About 12-20 words is good. Write each word on a piece of card or paper and fold in half. Put all of your words into the box and bring it to class.

Divide your class into two or three teams and choose a team to go first. One student comes up and takes a card from the box. They have one minute to DESCRIBE the word to their team (they can't say the actual word!) Once their team has guessed the word, then the student at the front can pick a new word. After 60 seconds, their time is up and it's Team 2's turn. Team One keep any words that their team won.

One player from Team 2 now comes up and chooses one random remaining words from the box. Again, they only have 60 seconds. Keep going until all the words have gone.

The winning team is the team with most words at the end!





# The Sleuth



This is another ESL classic for older children! In a nutshell, students will write three fun statements about themselves and the other students need to guess which two statements are true and which statement is a lie. Lots of speaking, listening and writing in this one!

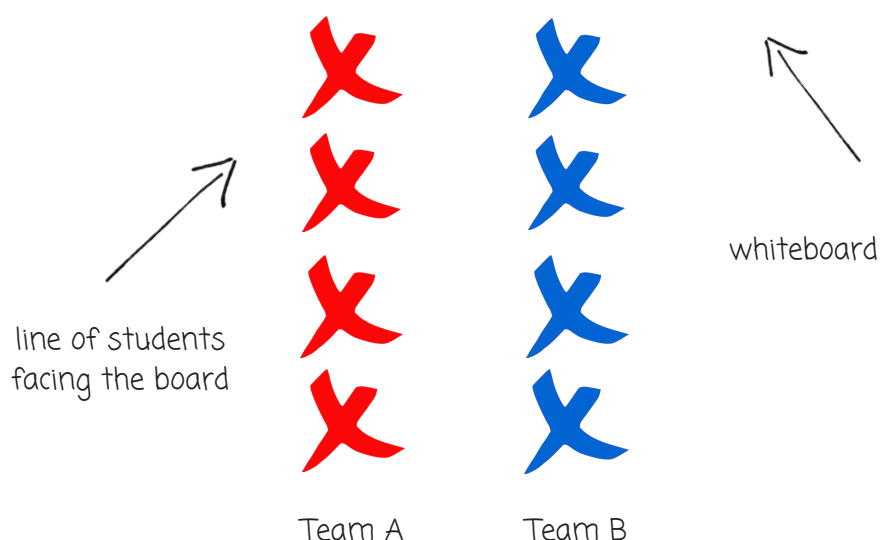
The teacher starts this activity off by writing three statements about themselves on the board. Two must be true statements and one must be a lie. Make them all as funny as possible, but all believable.

Tell your students that these statements are all about you, the teacher, and that two are true and one is false. Ask the students to guess which one is false. Hand out your board marker and get the students to come one by one and put a cross next to the lie. Develop an interest in this activity before the students do it themselves. Now tell your students which one is the lie.

Your students should now be prepared for the main part of this activity. Tell them to write down three statements about themselves; two true, one lie. When they are ready, students should stand up and mingle, telling each other their statements. Each student should listen and try to guess the lie, writing down the name of the student they spoke to and what they thought the lie was. After 10 mins, sit everyone down and hear which statements the kids' thought were lies; some definitely laughs and surprises in this activity! A good opportunity to expand a discussion too!



# WORD CHAIN



This is a super simple game which can be used as a warmer at the start of the class or a filler between activities in class.

Divide your students into two or three teams and have them form lines facing the board. There should be at least 2m space between the first student of each team and the board. Give the first student of each team a board marker.

When the teacher says 'Go', the first student of each team must run to the board and write a word on the board. They then turn, hand the marker to the next student in line, who then runs to the board to write a new word. The student handing the marker over joins the back of their team's line.

This is the tricky part; the new word must begin with the last letter of the previous word! For example: computer, **read**, **definitely**, **year**, **robot**, **talkative**...

Once a team has written a word, the other team cannot use this word (this stops students simply copying the words from the other team). The first team to write 20 words is the winner.



# HOT BALL



Bring a soft ball or soft toy to class and move all the chairs back to make a large space in your classroom. Get your students to stand up making a large circle with one student standing in the middle.

The teacher calls out a topic, for example, 'colours'. The student in the middle then throws the ball to one of the students in the circle. The student needs to catch the ball and say a word associated with the topic i.e. 'blue'. The students then throws the ball to another student in the circle.

As the ball is being thrown, the student in the middle must try to catch the ball in mid-air. If he/she can do so, then the thrower is out and must sit down on a chair on the outside. Keep the ball moving around the circle, with words being called out each time. Words cannot be repeated, too. Any student who repeats a word is out. Any student catching a ball, but not saying a word is out.

If the ball is dropped by a student in the circle, then both the thrower and the catcher must say a word associated with the topic, or both are out of the game!

After every elimination, change the topic and also the person in the middle. Keep going until there are only three students remaining. These three are the winners.



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# DRILL SERGEANT

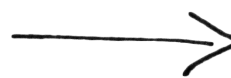
This is a great activity if you're teaching imperatives i.e. sit down, stand up, turn around, touch your nose, etc.

Get your students to stand in a line and choose one of your students to be a drill sergeant. Your students are all soldiers and must obey whatever the drill sergeant says!

If the drill sergeant shouts 'Sit Down!', then all your students must sit down. If the drill sergeant says 'Open your mouth!', then the kids must obey. If the drill sergeant shouts 'NOBODY MOVE!', then everyone must freeze immediately. Anyone moving is out.

The slowest student or the student doing the wrong move is out each time. Also, if any kids laugh, then they are out, too! They must keep a straight face and the drill sergeant is allowed to try to make the other kids laugh! Each time two students are eliminated, then change the drill sergeant. Keep going for a few minutes and encourage different commands. As the activity begins to slow down, kill it and move on with your class.

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# SKITTLES!

This is a useful warmer which can be done with Skittles or different types of candy, and can be tailored towards unit content or revising prior materials.

Write the colours of the skittles on the board (usually red, orange, green, yellow, purple.) Ask the students individually to think of five questions, one for each colour. These questions can be the students' random choice or something connected with a topic in their books.

For example:



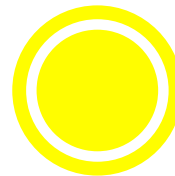
Do you have any pets?



What do you do on weekends?



Who is your favourite teacher?



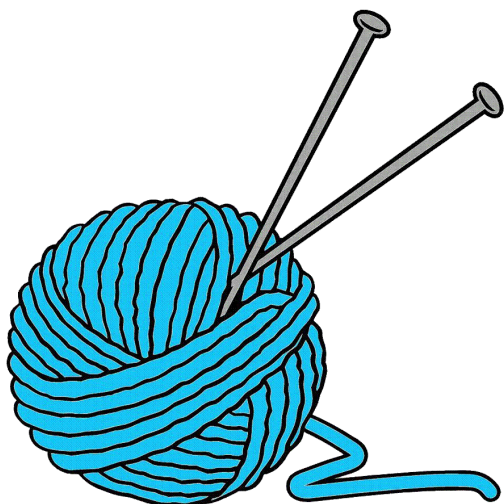
Where was your last holiday?



When did you learn to ride a bike?

When your students have written their questions, give each student five skittles in a little sealie bag. It doesn't matter which colours you give them, but a mixture is preferable. Students now walk around and ask each other their questions. Once a student has asked a question, then the student eats that candy.

Once a candy has been eaten, the student moves on to speak to someone else, asking their new question and answering the question asked of them. Keep going until all five candies have gone. You can follow up and extend this warmer by asking about any interesting facts your students learned from each other.



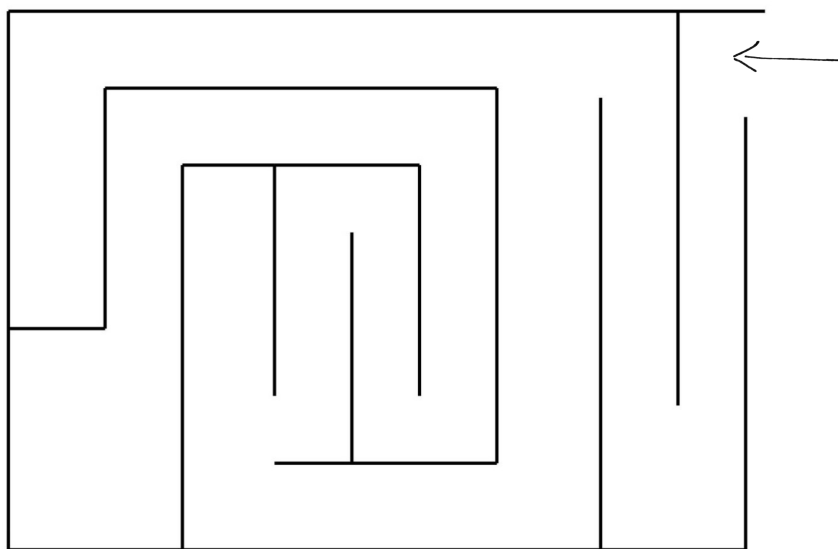
# yarn

# MAZE

This activity will take a little bit of preparation, but it will be definitely worth it and your kids will go crazy about this game! It's perfect for when teaching directions. For this activity, you'll need a ball of string or knitting yarn, sticky tape, a print out of a simple maze and a blindfold.

Before your class, get a simple print out of a maze (or just use the one from this book) and go to your classroom or activity room.

Move the chairs to the side of the room to make as much space as possible.



Using your printout as a guide, copy the maze on the floor using your knitting yarn and hold it down using sticky tape at each 90-degree turn. It should take you ten minutes tops. Now time for class!

Put your students into pairs; one will be blindfolded walking through the maze, the other will be calling directions (turn left, turn right, stop, go straight, etc).

The team with the fastest time through the maze wins! Add 5 seconds penalty time if students use their L1 or walk on the yarn!





# Sticky Gloves!

In this amazing ESL game for kids, your class will be running to a bucket of coins and seeing how many coins they can have stuck on sticky rubber gloves after answering questions! To play this game, you'll need the following:



rubber gloves



lots of low-value coins or buttons



blindfold



a bucket

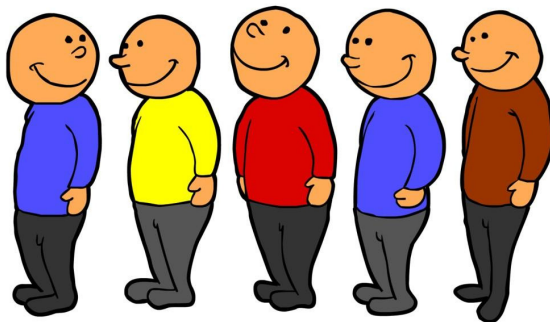


double-sided sticky tape

Put students into teams and have them sitting together. Write team names on the board. Ask each team a question from topics they've recently been studying. Ask each team a question in turn and if they get the answer correct, award the team 10 seconds. Write each team's time on the board. Each team gets five questions each, so if you have two teams, you'll be asking 10 questions. Let's say Team A got 4/5 correct, then they have 40 seconds, but Team B got all their questions correct, then they have 50 seconds.

After your questions, place a bucket with a load of small coins, buttons, matchsticks, etc, at the end of the classroom. Have the first team form a line and give them a rubber glove, with the palms and fingers covered in double-sided tape (making it super sticky!)

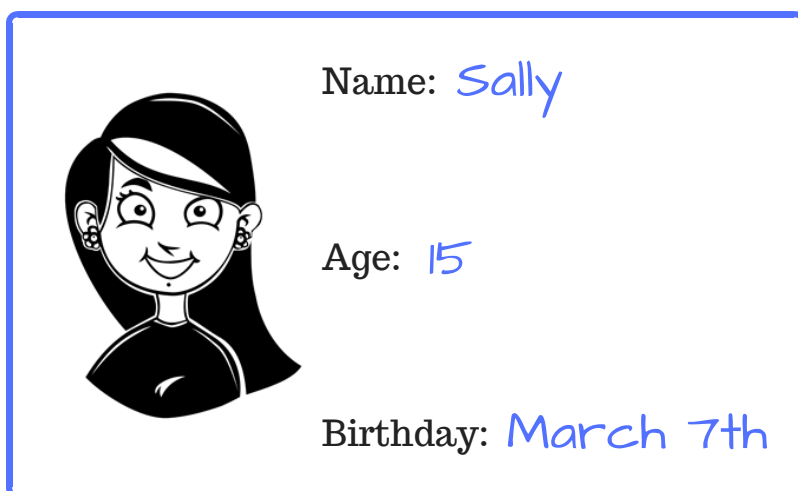
Choose one team to go first and have the first student put on the glove. Start the clock and the first player must run out, dunk their hand in the bucket, run back and have his team take off the coins and put them on the floor by their feet. The first player then takes off the glove, gives it to the second player to wear, who then runs out and repeats the process. Keep going until the time runs out! Write the total coins on the board next to the team name and then put all the coins back in the bucket for Team B. The team with the most coins/objects is the winner!



# Get in Order!

In this ESL game, you're students will be given character cards and then asked to arrange themselves in different orders according to what the teacher says! Awesome!

First things first, you'll need to make one character card per student in your class like the one shown here. Make sure that for each character card, you have different names, ages and birthdays.



When you're ready, give one character card to each student and tell each student to remember the info on their card. Give help where needed to pronounce any names or months. Practice the questions and answers before you begin.

Now ask your students to put their cards in their pockets and stand up. Tell the students to make a line according to the alphabetical order of their names. To do this, students will need to speak to each other to find out each other's names. When done, get each student to call out their names to check that they got it right.

Now tell them to get in order according to age! This will make them speak to everyone again to find out names and make a completely new order of line! When this is done, finally make the kids get in order according to their birthdays! They'll love this activity!



# Swatter Stories!



Choose a short story and write key vocab from the story all over the board. Form two teams and have them line up facing the board. The front students both have fly swatters. They need to hit the words as they hear them. Once hit, the two students go to the back of the line. The team with the most points at the end wins!

angry

cow

market

window

magic

sell

son

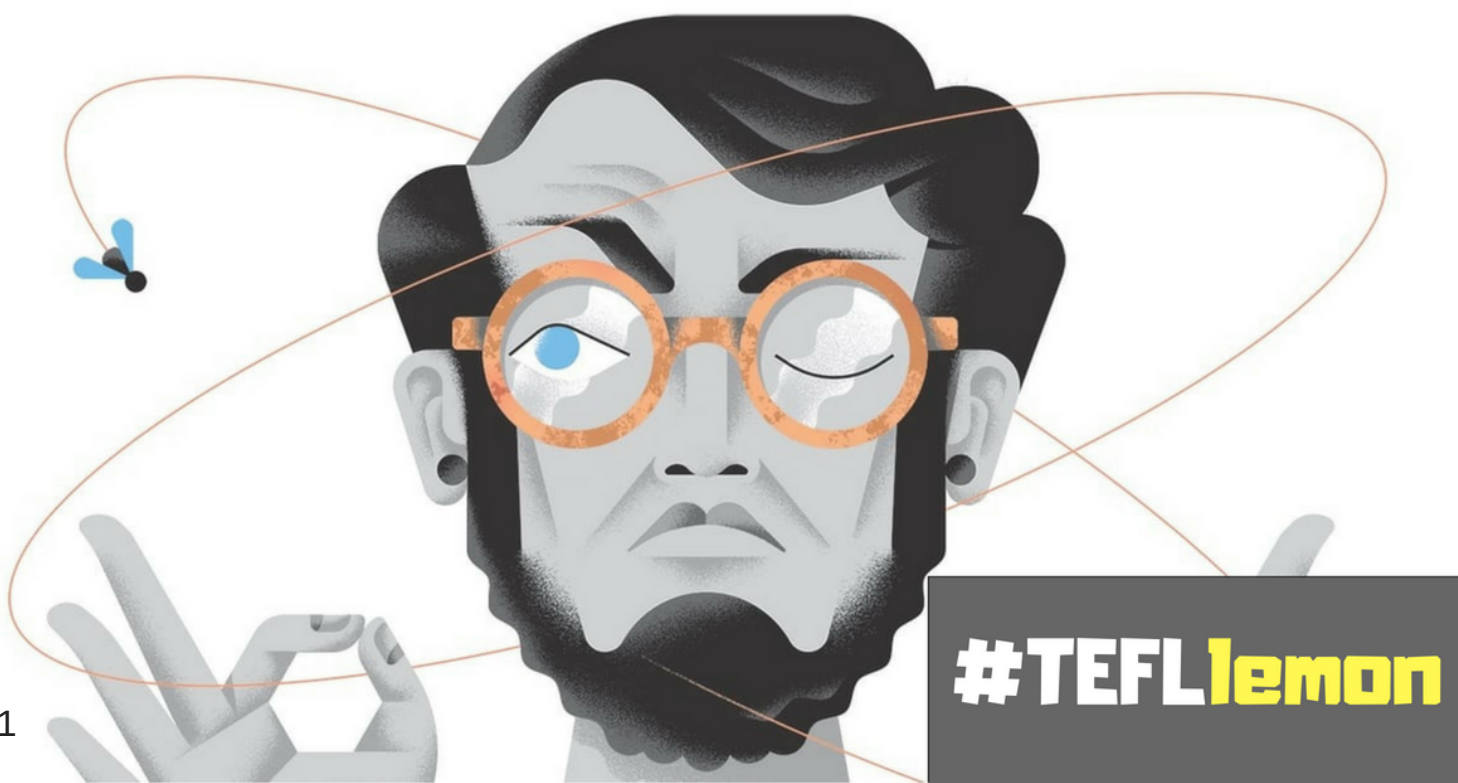
poor

beans

Once upon a time there lived a poor widow and her son Jack. One day, Jack's mother told him to sell their only cow. Jack went to the market and on the way he met a man who wanted to buy his cow. Jack asked, "What will you give me in return for my cow?" The man answered, "I will give you five magic beans!" Jack took the magic beans and gave the man the cow. But when he reached home, Jack's mother was very angry. She said, "You fool! He took away your cow and gave you some beans!" She threw the beans out of the window. Jack was very sad and went to sleep without dinner.



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# TIN CAN PHONES



Long before the telephone was invented, people found that they could get two empty tin cans, attach them together using string and speak to each other over pretty long distances. These have become called Tin Can Phones and the chances are that you made one of these as a kid yourself. You can make one at home or in class and have the kids practicing words, sentences or short dialogues in a really fun way! This is an especially good activity if you have a large classroom, are easily able to make use of a corridor or, best still, have a safe area outside.

You'll need:

two empty tin cans  
a long length of good string  
a small nail  
a hammer

Get two empty and clean tin cans. Using your hammer and small nail, gently tap a hole in the bottom of both of your tin cans. Try to get your holes as close to the centre as you can. Thread your string up through the hole, so that the string is poking into the can. Tie a big knot in the string so that it can't fall out. Repeat with the other can and you are ready!

When you are ready, clear lots of space get half your class at one end of the tin can phone and the other half of your class at the other. Get two students to speak to each other in English, practice words, phrases, tongue twisters, whatever! They'll love it!

*Safety:* If you do make this in class, never leave your hammer and nails unattended. If you are at all concerned, then make the phone at home before class.



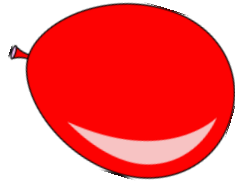
# PASS THE ~~PARCEL~~ *Cabbage*

We've all played pass the parcel at birthday parties or at Christmas, passing the gift around the circle with fast background music on and when the music stops, the person holding the gift must take a layer of wrapping off. This cool kids ESL game is a take on that, using printed pictures or written words as wrapping!

First things first, go to the shops and get a few sweets the day before class. Next thing you'll need is a load of pictures of vocabulary items you've been studying recently, for example, different toys or animals. Alternatively, you can have words for kids to read or letter sounds for early readers. For older kids, you can have full sentences, it really doesn't matter and you can adjust the content to fit your class.

Wrap your sweets in one of the pictures. When you've done, do it again. And again. And again. And again. Keep going until the ball gets bigger and bigger! Eventually you'll be wrapping the pictures around like cabbage leaves! If you want to, you can pop the odd sweet into one of the layers to give the kids a little surprise!

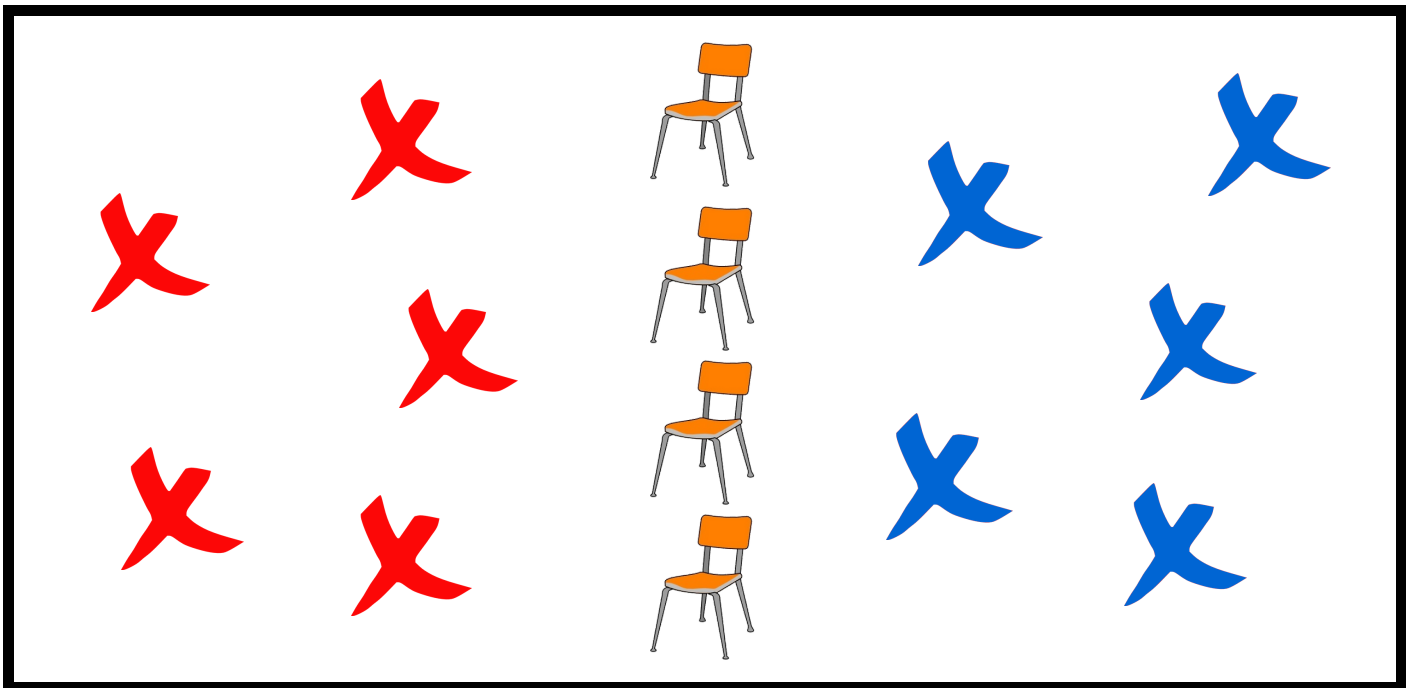
Bring your 'cabbage' to class and get the kids sat in a circle. Play some cool music and have the kids pass the cabbage around the circle. When the music stops, the child holding the cabbage must take off a layer, show the class the picture and say the word. All the kids repeat the word and the game continues. Keep going until one lucky child wins the sweets! Review all the words with the class together after the game to reinforce the language.



# Balloon Volleyball

Clear a big area in your classroom and divide your students into two teams. Put a line of chairs down the middle of the classroom to divide it into two halves.

Have your students spread out on each side of the 'net' like two volleyball teams.



Get a balloon and throw the balloon to one team. Whenever a student hits the balloon, they must say a word from a topic you give. The object is for teams to score a point by the balloon touching the floor on the opposing team's side. Students cannot move their feet and must stay planted on the floor. The first team to ten points is the winner! If a student hits the balloon without saying a word, then they lost a point. Change topics often and have fun!



# ↑ **UPS** VS **DOWNS** ↓

This classroom game is so simple it's genius! For this game, you'll need 20 plastic or paper cups. Make a large space in your classroom and place the cups on the floor in a 4 x 5 grid.

Put 10 cups facing upwards and 10 cups facing downwards.

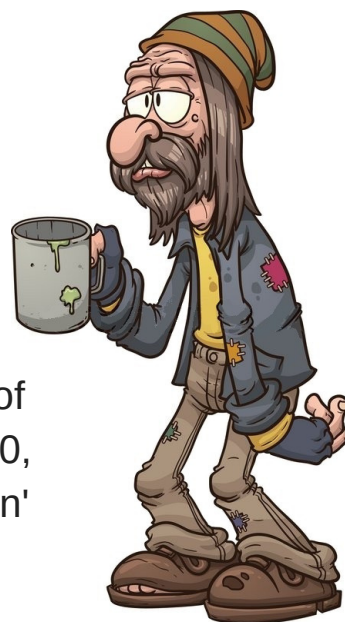


Split the class into two teams: the 'ups' and the 'downs'. Ask one team a question, if they get the question right, then they can turn one of the other team's cups the other way around. Take turns and keep going for 10 minutes. The team with the most cups going their way is the winner! You can make it clearer by colouring the bottom of the cups black with your board marker.

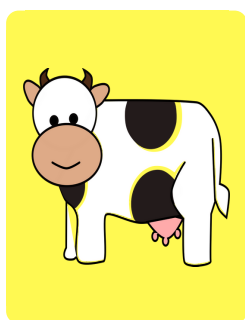
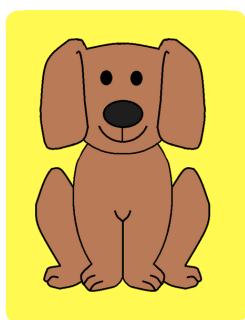




# Bankrupt



Before class, get twenty flashcards and write different values of money on the back of the cards. For example, \$50, \$100, \$100, \$150, \$50, etc. On the back of two of the cards, write 'Donation' and on the back of another flashcards, write 'Bankrupt!'



In class, divide your class into two, three or four teams (depending on how many students you have in your class.) Stick your flashcards on the board, with the money values hidden.

To the side of the board, write your team names on the board and every team starts with \$200. Ask the first team to choose a flashcard. If they can say the word, or use it in a sentence, then they turn the card and win the amount which is on the back for their team! Write the amount the team has next to their name on the board.

If they are unlucky and find the 'Donation' card, then they have to give all of their current money to another team of their choice. If they find the 'Bankrupt' card, then their current winnings go down to \$0 and they have to start from nothing (the other kids LOVE this!!)

# Guess Who?

*Guess Who?* was a popular family board game in the west, where each player had to try to guess from a character the other player had chosen by asking questions about their physical appearance.



This will require some preparation on the teacher's part, but this is well worth it, as your students will become much more comfortable with describing appearance and you can save all the game materials in the teacher's office for other classes.

Print out 24 character cards, each one A4 size. These can be from free clip art characters you find online. Repeat the process so you have two sets of identical character cards, one for each team.

Reduce the size of the cards and now print out two sets of character cards, with each card about the same size as a standard playing card. Where possible, laminate your cards - they'll last for years.

In class, divide your students into two teams. Stick all 48 A4-sized cards on the whiteboard or classroom wall. Now take your smaller pack and have each team secretly choose a character (they shouldn't show the other team who they've chosen). Once both teams have chosen a character, they must ask questions to the other team to guess the other team's chosen character card. For example, "Is your person a man?", "Does she has blonde hair?", "Does he have blue eyes?", etc. Teams may only answer 'Yes' or 'No'.

As each team finds out more information about the other team's character, you can remove all the character cards from the wall who are eliminated. For example, if Team A discover that Team B's character has blonde hair, then they can remove from the wall anyone with black, brown or grey hair.

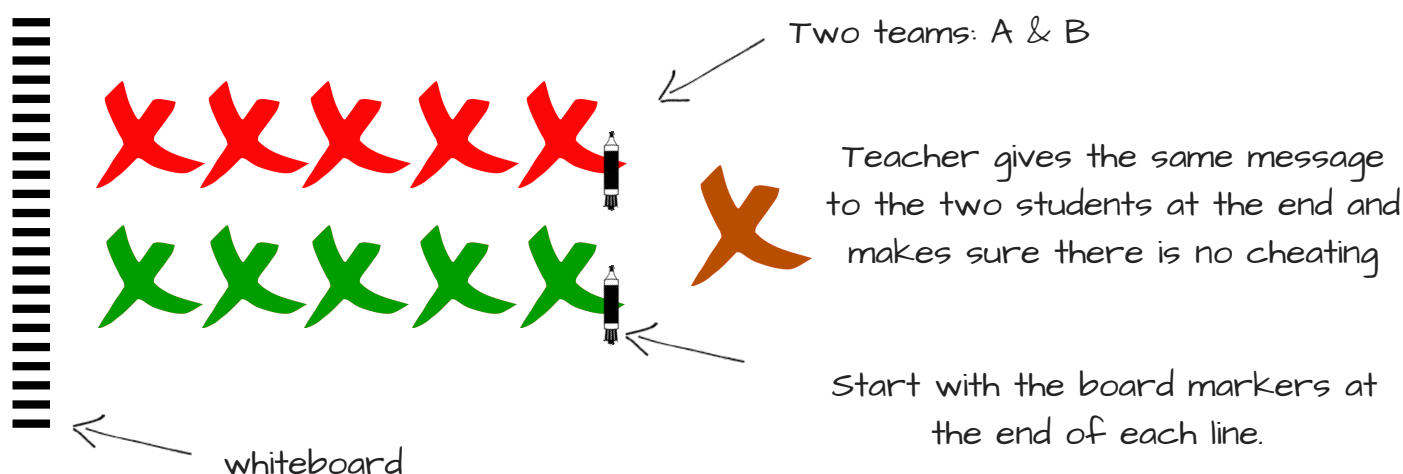
Teams take it in turn to ask questions and the first team to guess the other team's character correctly is the winner. Make sure all students are getting the chance to speak.



# Hot Marker



The problem with Chinese Whispers, especially in China where I teach, is that children often try to get an advantage by shouting what the message is down to the front of the line, missing out half the line, rather than whispering the message from person to person. The children will 'win' the game, without practicing their English skills. 'Hot Marker' aims to stop this happening.

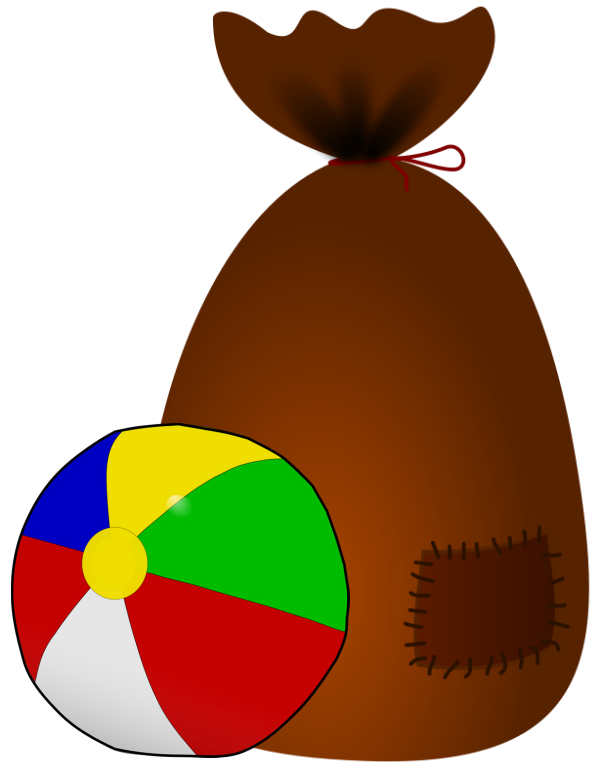


Get your students into two lines facing the board. If you have lots of students, then you can make three lines. Usually in Chinese Whispers, the message is passed down the line and the kids at the front of the line have a board marker and will write down the message. In this version, the teacher gives a board marker to the last students at the back of the line, along with a short sentence or word.

As a student whispers the message from the teacher into the ear of the student in front, only then, can the board marker be passed on to the student receiving the message. Keep the message and the board marker moving forward to the front of the line. When the message and board marker eventually reaches the front of the line, the front student can write the message on the board. The first team to write the message correctly wins a point. If there is any cheating, the board marker moves to the back of the line! This punishes any cheating!

# The Ball & Sack

For this activity, you'll need a sack (any bag will do really), a ball of any size, bits of paper and a pen. A super-simple ESL review activity for a class of children.



Before class, get a load of slips of paper and write questions on them appropriate to the level of your kids. Alternatively, you can have a picture of a vocab item you've been studying in class recently on each piece of paper, or a mixture of both.

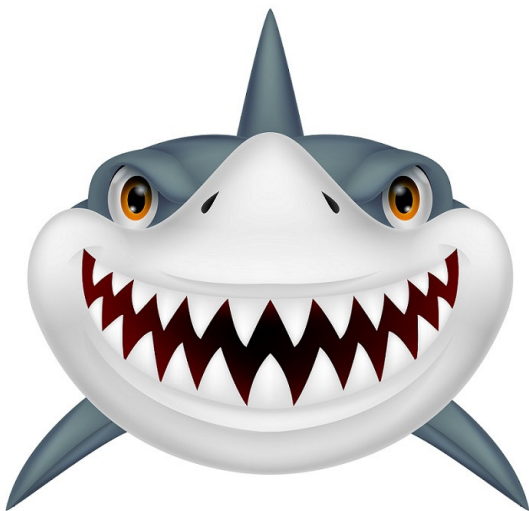
Make a big space in your classroom, or take them outside into a safe area if you have one. Form your class into two teams and stand them in two separate circles.

Give one circle the ball and, to the other circle, give the sack. Inside the sack place all of your questions / pictures. About 15-20 questions and / or pictures is perfect.

When you're ready, start some music and have the first circle pass around the ball. At the same time, have the second circle pass around the sack. Stop the music - whoever has the sack must take out a question and ask it to whoever has the ball in the other circle. If the student with the ball can't get it right, then other students in their circle can help them. Start the music again and have the ball and sack moving around again. After every three questions, switch the ball and sack to the other circles. Try to give everyone a go and keep going until there are no questions left.

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# A SHARK IS COMING!

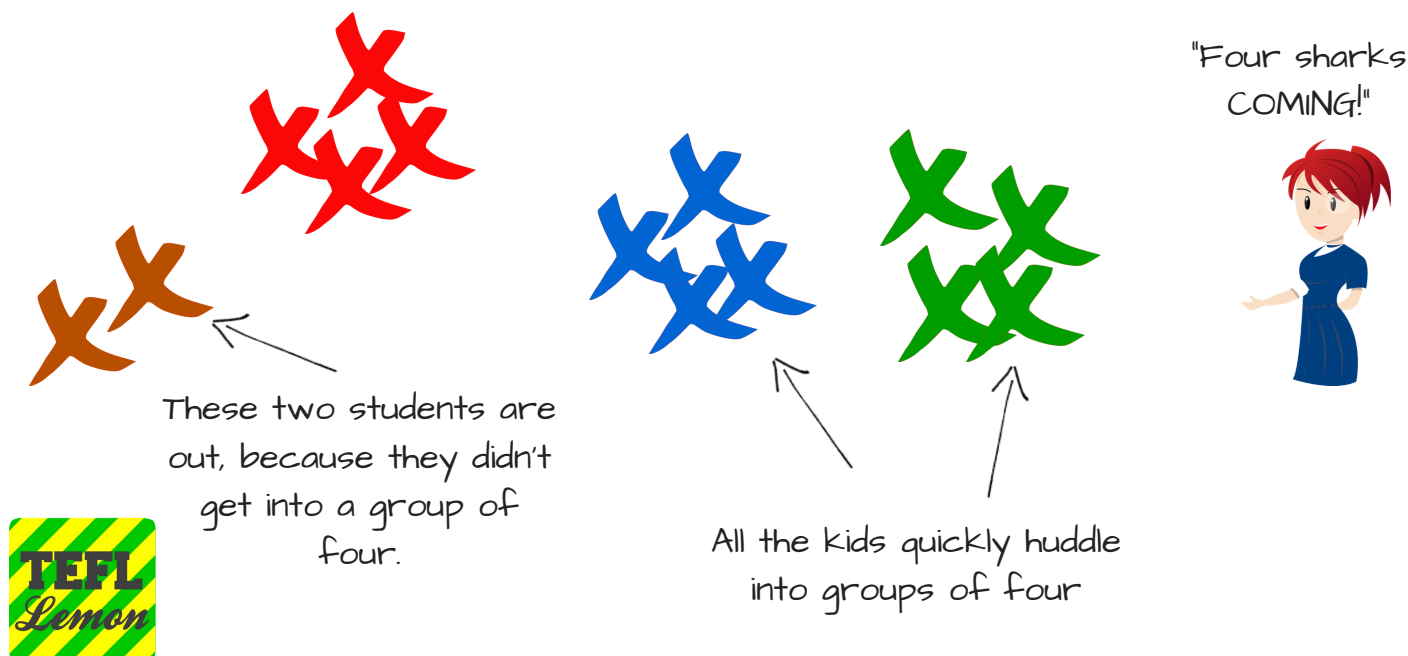
Many of you will be kindergarten or early primary teachers, and if so, then this classroom game or warmer is perfect for you. Your kids will also burn off some of their ever-lasting energy!

In 'A Shark's Coming!', the kids will be practicing hearing and thinking about numbers in English and also asking 'How many?' Your kids will not only need fast feet in this ESL game, but will also need to think fast!

When you're ready, shout 'sharks coming!', hold out your arms in front of you and start clapping your hands together like shark jaws snip snappin'!

Here, the kids need to shout 'how many?!', and the teacher shouts out a number. The children then have to get into groups of that number hugging each other for safety as quickly as possible! Any students not in a safe group are out. The kids who are out, move to a safe area at the side until the next new game. Now, all the kids mingle together again and the teacher yells 'Sharks Coming!'. Again, the kids shout 'How many?' and the teacher shouts a new number. Keep going until only a few kids are left and these are the winners.

This is a fast-paced game and excellent practice for numbers. You can play this game as a warmer, game to practice numbers or as a filler. You can play this a few times to make sure every student gets some good game time. Each time, change the number of sharks that are coming.





# Draw the Sentence

This activity is ideal for slightly older kids and is better for smaller classes. If you have more than five or six children in your class, then you can simply divide your class into smaller groups.

Put your students in a line seated on their chairs all facing the board. The teacher should write a simple sentence on a piece of paper, for example, "Grandma is shopping". You then show this sentence to the student at the back of the line (don't show the sentence to the other kids).

The student at the back of the line must now draw a picture of the sentence, so in this case, a grandma shopping. The student only has 60 seconds to draw the picture. Once finished, the student shows their picture to the student in front. This student must look at the picture and then write a sentence conveying the meaning of the picture and what they think is happening in the picture. The student writing the sentence should not show anybody, especially the person who showed them the picture.

This second student now gives his sentence to the third student, who must look at it and draw a picture. Again, they only have 60 seconds to do this. Once the student has finished their picture, then they show it to the next student in the line, who must write the sentence.

Keep alternating until the student at the front goes up to the board and writes down the sentence which they received. This will most likely differ greatly from the original teacher's sentence! Encourage the kids to not tell each other what the sentence is, otherwise they'll spoil the fun!

Stuart's tip: Don't make the lines too long, otherwise the students at the front will get bored and restless (as well as at the back after the first ones have had their go). The ideal length of the line should be no more than 5-6 students. If you have more students, then simply have more lines.



# STOP!



This is a flashcard activity which is perfect just for a quick review of recent classes or a lead-in to a classroom game. It's super easy and you can introduce this into any lesson or any level.

Get your students sitting on the floor in the middle of the classroom, with the teacher seated at the front. Get 10-15 big and colourful flashcards of recent vocab you've been studying. Make a pile and hold the flashcards out in front of you.

Cycle through them, one flashcard every 2-3 seconds. The kids need to look at the flashcards constantly. Cycle through the flashcards twice until you get back to the beginning.

After you've cycled through the flashcards twice, rest the pile on your lap and ask the students which words they can remember. Encourage your students to raise their hands and not call out. Keep going and see if they can recall all of the flashcards.

Now tell the class that you are going to play a game. The teacher will say a flashcard and then start scrolling through. The kids have to yell '**STOP!**' when you reveal the correct flashcard as you go through. After each time, choose a random flashcard and again the kids urge you to '**STOP!**' as you cycle through and when they see the flashcard you've called. A really simple, but effective ESL flashcard activity.

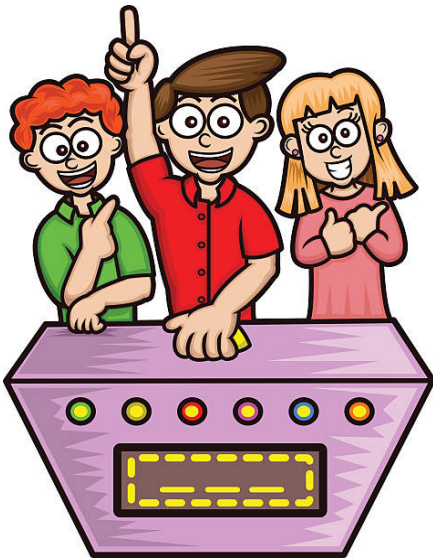


# The Human Buzzer Game Show



We've all stayed in on a Saturday night watching TV game shows, where the fastest finger buzzes in to answer the question for their big chance to win prizes or a holiday! This is where you can bring those big Saturday night game shows right into your ESL classroom!

Before class, prepare about 20-30 questions appropriate to the English level of your students, or on topics you've recently been studying. To mix things up, you could have a 'picture round', where you show flashcards, or an 'audio' round, where they hear someone speaking or singing and the kids have to imitate it. Bring your questions to class.



In class, divide your students into three or four teams and explain that they're going to be playing a TV game show. Each team should choose a player to answer a question first, with one student from each team standing in a row at the front of the class. In front of each standing student, have seated in a chair another student from their team. So, for example, if you have three teams, you'll have three students answering questions and another three students seated in front of the kids answering questions, making six in total at the front.

This is the funny part; each student answering must rest their hands on the head of their team mate seated in front of them. After the teacher has asked a question, if a student knows it, then they must press down on the head of the student in front of them and the seated student must make a funny buzzer noise, just like the buzzer on TV! Only then can the standing student give their answer. The first to buzz in gets to answer first. If they get it right, then their team wins \$100, if they get it wrong, then one of the other players can try to answer.

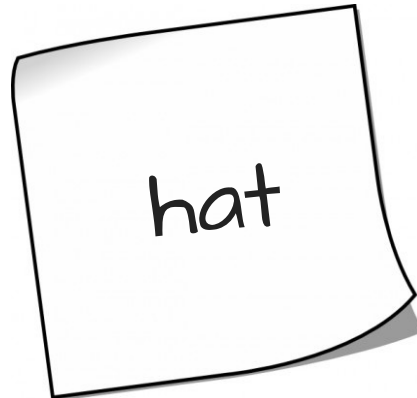
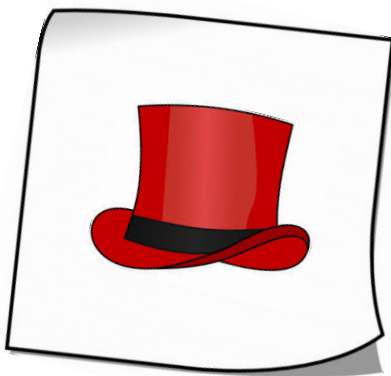
After each question, change the kids at the front, so everyone has a chance of answering questions and being the human buzzer! This game is seriously funny and very awesome! Play this ESL game in your classroom this week!



# Match

This is a **nice warmer**, which can be used **for any class, regardless of age or English level**; simply change the content to make it age / level appropriate. In a nutshell, you'll be giving a **piece of paper to each student** with a colour, shape, word, whatever, and have to walk around the class looking for the student whose paper matches their own.

**Get a piece of paper and fold it in half.** For the purposes of a clear description here, we'll say that you're teaching 'clothes' to a class of kids. On one side of the paper, draw an item of clothing (you can find clip art online if you'd prefer) and on the other side of the paper, write the name of the item of clothing. **Now rip the paper in half.** Repeat the process again using a different item of clothing and its name. Again, tear the paper in half. **Make enough matching halves so that you have one for each student.** Now mix up these halves and bring them to class.



At the start of your lesson, **hand out one half to each child.** They now walk around **showing their half to each other** and trying to find the student who has the **matching half.** Once found, they stick together. If you have an odd-number of students, simply give one half to yourself and join in, making it an even-number. At the end of the activity, ask each pair to show the rest of their class their matching pair and to say the word.

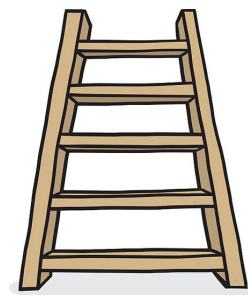
You can have *matching colours* for very young children, *shapes, verbs, half-words, complex words and meanings, synonyms, antonyms*, whatever. This really is a multi-level ESL warmer for any class.



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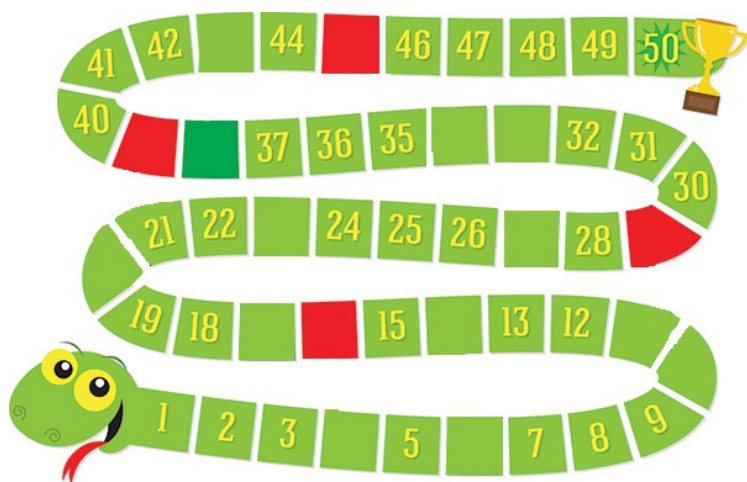


# Make Your Own Snakes & Ladders



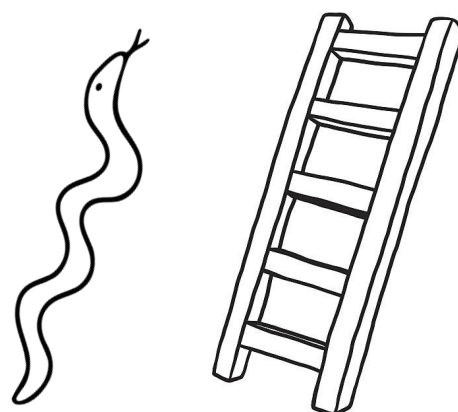
Snakes and Ladders is a common game from everyone's childhood, yet strangely, often gets overlooked or forgotten within the ESL classroom. Playing Snakes and Ladders provides an excellent platform for review work within a class of both younger or older children.

Teachers who do play snakes and ladders usually just draw a big square on their whiteboard with intersecting lines to make a grid, draw on the snakes and ladders to finish the board and then play. This version is far more interactive and will generate higher interest in the game and in answering your review questions. In this version, your students will be sticking on their own snakes and ladders on the whiteboard to design their own playing board!



Draw this game template as big as you can on your white board. Notice there are no snakes or ladders on the board yet!

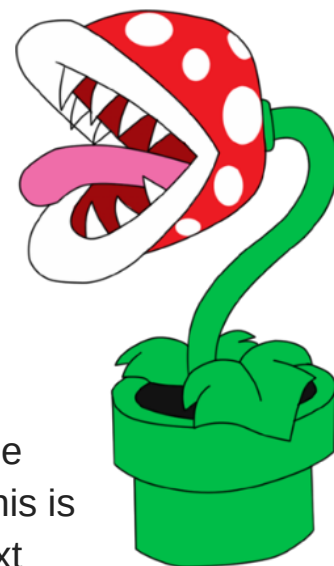
In the teacher's office, make 2-3 snakes and 3-4 ladders of different lengths. Bring them into class along with some sticky tape.



In class, divide your class into two teams. Ask one of your teams to come to the front and place a snake on the game board. Now ask the other team to come and place a ladder. Keep going until all the snakes and ladders are on the board. Now play Snakes and Ladders using questions from recent topics in your English classes!



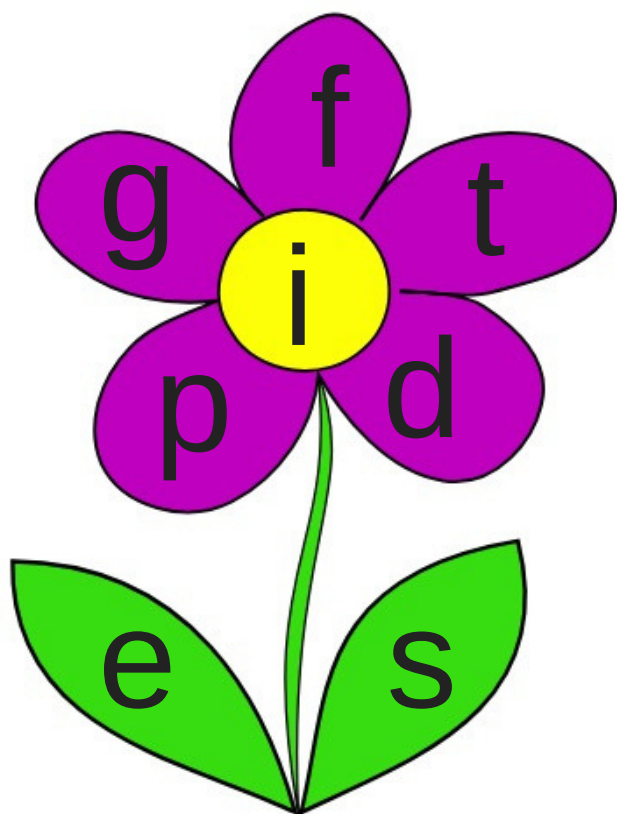
# Power Flower



A nice low-energy warmer for kids classes if you want to ease nicely into your class without too much madness early on. This is a pair or small team warmer, where the kids can use their text book or mini-dictionary to help them.

Put your class into pairs or small groups. Try to get some space between your groups, so they all have some privacy and thinking space.

Next, draw a big flower on the board with petals and a few leaves. On each petal and leaf, write a couple of different letters, similar to the flower show below. Make sure there are at least 1-2 vowels.



Tell your students that they have five minutes to try and write down as many words as they can only using the letters on the flower. They can use each letter more than once in a word, but may not use any other letter than the ones now on the board. The team with the most words at the end of the winner. This is an easy, no-prep warmer to a class.



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# Balloon Bang!



Balloons going bang! Sentence strips flying everywhere and kids scrambling on the floor to make sense of what's come out of the balloon...sounds like a recipe for a lot of fun in your classroom!

Balloons going bang! Sentence strips flying everywhere and kids scrambling on the floor to make sense of what's come out of the balloon...sounds like a recipe for a lot of fun in your classroom!

During the week, pop into your local supermarket and grab a bag of regular balloons and bring them into your school. The idea is that, before blowing up the balloons and tying the knot, you'll be placing into the empty balloon some kind of written content cut into sections, for example, a familiar short-story which has been cut up with scissors into sentence strips.

"I'll huff and I'll puff..."

"...and I'll blow..."

"...your house down!!"

said the Big Bad Wolf.

Other examples, depending on the age and level of your students, could be familiar sentence structures you've been studying, first cut up into individual words, or longer stories cut up into paragraphs. For low levels, you can put in small pictures and the corresponding names of these items, but the idea is much the same, you put in some kind of printed or written content cut up with scissors into smaller sections in the balloon, blow up the balloon and then tie a knot in it. Repeat this a few times so you have a number of balloons, all with identical content rattling around inside.

In class, put your students into small groups. The best thing to do is to have your balloons all different colours and then name your groups that colour. For example, red team has the red balloon, green team has the green balloon, etc. When you're ready, place the balloons spaced out on the floor. Your teams have to run to their balloons, pop them and then put the written content inside in the correct order, whether its words to make sentences, paragraphs to make your short story, or words to pictures, whatever you've put in your balloon. The first team to correctly order it is the winner.

Stuart's Tip: I did this once with individual words cut up to form a long sentence. When the kids stamped on the balloon, the words went all over the classroom and got hopelessly mixed up with each other and the activity failed. Use a different coloured piece of paper, or a different coloured pen, for each balloon. If they do get mixed up, it's not a big problem.





# Spot the Difference

All English teachers reading this right now would have played a Spot the Difference game, probably on a rainy Sunday afternoon or a long car journey somewhere as a kid, you know, where you look closely at two similar pictures, trying to find six small differences. Well actually, playing Spot the Difference in your ESL classroom is an excellent activity to practice language!

Before class, go online and look for simple Spot the Difference puzzles. Try to find a Spot the Difference puzzle which isn't too complex and ones where your students could describe to you what they can see in the picture without searching for too much new language. See the example below:

**A**



**B**



Activity 1: The teacher has one copy of Picture A. Put your class into small teams and have them sitting in groups. Hand each group one copy of Picture B. Have each team take turns to ask a question to try to find differences. For example, "Where is the cat?", "What is the boy doing?", "Is the TV on?", etc. Each group takes turns to ask a question until all differences have been found. The team with the most points wins.

Activity 2: The teacher divides the class into pairs. One student gets Picture A and the other student gets Picture B. Students take it in turns to ask each other questions to Spot the Differences. To stop cheating, move their chairs so they are facing each other with a gap in between.



# Mysterious Bag

This is a lovely little ESL warmer for kids which will immediately pique their interest in your class. It will get their sensory juices flowing and is particularly useful as a warmer if you've been teaching classroom objects, household items, fruits and vegetables, toys, shapes, animals, all common topics in young learner English textbooks.

For this introduction, let's assume you've been learning classroom objects. Go round your home, the office or teacher's room and get hold of some common classroom objects, pen, pencil, rubber, ruler, paper, pencil sharpener, pencil case, etc. Put them all in a bag and bring the bag to class.

At the start of your class, put your students into pairs. Now walk around the class and invite every student to dip their hand into the bag to feel inside (they aren't allowed to peek inside the bag). Give each student just 5-10 seconds to feel inside and then move to the next student. Give every child a chance to feel inside the bag.

At the end, tell your pairs that they must work together to name all of the things they could feel in the bag. Give them a minute or so to discuss. Now ask each pair to name one thing they could feel in the bag. One student from each pair should then come and write the word on the board (you can help them with spelling, if needed, or ask them to bring their book to help).

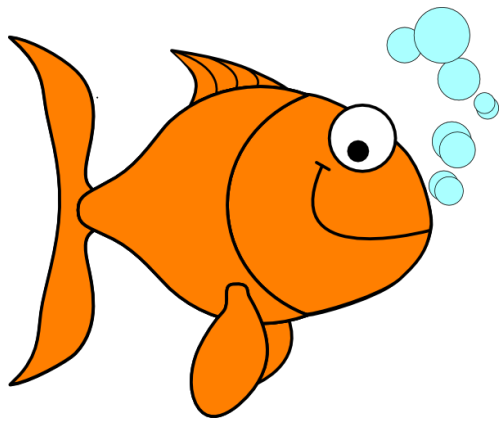
Go around each pair until you have covered all the items in the bag. To finish, tip out the bag and go through the items again.

You can do this activity with fruits and vegetables, household objects, toys, shapes, animals (if you have small models), whatever really. This warmer will get your kids speaking and interacting quickly.

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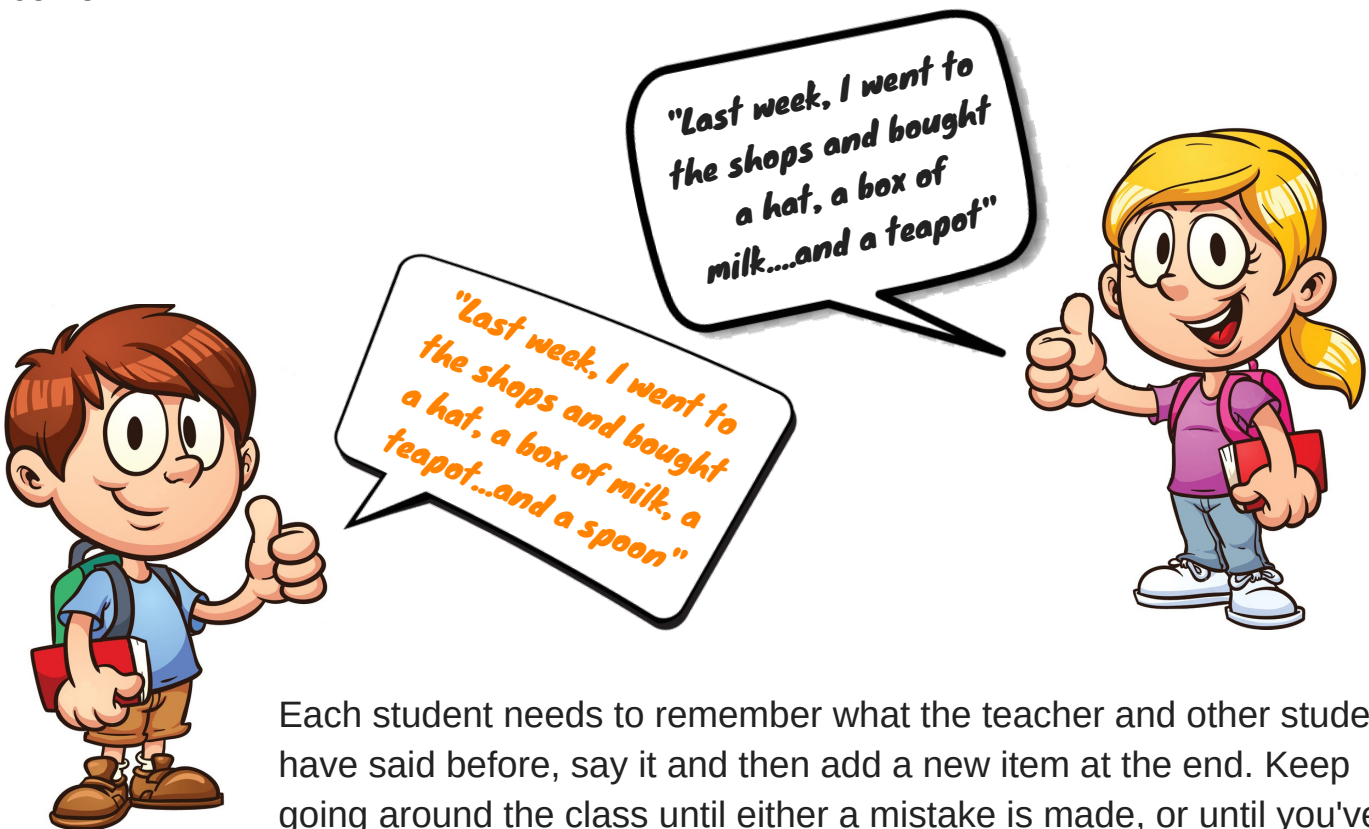


# MEMORY OF A GOLDFISH

This is a devilishly simple warmer, which will get all of your students involved from the get go! This ESL warmer for kids will test their vocabulary skills, their recall ability and, most importantly, their ability to remember what the other kids in the class have said before them.

Get everyone sat in a circle. The teacher starts this one off by saying "Last week, I went to the shops and bought a hat..."

The teacher now prompts the next student to repeat the sentence, but add something new on the end. For example: "Last week, I went to the shops and bought a hat...and a box of milk..."



Each student needs to remember what the teacher and other students have said before, say it and then add a new item at the end. Keep going around the class until either a mistake is made, or until you've reached 15 or so items! Your class will now be nicely warmed up and ready for your lesson.



# CLEOPATRA'S HIEROGLYPH CODES

This activity can be used either as a warmer or an activity if you find that you have a few more unexpected minutes at the end of your class, but have finished your lesson plan.

In a nutshell, you'll be writing out the letters of a secret message on the board using pictures for your students to work out. This secret message is your name.

The students must write down the English words of the pictures you draw on the board. Then take the first letter of each of those words. The kids then put all the letters together and work out that the secret message is your name. For example, my name is Stuart:



Snake

S



Tree

T



Umbrella

U



Alien

A



Rabbit

R



Tomato

T

If there is time, as a follow up, give a piece of paper to each student and allow them five minutes to draw pictures for each letter of their name. You can lend help if kids can't think of vocabulary for any particular letter. They should only draw the pictures at this stage and not write any words.

After five minutes, the students should fold their papers and hand them to the teacher. Now give back the papers randomly, so every student has a new paper. The kids should work out the name of their classmate by solving the puzzle.





An ideal warmer / icebreaker for classes early on in the school term, 'Who Am I?' allows students to learn more about each other, as well as getting to know each other's names, an important component to getting your class bonded, having a close learning environment and for building closer student relationships.

Bring a blindfold or scarf to class and get all your kids stood in a circle. Now blindfold a student (a more outgoing student is your best first pick) and have them stand in the centre of the circle.

Now silently choose another student to come into the middle also. Tell the student that they must say three things about themselves, for example, favourite colour, the name of their pet, what they do at weekends, favourite song, movie, whatever. However, they should say these things in a funny voice...all the kids find this hilarious!

The blindfolded student must listen carefully to the three things the secret student has said. The teacher then asks the blindfolded student what the secret student said (this reinforces the language for all the students in the class), and finally, who they think the secret student is.

Give all the kids a go and then move on.



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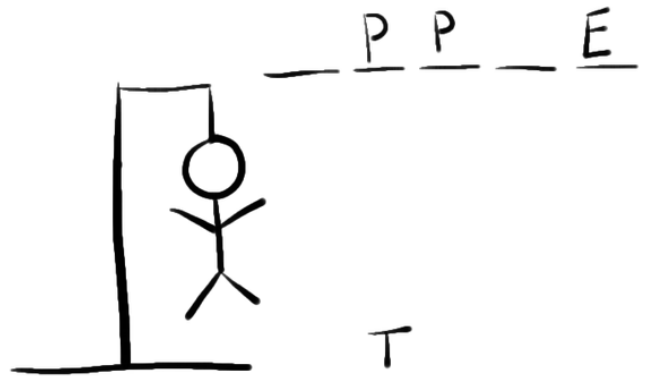
# BRING THE SHARK FIN NEARER!

## An alternative to hangman

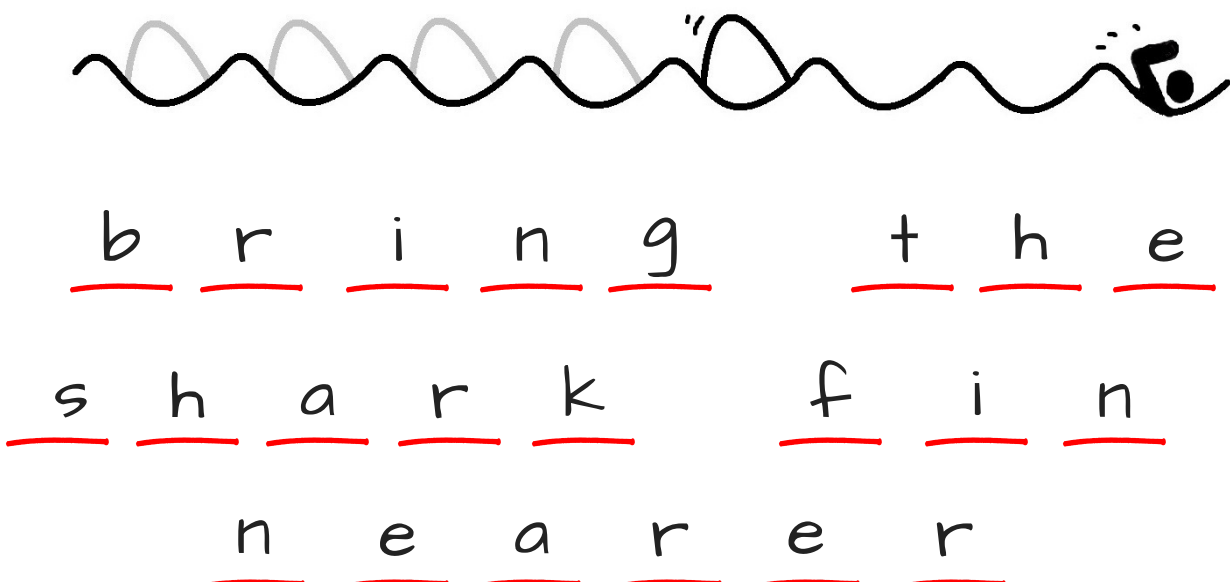
Growing up in England, a popular classroom board game for primary years was Hangman. The teacher would think of a secret word and write the number of spaces at the bottom of the board and the kids would try to guess the letters in the word.

Each time the kids guessed a letter which wasn't in the secret word, then the teacher would draw a man hanging from a gallows bit by bit. The object of the game was for the kids to guess the word before the man was hanged.

As a new English teacher coming to China for the first time, I decided to play this in my primary school class as a warmer. It was clear that the kids in China had never played this game and they were excited. But as I drew more and more, they slowly realised what I was drawing and it dawned on me that it was actually pretty gruesome and perhaps unsuitable for young learner classes.



Here is a good alternative to hangman for ESL classes. You still have a secret word for the kids to guess, but this time, a shark is getting nearer and nearer to a man frantically trying to swim away. It's easy to draw and the kids will love it. Even if your students have played Hangman and are used to it, this will make a nice change for them.



# Running Dictation



Running dictation has been a staple activity for English teachers for many years, passed down from veteran teacher to TEFL teaching newbie since the dawn of time. However, there are many teachers out there which may not have ever come across Running Dictation before, and if you are one of these TEFL teachers, then this page will come as a real treat to you! What makes running dictation so popular among English teachers and ESL students is because it practices all four main English language skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening.

In class, divide your students into pairs. Each pair of students will need a pen and paper, and also an area to write, whether it's on their desk or sitting on the floor.

The next thing the teacher will need to do is to prepare a short paragraph or dialogue, printed out on paper. Make sure that you print this out big and clear, as your students will need to be reading this from a metre or so away.

Stick the text on the wall at the other end of the classroom a bit higher than the height of your students' heads. When you're ready, shout 'GO!' and one student from each pair (Student A) needs to run to the text, read a part of it, try to remember it, then run back to their partner (Student B). Student A tells Student B as much as they can remember from the text on the wall and Student B needs to listen carefully and write this down. Student A then needs to run back to the wall to read more, then return to Student B to tell more of what is written on the wall at the other end of the classroom. Student B again writes this down.

After 2-3 minutes, the teacher shouts 'CHANGE!', and now Student B must do the running and reading / speaking and Student A stays at the desk to Listen / Write. The first team to finish writing the text is the winner. This is a brilliant activity, which all children enjoy. Importantly, they'll be practicing all four key language skills by playing Running Dictation. Remember to shout change pretty often, so every student get to practice all skills and do some running about.

## Rules to remember:

1. Kids can't shout the text from the wall back to their partner. They must run backwards and forwards with the information
2. No pens are allowed at the wall. No writing of notes to help them remember.
3. Kids cannot run to the wall, run back and also do the writing all by themselves.



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# DRAW THE JOB

Quite often during your English teaching career, you'll find yourself teaching a unit about jobs and occupations. If you're currently teaching a topic about jobs, then this ESL game will fit your class perfectly.



It takes about 20-25 minutes and allows your students to practice jobs and occupations vocabulary.

Before class in the teacher's office, prepare some mini-cards of some common jobs and occupations, such as teacher, doctor, shop worker, businessman, baker, butcher, carpenter, etc. Ideally, these should be jobs your class has already been studying. A good way to do this is to get a cheap pack of playing cards and then sticking white paper onto the card and writing / drawing the job, however slips of paper work just as well if you're in a rush.



In class, divide your class into 2-3 teams. Clean off the whiteboard and have all your teams sitting together in groups. Have one student from the first team come to the front of the class. The student takes one of your job cards and then have a look. They cannot show anyone else the card. Take the card back from the student and put it to the back of the pile.

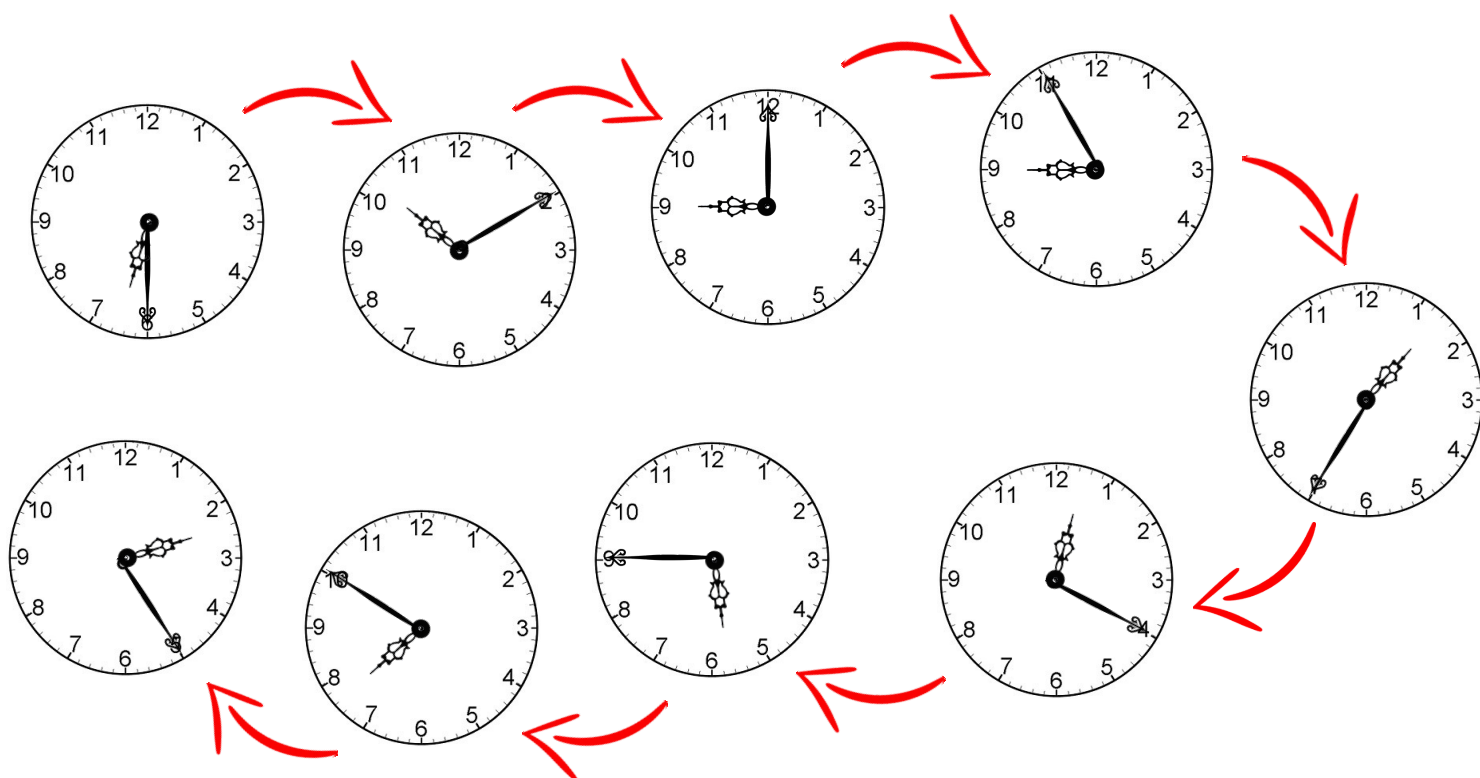
The student now has 30 seconds to draw a picture of the job which they chose. After 30 seconds their team can try to guess what the job is. If the team guess correctly, then they get one point. If they can't guess correctly, then one of the other teams gets to try. If another team guess correctly, then they get two points. Keep taking turns until all your job cards have run out. The team with the most points is the winner.





# Time Flipper

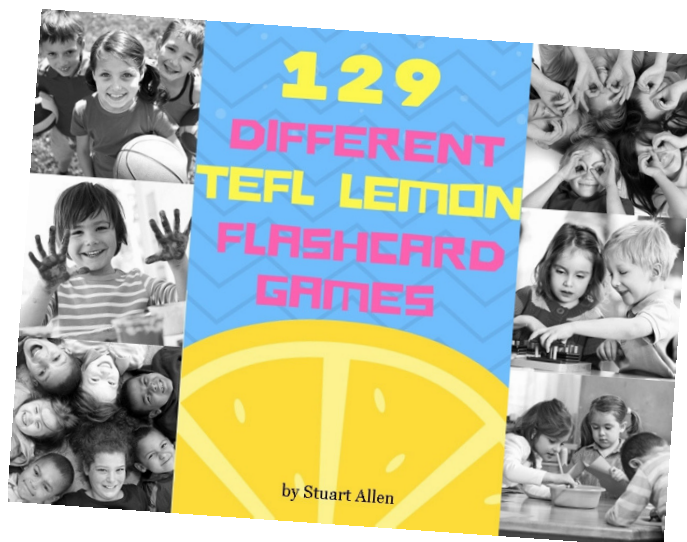
This activity is especially for those classes where you're teaching kids how to tell the time. There's a few different ways you can put a twist on this game, but the basics remain the same. For this activity, bring in a few coins from home. For this activity, bring in a few coins from home. On the whiteboard, draw about 20 clock faces or so with different times like below.



Divide your class into two or three teams. Put three board magnets on the first clock. If you don't have board magnets or your whiteboard is acrylic, then you can use a different coloured board marker dot or coloured paper and sticky tape. Ask the first team what the time is on the clock their marker is on. If they get it right, then they can come up to the front and flip a coin. If they get heads, then they move their marker on two clocks. If they get tails, then they move their marker on one clock. It's then the next team's turn.

Each team take turns to say what the time is and flipping the coin. The first team to make it to the end is the winning team. You can also play this game by drawing the time on paper plates and putting them in a winding line on the floor, that's super cool!





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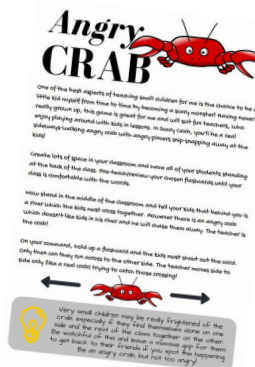
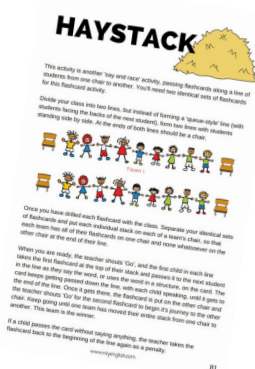
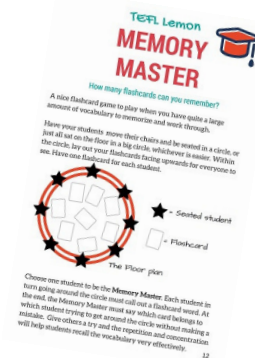
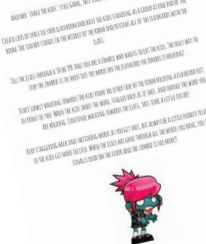
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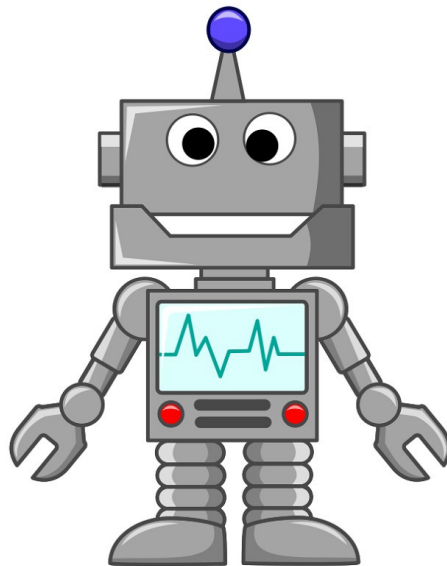


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The Walking  
**ZOMBIE**





# ROBOT ON ROBOT OFF

This game is perfect for those who teach very young children at kindergarten. Pre-teach your class 'robot' and then have the kids show you their best robot impressions...the kids love this!

Now tell your class that when they hear 'Robot ON!', they have to move around the class like a robot. When the teacher calls out 'Robot OFF!', the kids have to freeze, like a robot which has run out of power.

This activity is especially useful when you're teaching the short 'o' sound in phonics.

As a follow on from this activity, you can add in things like: 'robot stand up', 'robot sit down', 'robot touch your nose', 'robot show me four fingers', 'robot read a book', etc'. A great way of putting a twist on a Simon Says activity to teach verbs, imperatives, body parts, etc.



زبانکده اَوس

مرکز تخصصی تهیه آزمونهای مراکز آموزش زبان

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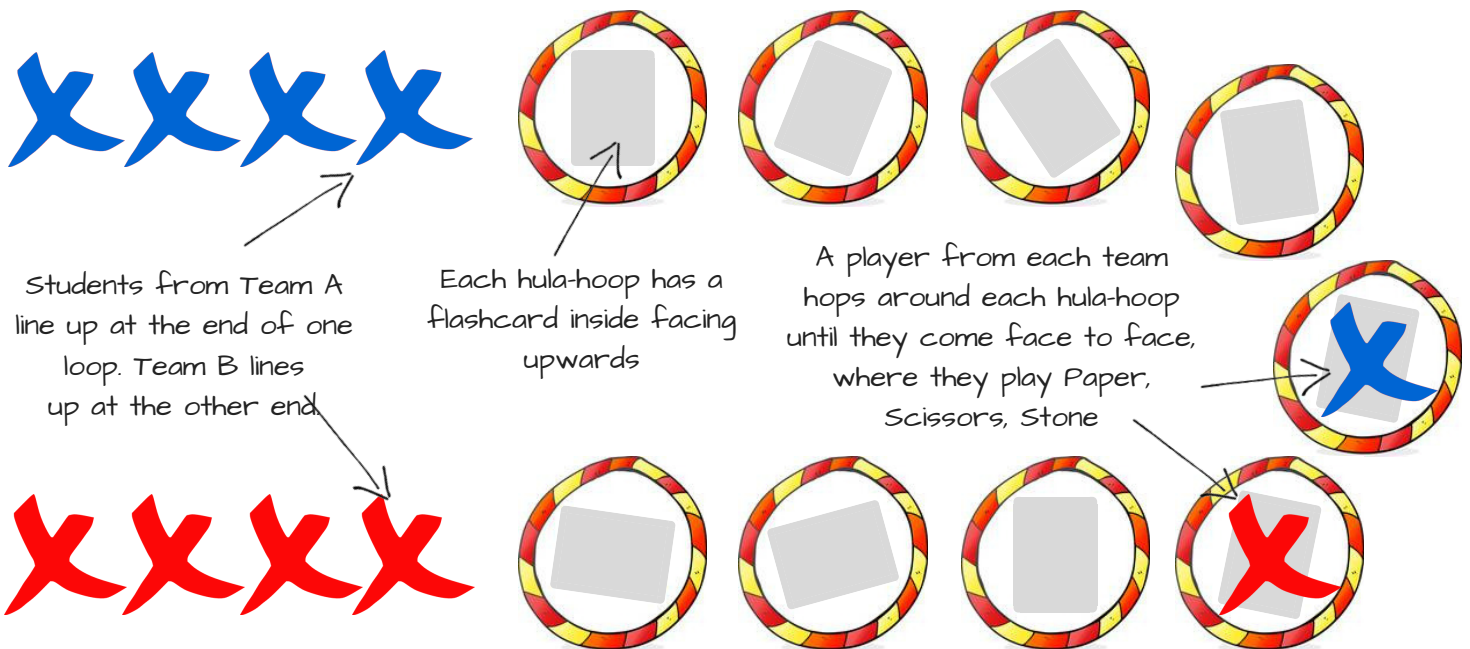




# Hula-Hoops

## STEAL

A cool flashcard game, this will certainly be a big time favourite for your kids, which you can play often over the year. A high-energy game, with excellent repetition and review of key vocab for your English class. Make a loop of hula-hoops, with a different upturned flashcard in each.



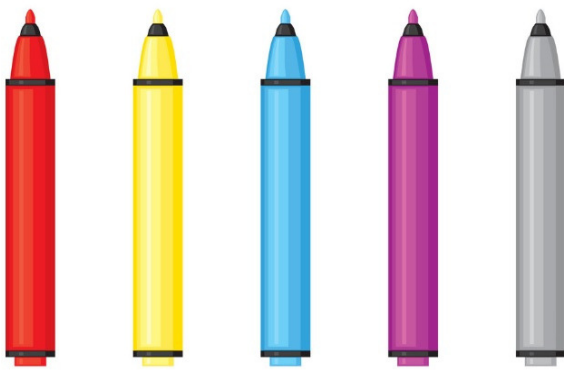
Divide your class into two teams and have them standing in two lines at the end of the hula-hoop loop. When you say go, one player from each team must start hopping along the flashcard loops, saying the word inside the hoop as they go along. Very quickly, both students will come face to face. They now play a game of paper, scissors, stone. The loser must run back to the end of their line, while the winner continues on hopping around each flashcard hoop trying to reach the other team.

As soon as the student who has just lost Paper, Scissors, Stone gets back to the end of their team, then the next student can start hopping along the loop trying to block the approaching student. As soon as they come face to face on the loop, then they play Paper, Scissors and Stone again. The object is for a player to go all the way around the loop to reach the other team. If they can, then they can take two students from the front of the other team to join their team. The first team to run out of players is the loser!

# Colourful Cups



A super easy game to set up. All you'll need is some paper cups, a coin and five different coloured felt tip pens. The colour of the pens doesn't matter as long as they are all different colours.

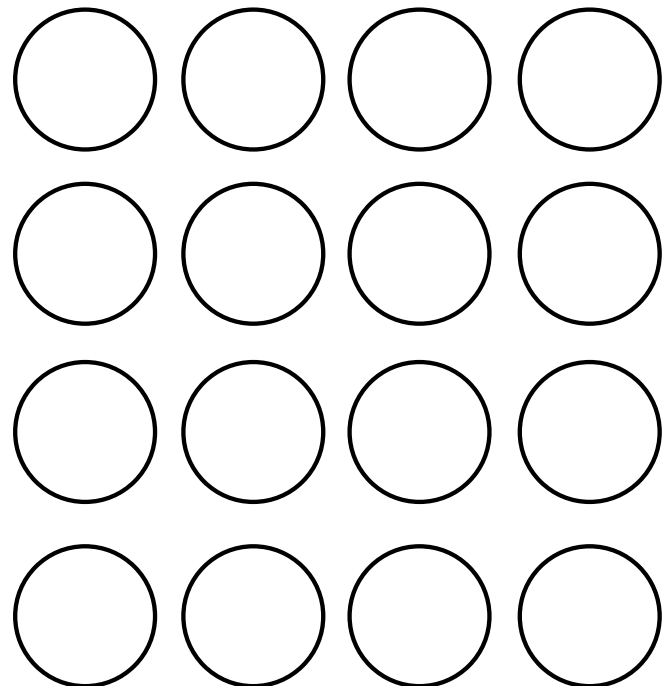


For this example, we'll use a red marker, a yellow marker, a blue marker, a purple marker and a grey marker.

Take 16 paper cups and make a big coloured dot at the bottom of the inside of each cup. Only use one pen per cup, but use all of your colours by the time you've made a dot in all 16 cups. You should have a 3 or so cups, all with either a red, yellow, blue, purple or grey dot at the bottom, making 16 cups in total.

Divide your class into two teams. Place your 16 cups on the floor bottom side down. You should not be able to see the coloured dots on the inside of the cups. Get all your students to turn around and hide the coin under one of the cups. Now get them to turn back again.

Ask a question to one student in the first team. If they get it right, they can turn over any one cup to try to find the coin. The chances are that they won't find the coin, but if they find a cup with a **red dot**, then they get 2 points. **Yellow** = 3 points. **Blue** = 4 points. **Purple** = 5 points. **Grey** = 6 points. Once a cup has been turned over, then take it away leaving one less cup on the floor to choose from.



Keep taking turns asking questions and turning over a cup one by one, making sure to keep a tally of points on the board. If a student finds the coin, then their team get a bonus 5 points + whatever colour the cup was. The team with the most points wins the game. Best of three games wins.





# WONDER WORDS

There are several ways that you can run with this activity, depending on your teaching aims and the age / level of your students. In a nutshell, you'll be sticking a different letter on the back of your students and having them form words by standing in a line in the correct order.

## Variation 1: CVC words

If you are teaching early reading with a kindergarten or primary class, then write a number of CVC words, for example, pig, cat, man, hot, hug, on the board. Put your children into groups of three and get each group to choose a word from the board. Now, on a pieces of paper, write each letter from their word and stick one letter on the backs of each student. Each student can see the letter on the backs of their two team mates, but not their own. The kids must work together to stand in order with their backs to the class to make the word. Take a photo with your phone to show them and give lots of praise when they get it right.

For slightly older children, write a list of different CVC on the board, but don't tell them which word you've chosen. They must get into order and tell you which word you secretly chose for them. They work this out by talking to each other and seeing which letters they have on their backs and then checking the board. For younger children, have one group come out at a time. If you have many children mingling, then they'll get confused and the activity will fail.

## Variation 2: First group to make their word

This activity is for older children who can already read with confidence. This game will take a little bit of thinking by the teacher, but not too much.

For the class you want to play this game in, think about how many students you have in your class. Let's say you have 23 students. Now, look in their text book and choose a few words you've been studying recently. Try to choose words of equal or similar length. For example, let's say they've been learning verbs, you could choose **play, sleep, watch, jump, drink**. The number of letters for your chosen words should equal the number of kids in your class. Stick one letter on the backs of your students and then write the different words you've chosen on the board. The first team to stand in a line with their correct word is the winner! **Tip:** Consider any possible absences and have a few different shorter words you could use in case.



# GUESS THE ANIMAL

This is for elementary+ students. Your kids will be describing many different animals, how they look and what they can and can't do. Teams work together to try and work out the mystery animal using this information.

Pre-teach / review a number of different animals. You'll probably want to review at least 15 animals using flashcards, if possible. Whilst you're reviewing the animals, ask your students questions about each animal, what they look like, what they can do, to name any body parts, etc. This will be perfect prep for this activity.

Put your students into teams. Anywhere between 2 to 5 teams will be fine. Get your students sat together and get them to choose an animal each. They shouldn't let any other team know which animal they've chosen. The idea is to guess the other teams' animals.

Each team need to ask four questions to the team to their right. These questions are:

1. Are you \_\_\_\_\_? (big, small, fast, fat, ugly, etc) Students can only pick one adjective to ask about.
2. Can you \_\_\_\_\_? (swim, fly, run, jump, etc) Students can only pick one verb to ask about.
3. Do you have \_\_\_\_\_? adj + body part (short tail, long ears) Students can only pick one adj + body part to ask about.
4. Are you a/an \_\_\_\_\_ (teams now guess the animal of the team to their right)

Any team which can guess the secret animal of the team next to them are winners. You can play this a couple of times, as it is excellent language practice. Try to get different students to ask questions each time. Don't let one student do everything.



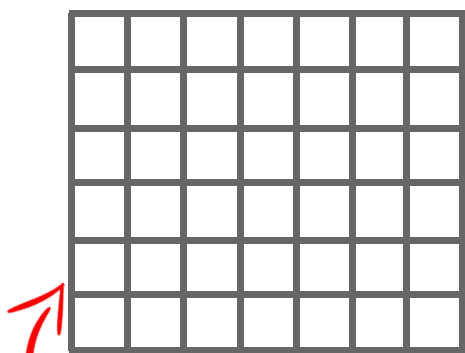
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# Four in a Row

We've all played Four in a Row or Connect-4, where two players take it in turns to drop in either a circular **red token** or a circular **yellow token** into a grid to try to make a line of four in a row. It's a really simple game to play, with simple rules. This makes it perfect for the classroom.

There's two ways you can do this; the easier way (which won't look as good), or the harder way (which will look great). I'll explain the easier way first.

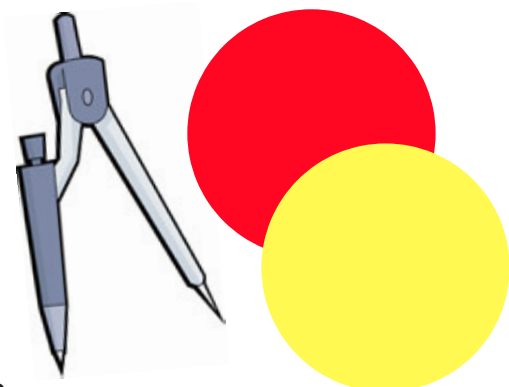


Tokens can't hover in the air. They must either be along the bottom of the grid or resting atop another token, k=just like the real Connect 4.

**EASIER WAY:** Get a black board marker and draw a big 7 x 6 grid on the board. Use two other colour board markers to draw big colourful circles for each team.

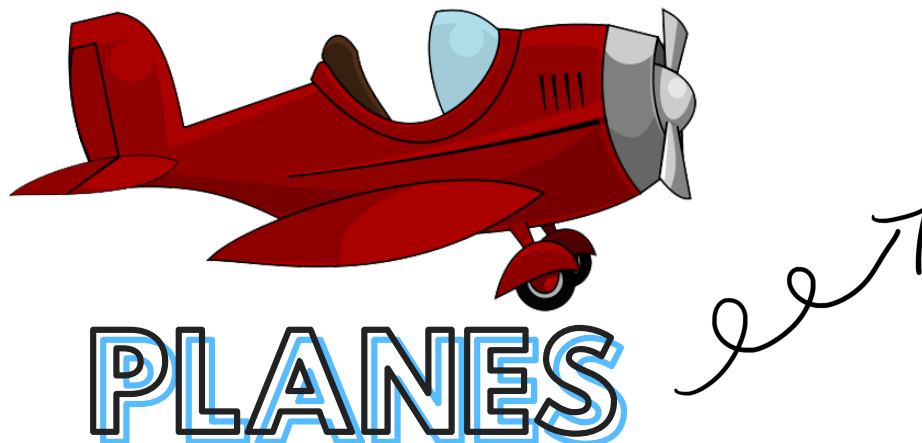
Divide your class into two teams. Assign a colour to each team, let's say red and yellow. Ask a question to Team A. If they get it right, they can colour a red circle anywhere along the bottom line of the grid. Now ask a question to Team B. If they get it right, then they can colour a yellow circle, anywhere along the bottom row of the grid (or resting upon another coloured circle). Keep going taking turns until one team have four of their colour in a row (either vertically, horizontally or diagonally)

**HARDER WAY:** Get a black board marker and draw a big 7 x 6 grid on the board. Draw it as big as you can. Get a ruler and measure the size of one of the squares. Using a compass set, along with red and yellow paper, make 21 red circles and 21 yellow circles to act as tokens. If you have a laminator, then you can laminate each circle, so they will last for many years in your school.



Use a compass set to make red and yellow tokens. Team A get 21 tokens at the start of the game and Team B get 21 yellow tokens. Take it in turns to ask teams questions and they can use sticky tape to stick their tokens on the board. The first team to make Four in a Row is the winning team.





Got some scrap paper sitting around the office, grab a load of scrap A4 paper, hit the classroom and your prep is done for this one! This is a fun ESL activity, which all kids love and is not level specific. You can simply change the questions you ask to make it easier or more difficult.

Give each child in your class a piece of A4 paper and get them to make a paper plane. Give them only a couple of minutes to do this and lend a hand to any students who are struggling.



When they are all done, sit with your students and assign different objects in your classroom different points. For example, the teacher's desk is worth 5 points, the teacher's chair is 10 points, the door is 10 points, the wastepaper bin is 20 points, etc.

Now put all your students into a few teams. Ask a student a question from the book that they've recently been studying. If they get it right, then they can come to the middle of the room, choose a target and throw their plane at it. If they hit their target, then they get that number of points.

Write up the points on the board. After everyone has had a question, then the game is over. The team with the most points wins. If a child doesn't get their question correct and doesn't get a throw, they may feel sad. Maybe let them throw for a target but for half the points. Have fun and move on!



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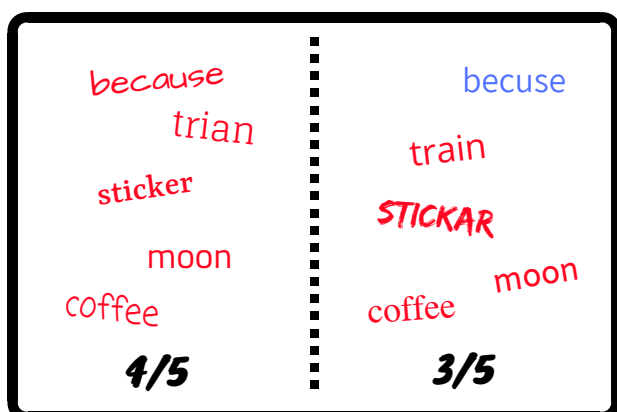
# Can't See Spelling!

Although spelling tests are exceptionally useful in learning English (they help with writing better, helping others understand you and students understanding how English language works), they can be quite boring and monotonous for kids. But spelling tests don't have to be boring.

This ESL spelling game gets kids thinking about familiar words and how they are spelled in a fun way. All you need are two blindfolds, a whiteboard, two whiteboard markers and some space in your classroom and you're good to go.

Divide your class into two teams and have them make two lines facing the board. Blindfold the first two students and give them a board marker.

Have your teams spin around the two blindfolded students three times and have them facing in the wrong direction. The teacher now says a word that the students have recently been studying. The blindfolded students now have to find their way to the board (their team mates can guide them using English, but not touch them).



At the end of the game, your whiteboard will probably look something like this. Correct words right at the end of the game.

Once at the board, each student must try to spell the word the teacher has said with the blindfold still on. Give them 10-15 seconds to spell the word, then stop them. Take the blindfolds off and the two students go to the back of the line. Leave the two words as they are and blindfold the next two students.

Keep going, giving each new pair of students a different word until every one has had a go. At the end of the game, go through your list of words, giving one point for any words spelled correctly. The team with the most points is the winner!





# 30-Second Artist

This is perfect for smaller classes of six or less kids, but with a little jiggling in the set up, you could play this activity with a larger class, although I'd say that 15 kids would probably be your limit.

Give each child in your class a board marker and tell them to all come and face the board. Draw a square for each child along the bottom of the whiteboard as a drawing space.

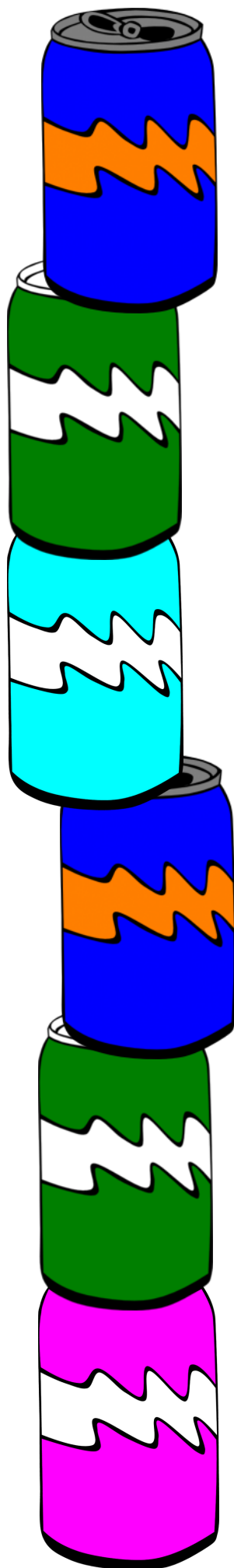
When you're ready say a word or short sentence and your kids must draw this in their box. For example, if you say 'apple', then all the kids must draw an apple in their box.

If you say 'a woman running', then they must draw a woman running in their box. They only have 30 seconds to finish their drawing (have a little whistle or horn to show their time is up). Go along and give a point to the best drawing.

Do about 8-10 different words, award a prize to your winner and move on with the class. Job done!

If you have more than five students, then space at the board will be an issue and you'll get tussling going on. Instead, hand out a sheet of A4 and divide it into eight sections. At the end, you can go around having a look at their work and award a prize for the winner.

# Soda Can Tower



Got a ton of empty soda and coke cans at home or in your school? Maybe you have a teacher in your office or kids in class that drink fizzy drinks? However you do this doesn't matter, but over the space of a few weeks, collect as many empty soda cans as you can, wash them out, and bring them to school. You're all set for a fun ESL classroom warmer or game.

Divide up your class into teams of 3-4 students. Have them look through their text book and choose ten or so words they've recently been studying. Get them to write these words down on a piece of paper. After a few minutes, take away their paper and ask each group to tell you a few words they chose. Speak to each group. They'll now be well-prepped for the Soda Can Tower Game!

Make lots of space in your classroom and have one student come out and hand them an empty can. They say one of their words and place the can down on the floor.

Now choose a student from the next team and hand them an empty can. They must repeat the first word, then balance on the second can and add a new word. A student from the third team now comes up, takes a can from the teacher, repeats the first two words and places on a third can.

Keep going around the circle, with each new student repeating all the words from the first can to the top of the tower and adding on a new can. Keep building until the tower falls over. The team that successfully added the last can without the tower toppling over is the winner. This is a good activity for remembering vocabulary in a fun way.

# Clothes Race

As an English teacher to young children, you would have taught items of clothing to your students at some point and if you haven't yet, you will do. 'Clothing' appears in nearly all textbooks for young ESL learners.



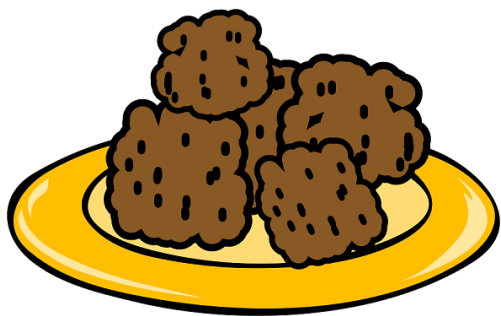
For this ESL game, you'll need to prepare a big bag of clothes to bring to class. Speak to other teachers in your school and ask if you can borrow some clothing for this activity if you can't get hold of clothing for the opposite sex. You'll need: trousers, jeans, shorts, dresses, skirts, hats, socks, shoes, trainers, shirts, T-shirts, coats, etc. Try to get all of these and two of each, if you possibly can.

There are a few ways you can run with this activity, just choose what works best for you and your students.

**Idea 1:** The teacher calls out an item of clothing, for example, 'jeans'. Have one of your students come out, find the correct item, hold them up saying 'these are my jeans', then putting them on. They get a point for choosing the correct item and saying the sentence correctly. Now repeat with other clothing and different students.

**Idea 2:** Have your students form two lines with a pile of clothing opposite each line at the end of the classroom. Make sure your piles have equal clothing, for example, a T-shirt in both piles, a skirt in both piles, etc. When you say 'Go', and yell an item of clothing. One child from each team must run to the pile, find the item of clothing the teacher called out, repeat what it is, put it on and run back to their team.

Now the teacher yells a new item and the next students run out to find this and put it on. Keep racing until one pile of clothes is all gone. This team is the winner. At the end, get each child to take off the clothing at the front of the class saying what it is as a review. Be wary of male students wearing female clothes, as they may be embarrassed. You can avoid this situation by being smart with the clothes you call out.



# Meatballs!

This is a really cool game which is fun and actually requires quite a bit of skill! In short, your students will be blowing ping-pong balls off of a plate and saying sentences while they go.

Before class, go to a shop or supermarket and buy ten ping-pong balls and a plastic plate. Buy nine balls of one colour i.e. orange and one ball a different colour i.e white.



Number each ball from 1-10 using a permanent marker, get your plastic plate and head to class!

On the board, write ten sentences using structures your students have recently been learning. Number your sentences 1-10. When you're ready put your students into pairs and get the first pair to stand up. The two students face each other holding the plastic plate between them. The teacher then puts all the ping-pong balls on the plate.

The idea is to blow the orange balls off the plate one by one, leaving only the white one on at the end! One of the pair goes first and blows off an orange ball. Let's say she blows off ball #7 onto the floor, she now has to say sentence #7 on the board. It is now the other person's go. Keep going until all the orange balls have come off the plate. The kids then finally say sentence #10 on the board. If the white ball is last on the plate, then the team get 10 points. If the white ball is accidentally blown off the plate with one orange ball left on, then they get nine points, two orange balls eight point, and so on. Give each pair a go.

Time for Round 2! Now rub off your sentences and leave just one word from each sentence on the board. For example, in Round 1, maybe one of your sentences was 'I have never eaten hamburgers', rub off all of the other words and just leave 'hamburgers'. Get the first pair up and have them play again, trying to blow the orange balls off. This time, when a ball comes off, they still need to say the same sentence i.e. 'I have never eaten hamburgers' but they only have a single word to prompt them. This is a good activity for speaking and pronunciation practice. The team with most points after two Rounds is the winner!





# Wheel of Fortune



Wheel of Fortune is an American and British TV quiz show, where contestants answer questions and then spin a huge wheel to see how much money they can win (or lose!)

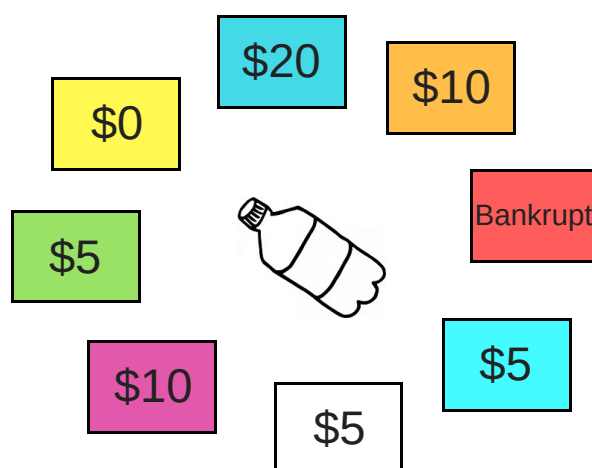
The random wheel spin and the drama of how many points a team will get, really makes this an ideal classroom game to play with your kids. All you need to do is to construct a wheel, get some questions and print out some play money.

Before class, prepare your questions that you're going to be asking your students. These questions could be recently studied things, vocabulary items, finish the sentence, what's this sound, categories, whatever you like! Make the questions relevant and suitable to the level of your students.

You'll also need to print out some dollar bills to give to each team as they win and lose money throughout the game. Students find it more engaging and holding play money that the teacher gives them during the game, but this part isn't essential, you can simply write how much each team has won or lost on the whiteboard if you are short of planning time.

In class, put your students into teams and have them sit together. Ask the first question and, if they get it correct, then they can spin the board to see how much money their team wins or loses. It's now the next team's turn. Ask each team 5-10 questions each in turn. The team with the most money at the end is the winner!

The easiest way to make your game board is to simply get an empty plastic bottle, clear a large space on your classroom floor and write different values on A4 paper in a circle.







## Say it... **LOUD!**

This is a super-easy warmer for kids to get your class off to a good start. It's particularly useful to view vocabulary from the previous lesson.

On little pieces of paper, write down vocabulary that you've recently been studying. Under the word, in a different coloured pen, write how you want your students to say the word:

bedroom

(very quietly)

kitchen

(very quickly)

bathroom

(deep voice)

To get this activity going, say a word you've recently been studying and tell them they need to guess the word. Say this word in a very silly high-pitched voice. Ask your students to guess what word you said. Now do a second word in a deep and slow voice, again the need to guess. Lastly, say a third and final word as quickly as you can, which they must guess. Your students will now be prepped and ready for your warmer.

Choose a more confident student to come up first and have a try. Give them one of your words and tell them that they need to read it out in the way the red pen says. The students must guess the word on the paper! This is a lot of fun and a fantastic way to liven up your kids, whilst reviewing vocab.

If a child doesn't understand how to say the word, then simply whisper the word in their ear for them to imitate. This works very well. Enjoy!

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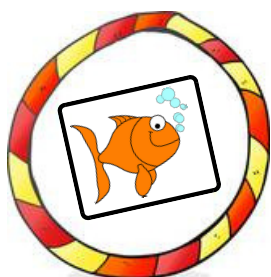


# Halo!

Get all of your kids sat on the floor in front of the teacher. As a class, review some recently studied vocab and/or sentences. You can hold up the open text book and ask questions about the page and the pictures, getting your students to answer using whole sentences, if possible.

When you feel that your students are comfortable with the words or sentences, then put your students into pairs or three's. Now set up a line of hula-hoops on the floor.

In each hula-hoop, put a flashcard or a printed picture of the words you've just been reviewing as a group.



The fish  
can swim



The rabbit  
can jump



The horse  
can run



The monkey  
can climb

Have the first pair or three of students come to the front of the line of hula-hoops. When the teacher says 'GO!', the students need to stand together inside the first hula-hoop, say the word or sentence (depending on the level of your students), and then bend down to pick up the hula-hoop, raise it over their heads and then put it on the floor next to the picture. They then move on to stand in the second hula-hoop and repeat. Keep going until the team has reached the end and then give them lots of thumbs up and praise.

Set the hoops back up and get the next pair of students in. If you like, you can change the order of the pictures to mix things up.



# Baseball

This activity can either be used as a warmer at the start of class or as an activity to add a little writing and spelling practice for a vocabulary session. All you'll need is some scrap paper, a whiteboard marker and an inflatable toy baseball bat. You can get these easily in toy shops or online.



Get some scrap A4 paper from the teacher's office. On each piece, write in big letters a topic you've covered in your text books this term. This could be food, clothes, toys, animals, places, whatever. Screw up the paper into a ball and write a new word on a piece of A4. Keep going until you have 5-10 big balls of paper with different topics on.

Put your classes into teams and have each team choose one person to be the batter. Play papers, scissors, stone to settle any squabbles. Have the batter come to the front and give them the bat. The teacher does an easy throw and the child must try to hit the paper ball. If they miss, then give the bat to a new team member and try again. When they've hit the ball, they can open it to see their topic. They then turn to those pages in their book and write 5-10 vocab items from the pages.

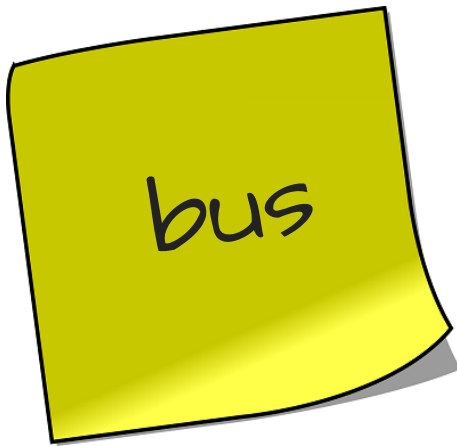


Each team has a turn and each team has a separate topic. When they've finished, go around ticking correct words and giving lots of praise for their writing.

# Fetching the Post

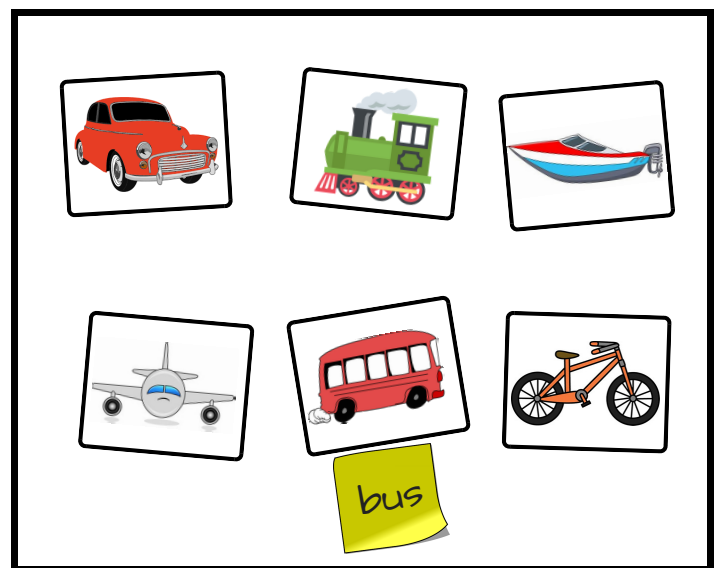


This is a nice find 'n' match activity, which will get your students up out of their chairs matching words to pictures or written definitions on the board. All you'll need is a pack of sticky notes and some pictures (or written definitions for higher levels.)



Before class, write a word your class has recently been studying on a sticky post-it note. Write out many different notes, each with a different word. Make as many sticky notes as there are students in your class. For example, if you have ten students, then make ten sticky note words. Stick them in different places around your classroom. Time for class!

In class, stick up or draw pictures on the board for the words you have. Now choose a student one at a time to look around the class to find a sticky note. The child then brings it to the front and sticks it on the correct picture. They can either say the word for lower levels or make a sentence using the word for higher levels. For older kids, you can have them stick the sticky note next to the written meaning of the word + make a sentence with it. Keep going until there are no more words.



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This activity is good for lower levels to practice Yes / No questions, for example, 'Can you .....' (Yes, I can / No, I can't) or 'Do you like .....' (Yes, I do / No, I don't).

Get a rope and divide your classroom into two sides. One side of the rope is YES and the other side of the rope is NO. Stand at the front of the class at the end of the rope and ask a question, for example, 'can you swim?' All the kids that can swim go to the YES side and all the kids that can't swim go to the NO side. Ask random kids on each side the question and then get them to answer i.e. Yes, I can swim / No, I can't swim.

Keep asking different questions and have the kids moving around. Remember who you've asked and bring the activity to an end when everyone has had a go at speaking.

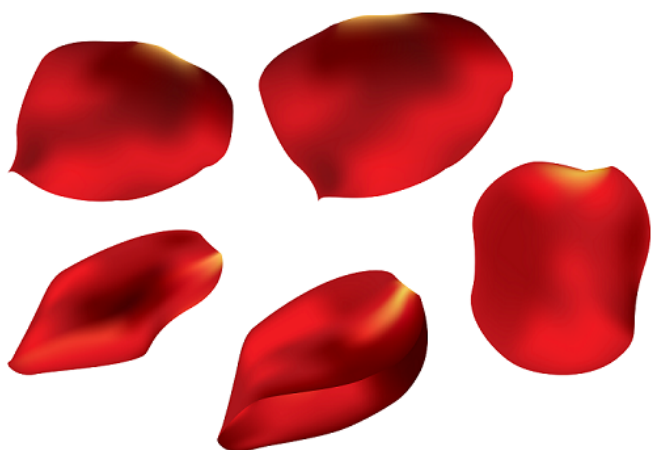
**Yes, I can.....**

**Yes, I do.....**

**No, I can't.....**

**No, I don't.....**



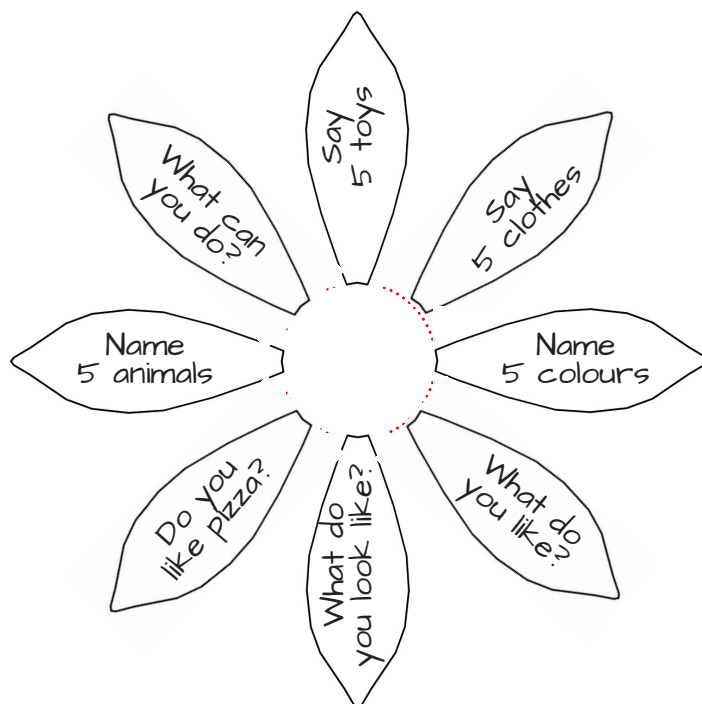
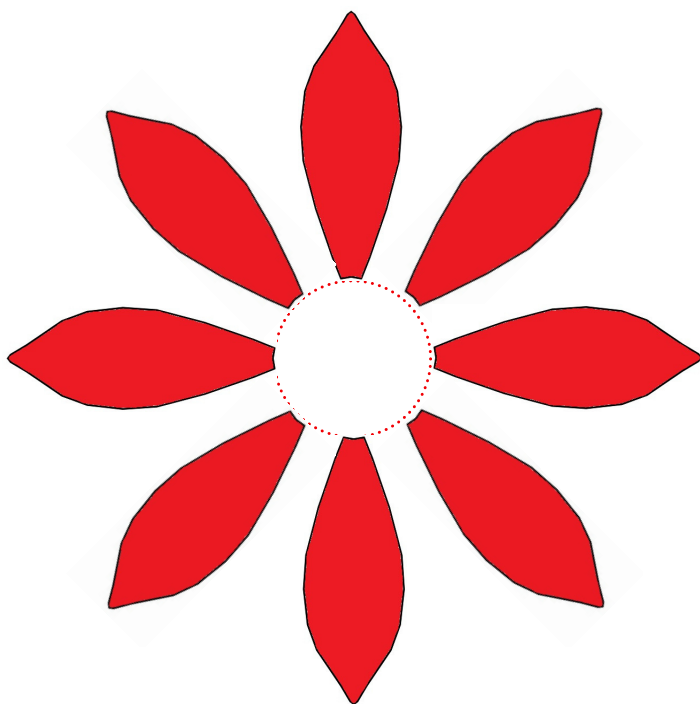


# ROSE PETALS

This is a lovely idea to bring some warmth and love into your classroom. It's super easy to prepare and will really grip your students' attention.

To make a long story short, you'll be bringing to class paper flowers with paper petals. The students pluck off the petals one by one to reveal questions or topics written on the back of the petals.

Before class, print out or hand draw a flower with lots of petals. Draw the petals so that they are thin near the centre of the flower and so easy for the kids to tear off. Make enough flowers so you have one petal for each student.



Bring your flowers into class and stick the middle of the flower with sticky tack to the white board coloured-side out. Have one student at a time come to the front and tear off a petal to answer the hidden question written on the back!

# Jenga

Jenga is that game made up of wooden blocks; I'm sure you've all played it. Players have to take a block out from somewhere within the tower and place it on top. As each player goes, the tower gets higher and higher, but also more unstable. Eventually a player will cause the tower to fall down and they are the loser.



If you don't have a Jenga set at home, or another teacher doesn't have one you can borrow, then they are available online and are pretty cheap. You can also get a lot of mileage in the ESL classroom with them, too.

Take your class text book and find some words you've been recently studying. Using a pencil, write one vocabulary item on each block, this will take you 5-10 minutes. Put the pieces back into the box and come to class.

In class, put your kids into teams and build the tower on a table or on the floor. Ask a player from one team to go first and pull a block out, say a sentence using the word and then balance the block on top. It is now the next team's turn. Teams keep taking turns, using the word in a sentence and putting on top. Keep going until the tower falls. This team is the loser. For lower levels, you can stick little pictures on and they say the single word.

Stu's tip: I wouldn't play this game with more than ten students or with very young kids. With larger classes and younger kids, the energy levels will be too high and, sooner or later, a naughty kid will run over and kick the tower down for sure. Guarantee! Be smart and spot potential problems before they happen and don't get too mad if a child does purposely knock it over, kids will be kids! Smaller classes, older children.



# Back to the Board



This is an ESL classic known around the world, but if you're new to teaching, or maybe just in the wrong place at the wrong time, then you may have missed this...until now! This activity is usually better with older, higher level children as they can describe words with more confidence.

Put your class into small teams and have one player from the first team come to the front. They now sit, facing the class, with their back to the board (they are not allowed to turn around and look at the board).

The teacher now writes some words on the board which the students have recently been studying or should know. Their team now has 60 seconds to describe as many of the words as possible to their team mate. After 60 seconds, count how many words they got right and then it's the next team's turn. Keep going until every team has had a turn.

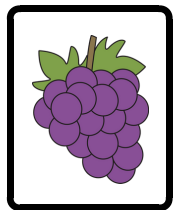
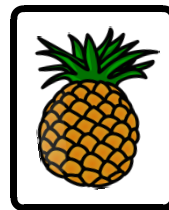
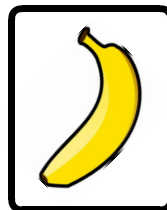
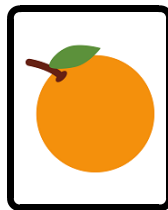
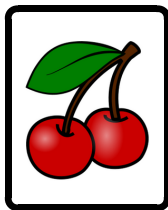
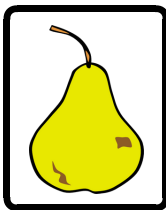
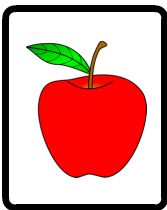


# Thor's HAMMER

For this activity, you'll need a soft inflatable bat, or better still, an inflatable Thor's Hammer (you can get them cheaply online!)



You'll also need some flashcards of recently studied topics. Try to get around 10 flashcards. Pre-teach your flashcards and then put them out in a low row at the front of the class.



Quickly before class, get a scrap piece of paper and write down a random sequence from 1-15 for your flashcards.

Divide your class into four teams. Give one player from the first team the hammer and tell them the first word on your list i.e. 'pear'. The student walks to the pear flashcard, hits it with the hammer and shouts 'pear'. Now it's the next team's turn. The teacher calls the next word i.e. 'pineapple'. This time, the player from team two must firstly hit the pear flashcard shouting 'pear' and then the pineapple flashcard shouting 'pineapple'.

Now it's team three's turn. The teacher calls out the third word from the list i.e. 'banana'. The student must remember the sequence so far, first hitting pear, then pineapple, and finally banana, all the time shouting out the words as they go. Keep going round until one team makes a mistake with the order. This is a tough vocab game and don't let anyone make notes!

1. pear
2. pineapple
3. banana
4. orange
5. banana
6. grapes
7. apple
8. cherries
9. cherries
10. pear
11. apple
12. orange
13. orange
14. grapes
15. cherries

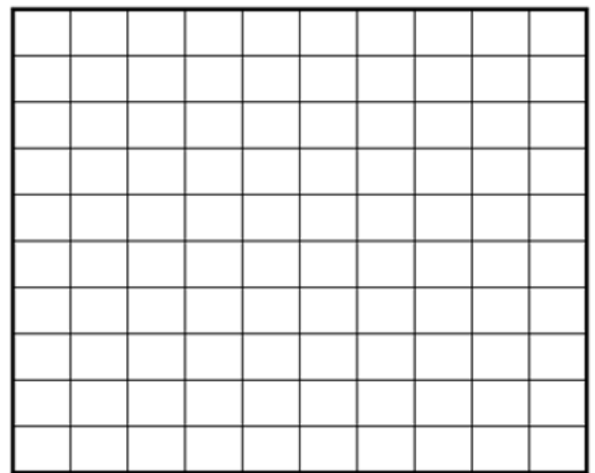




# S-c-r-a-b-b-l-e

Scrabble is a popular board game where players must use letters picked randomly from a bag to make words. More complex words mean more points, with the player at the end of the game with most points being the winner.

Scrabble is actually very difficult, even for native English speakers, so this version has been simplified to be played by children learning English. First things first, the teacher needs to draw a big 10 x 10 grid on the whiteboard and then divide the class into three teams.



The idea is for teams to write in words into the grid. Teams take turns to write in a word they can think up of as a team (minimum of three letters). Team one must have their word going through the red dot. The winning team is the first team to hit the green dot in the opposite corner. Give each team a board marker to write in their words and they are allowed to use their books to help them.

e				o	r	a	n	g	e
l				c					
e		p		t					
p	i	a	n	o			b		
h		n		p	a	p	e	r	
a	n	t		u			l		
n		s		s			o		
t							w		

Here, the team that placed the word 'orange' wins the game, because their word hit the green marker. If you fill up the grid without hitting the green marker, then the team with the most letters laid down is the winner.





# HOT DOG!

You've probably got a few fly swatters laying around the house or in your school. If so, then you're half-way there already! All you now need is a pack of those ready-to-eat sausages in a red plastic wrap. You can buy these in any supermarket or convenience store really cheap.

For this activity, you'll need one fly swatter and one ready-to-eat sausage in a plastic wrap per team. Make sure the fly swatters you choose are quite rigid at the end.

In class, divide your class into teams. If you have lots of students, you'll need more teams (and more fly swats + sausages). Your teams line up at one end of the classroom. The first person in each line holds their team's fly swatter with a sausage balancing on the end.

When the teacher says 'GO', players must walk towards the teacher at the other side of the room, balancing their sausage on the fly swat, they cannot hold it with their other hand!

When they reach you, hold up a flashcard or your text book and ask them a question or ask them to use the word in a sentence (dependent on their level).

Only once they've answered, can they turn around and go back to their team. If a student drops the sausage on the way to the teacher, then they must start again. If they drop the sausage after answering the question, then they must go back, answer a new question and then try to make it back to their team.

Once the first student walks to the teacher, answers a question, then successfully walks back, then they pass over the fly swatter and sausage to the next person in their team, who must now carefully walk to the teacher balancing the sausage.

The winning team is the first team to have all their team answer questions and get back.





This is a very solid ESL activity with a grammar and fluency focus for slightly older kids. Your students will be using previously learnt verbs and using them to make sentences using whatever grammar structure the teacher wishes to look at or review. This game will seriously help your students fluency and confidence.

Divide your class into two teams and elicit from them verbs that they know i.e. go, walk, see, touch, know. Write down their ideas on the board in a vertical column down the centre of the board. Stop writing when you've taken one verb for pair of students in your class, for example, if you have 10 students, then write 5 verbs. If you have 20 students, then take 10 verbs, and so on.

✓	<b>WALK</b>	✓
	<b>SEE</b>	
	<b>TOUCH</b>	
✓	<b>KNOW</b>	✓
	<b>BUY</b>	
✓	<b>CLEAN</b>	✓
✓	<b>COOK</b>	
✓	<b>TRY</b>	

Your verbs are written down the middle of the board in a long column. You should have enough verbs for every pair of students in your class.

Teams tick off the verbs as they use them in a sentence. The first team to tick off all their verbs is the winner.

Have your teams form two lines opposite the board. Have the first person to run out to the board. Each student must come out to the board, tick a verb on the board and then use it in a sentence. This sentence can be in a grammar structure you're currently studying. Have each team member come out in turn to use a verb in the structure you've chosen. The first team to tick off all of their verbs is the winner.

# Checklist



This activity only requires five minutes preparation in the teacher's office, but you'll get thirty minutes of amazing classroom language practice in return. Your students will be producing lots of language and you'll also be able to make notes of language points, strengths and weaknesses of each and every one of your students to help them and to discuss with their parents. This activity is best for slightly older kids, but can be easily adapted for younger children and / or lower levels.

In the teacher's office, take your text book and write down a list of words your students have studied. There should be one word on your list for every student in the class, so if you have 20 students, then write down 20 words. Now, make photocopies of your list. Make one photocopy for every student you have. Finally, write down your words on separate pieces of paper. So, again, if you have 20 words, you'll have 20 small bits of paper, each containing one word. Your preparation is now complete, time for class!



Give every student a scrap of paper with a word on and also a complete checklist of all the words you've chosen and given to students.

Give a checklist to every student and let them have a look. Make sure the students understand all the words. Now ask them one by one to take a word from the ones you wrote on scrap paper. At the end, every student will have an identical checklist and also one word from the list. No student should have an identical word.

Now you are ready to begin and have your students stand up. All students need a pen.


Your students should first tick off on the checklist the word they have. They should then find another student and see what they have. Each student asks 'what have you got?' After both looking, they use their partner's word in a sentence, then swap words (but keep their own checklist). They then find a new partner.

Students keep speaking to different partners, using different sentences and swapping words, each time checking off the words they receive on their checklist. This isn't a race; the idea is to complete your checklist well, using a variety of sentences. The teacher walks around the class helping and making notes. At the end, you can do feedback and error correction.



Bingo is a traditional British game where each player has a printed card of random numbers (like the red card in the picture above). A person is at the front of the room and picks out balls from a bag, with each ball having a number on it. The person then calls out the number loudly and any one in the room with this number on their card crosses it off.

Numbers keep getting called and the first person to cross off all of their numbers, raises their hand and calls out 'BINGO!' This person then wins a small cash prize! It's very popular and very fun! You can play Bingo in your classroom, but using vocabulary items rather than numbers.

BINGO		
Under the sofa	On top of the TV	Behind the bed
Between the dog and the cat		In front of the cat
On top of the bed	Between the cat and the sofa	Next to the cat

Bingo is not only an excellent method of reviewing vocabulary in a fun way, but also sentence structures and many other things in English. Here is a Bingo sheet I made to practice prepositions of place. Each student's sheet is different and the teacher reads out different propositions of place. Students listen to the teacher carefully, crossing off the ones they hear. The winner is the first student to cross off every item on their list.

You can use vocab, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, whatever!

There are some good Bingo vocab sheet makers online. Teachers simply type in the vocabulary they want to use, type on how many students they have, and the website will generate printable ESL bingo sheets! Here are some good online sites for you:

<https://myfreebingocards.com/bingo-card-generator>

<https://osric.com/bingo-card-generator/>



# Word Tennis

It's summer, strawberries and cream, green grass, lemon squash and Pimm's...it must be tennis season!

This ESL warmer has been a favourite of English teachers over the years. It works each and every time, needs no preparation and you can use this for any age or level. If you only use one warmer ever for all your classes, then this wouldn't be a bad choice. Solid and dependable.

Divide your class into 2-4 teams and have them sitting in groups. Give a category i.e. 'colours' and the first team must say a colour, then the second team must say a different colour. Keep going around until one team either repeats a word or hesitates for too long. The other team(s) score a point.

Now give a new category i.e. 'shapes'. Teams take turns to say shapes until one team repeats a shape or hesitates. The other teams again win a point. The first team to six points is the winner.

The good thing about this activity is that the teacher decides the categories, which means the teacher can make this as easy or as difficult as they like and can tailor it to perfectly suit any class. Game, Set and Match!

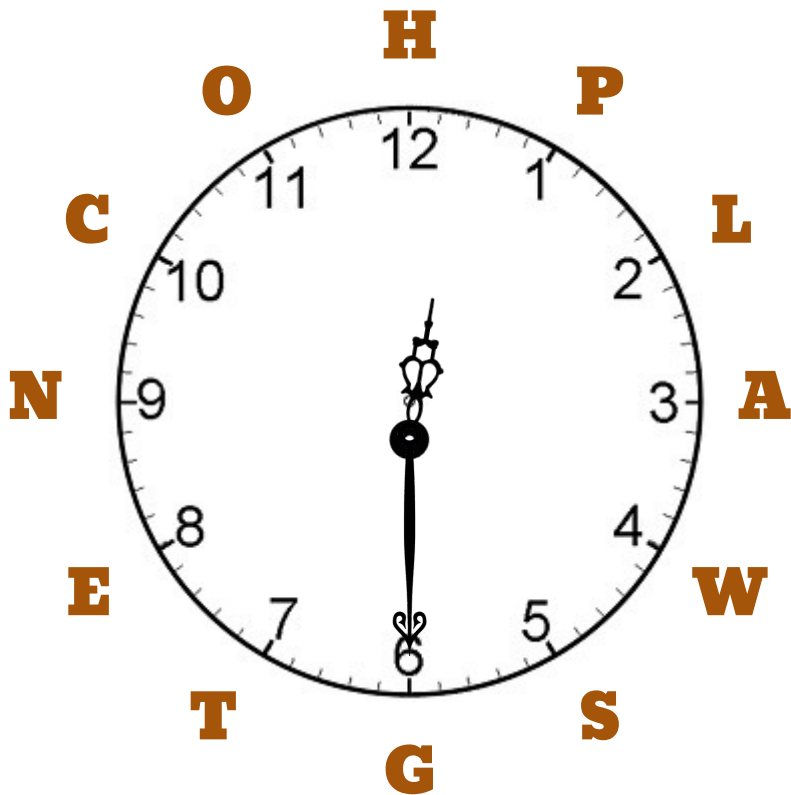


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# CRAZY CLOCK

This is a pretty cool warmer for kids classes, or you can put a little twist on it as a class activity for telling the time. All you need is a wall clock with two hands to bring to class. The bigger, the better!

On the board, draw a big clock face. Around the edge of the clock face, write random letters next to the numbers.



Divide your class into small teams. Tell the class that you're going to show them a time on the clock you brought to class. The hour hand represents the first letter of a word and the minute hand represents the last letter of a word. Teams need to look at the time and think up of a word.

For example, for 12.30pm, teams would need to think up of a word starting with an 'H' and ending with a 'G'. After each round, ask each team to tell you their word and award a point for a correct answer. The team with the most points after five rounds is the winner.





# Rainbow Bulldog

Bulldog is an old English game where kids need to run from one side of a big field to the other, with a person (usually a grown-up), in the middle trying to catch the kids as they run past to get to the other side.

In this ESL version, the teacher is the bulldog and the classroom is the field!

Clear lots of space in your classroom. Have all of your kids stand at one side of the room with their backs against the wall. Tell a few of your students that they are 'red', some others are 'blue', some others are 'green', etc. Use all the colours you've been teaching.

When you're ready, call out a colour, and any students who are that colour must run from one side to the other. The teacher tries (not too hard though) to catch the students running by. The teacher should bark and be an angry, hungry bulldog! Play for a few minutes and then get back to class, this will be good practice for colours and will use up some of their abundant energy!

You don't have to limit yourself to colours. You can use any vocabulary, really. Clothes, toys, verbs, days of the week, whatever! Be flexible in the classroom! Have fun!



# Driving Around Town



If you're teaching about places in town and/or directions, then this is an activity you should certainly consider! This will require some preparation, but if you're willing to do it, then this could be one of the very best activities in this book. For this activity, you'll need a radio-controlled car and some empty small to medium-sized cardboard boxes. In a nutshell, you'll be creating a mini-town in your classroom, with shops, parks, banks, barber shops, supermarkets, etc, and have your kids following directions around town to get from A to B!

First things first, you'll need a remote controlled car. These aren't that expensive anymore, especially very slow ones for very young children, and this is the type you want, the slower and easier to steer, the better.

Next thing you'll need is some cardboard boxes to make your different shops. You can either make the shops yourself, or give a box to each pair of students to make their own (just remember this may take a little time, but many hands make light work!)

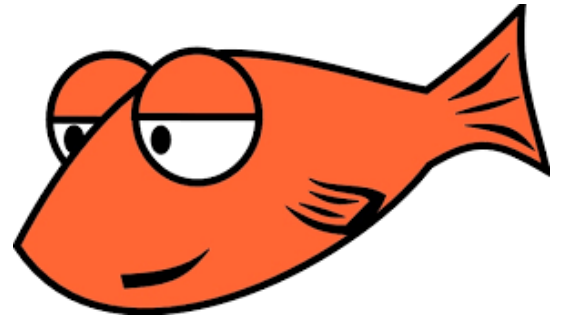
When you're ready, get the kids to put down the shops one by one on your classroom floor to make your little town. Be sure to make roads in your town so the kids can drive the car around. You can use string taped to the floor to make the town plan clearer.

Once your town is ready, you can have a go first and ask you kids how to get from the start to a particular place, i.e. the vet. Rather than have them pointing, encourage them to use directions to explain the way.

After seeing a few examples, they'll be keen to try. Give someone a go first and give them directions, for example, "Go straight, turn left, the shop is the third on the right. Drive there and tell me which shop I am thinking of."

Give everyone a go and have kids also giving directions for each other to follow. By the end of the class, your kids will be able to say all the places in town and give directions with confidence and you'll be the most awesome English teacher ever!

# Fast Fish!

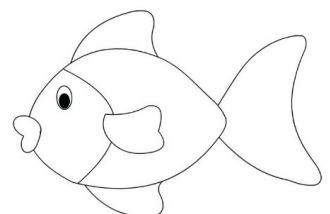
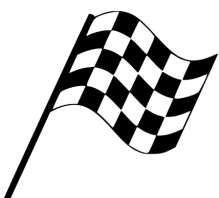
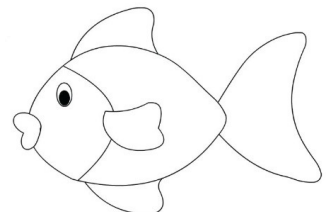


Sometimes, the simplest ideas are the best ones and this young learner games is one of these! All you need is some scrap paper from the teacher's office and you're good to go!

The first thing you'll need to do is to cut out two fish shapes from your paper. Simply put two pages of A4 on top of each other and cut out one fish; you'll end up with two identical sized fish. You can decorate each one quickly with scales, fins and eyes to make them look cool, it only takes a minute.

Lastly, make two paper fans from a sheet of A4 paper. These will be for wafting your fish along the floor later. You can make these by folding 1cm of your paper back, turning over the page and folding again, turning back over and folding again, etc, until you have a fan. Really easy!

Time for class! Clear lots of space in your classroom and divide your students into two teams. Put your two fish on the floor side by side. Ask a student from Team A a question. If they get it right they can fan their fish towards the finish line, however, they can only fan the fish for three seconds and then must stop. They also can't move their feet whilst fanning their fish (they can't walk along fanning their fish to the end). Now pick a student from Team B to answer a question. If they get it right, then they can have a go. Teams take turns until their fish is over the line. The first team to get their fish over the finishing line is the winner!





# STOP THE BUS

A perfect warmer for older children, who have a bigger vocabulary and better writing skills, Stop the Bus is a classic ESL game which is useful and will give you good distance in the classroom (excuse the pun!)

Put your students into small teams and have them sat around separate tables or in small circles on the floor. Each team need a piece of paper and some pens.

When you're ready, write a letter on the board, for example, 'T' and shout 'Go!'

The teams now must write as many words as they can beginning with 'T'. At any given point, any student can shout out 'STOP THE BUS!' and everyone must put down their pens and stop writing. The team with the most words spelled correctly is the winner.

Students usually call out 'Stop the Bus' when they think their team has got a lot of words and feel that they can't be caught, but sometimes it backfires and another team has more! A quality warmer!

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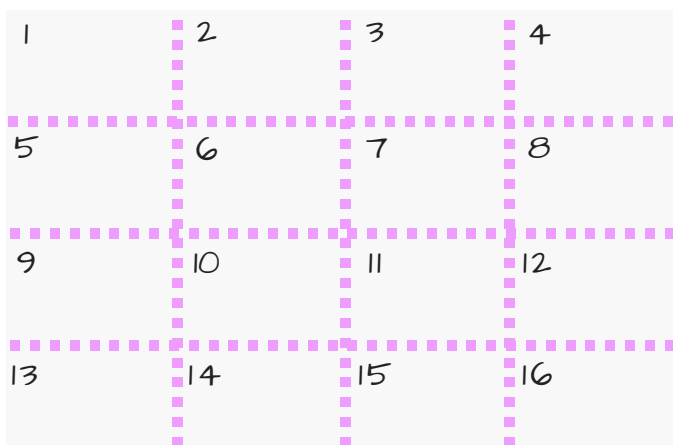
# Yogurt Pots

You need a number of empty, clean and preferably identical small yogurt pots for this game. Not more than 32 pots.

On the outside of each pot, write four or five words using a black permanent black marker. Write the words clearly but haphazardly - some the right way up and others upside-down. Then, inside each pot on the bottom, write a unique serial number starting with 1. Be very sure that you also make sure which way the numbers should be read, for example, it's easy to confuse 6 and 9 unless there is a line under them.

After you've written on each pot, make a master list so you have a full list of all of the words and on which number pot they're written. This is important for later.

When you play this game, each child will need a single sheet of A4 paper. Get the children to fold and tightly crease their paper in half down the length, then fold it in half again. When the paper is opened out flat, it will be divided into four long sections. Then have the kids fold it in half and crease it across the width and then fold again, this divides the paper into 16 sections.



Have the kids lay out their paper now on the desks in landscape. Have your kids number each box in top corner, turn the paper over and keep going up to 32, or for as many yogurt pots you have. If you only have 20 yogurt pots, then the kids only need to number up to 20 boxes.



# Yogurt Pots

Line your pots up along the teacher's desk in a line. Their job is to write down all the words from the yogurt pots into the the correct boxes on their sheet, for example the words from Yogurt pot #3 must be written in Box #3 on the sheet. Encourage your children to write as neatly as they can.

Once the kids grasp this game, they'll be off and away! Make the goal the first team to complete their words is the winner, this will generate some competition and drive the activity on.

Make a rule that kids can only take a yogurt pot from your desk once they have returned the one they've finished with and no swapping of pots with each other either.

The thing you'll most have to look out for is directly copying from each others' lists without using the yogurt pots, so you'll need to be on your game watching! Keep the rules well, but don't be some scary shouting teacher and spoil the fun by being too serious. Keep the class rules well, but with a big smile on your face!

Yogurt Pots is simple, cheap and extremely fast paced. Most importantly, kids love it! Be prepared for a noisy and active classroom and for children to climb all over you trying to locate the last few pots to complete their paper!

This is excellent writing practice and spelling practice for kids, too!



# STICK 'EM UP!

*"Well, what have we got ourselves here? Seems to me that we got ourselves a gen..u..ine TEFL teacher trying to put his big, ugly nose in my business!"*

*"Well this town ain't big enough for the two of us! Now get yourself out of this here saloon bar before I fill you up with lead!"*

Before class, the teacher thinks up of a word between 5-8 letters, which the class has recently been studying. Write down the word on big letters on a piece of paper and then cut up the letters. Keep the letters in order with a paper clip and come to class.

Divide your class into two teams and have them stand in two lines facing the board. Have the two students at the front holding board markers ready to write on the whiteboard. The teacher stands at the back of the class. When you are ready, get the two kids at the back of the lines to turn to face you and show them the first letter of your chosen word. They then turn around and, using their finger, draw the first letter on the back of the kid next in line.

The child being drawn on should raise their hands up like it's a stick-up! This child then needs to draw the same letter on the back of the child in front of them, like a stick-up, and so on, and so on. The child at the front of the line needs to write this letter on the board.

Once they've written the letter on the board, they need to give the marker to the person behind them and run to the back of the line and everyone moves forward one place. The teacher then shows the next letter in the word. Keep going until one team has written your secret word. This team is the winner.



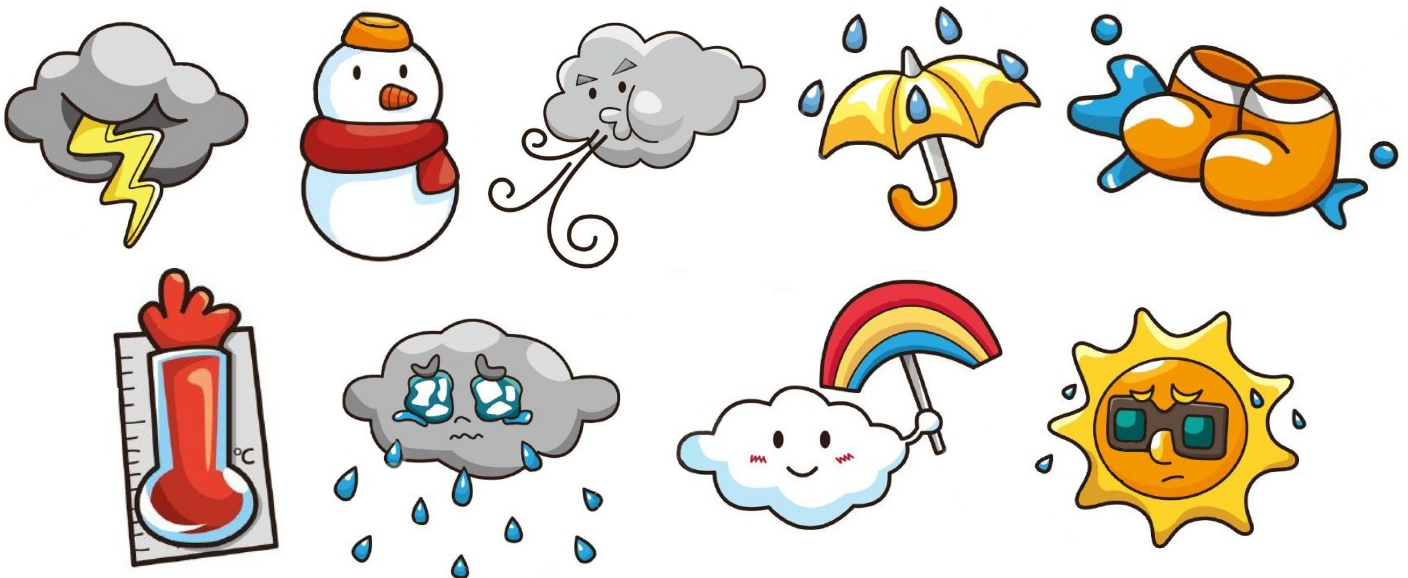


# The Weather Report



In most textbook series for Young Learners, around the elementary level, you'll usually find a unit on weather. Talking about the weather is important, especially in the west, where it is a common small talk topic. This is a fun activity to get your children talking about the weather and learning all the key vocab and phrases.

Now, if you're old enough, you may remember the weather forecast where instead of modern computer graphics of rain and cloud sweeping in, the weather presenter stuck plastic weather symbols on a map to talk about the weather. You can see the type I mean below:



Bring in a map of the world or a map of the country you teach in and have your students doing a weather report!

"In China, the weather is sunny. In the UK, the weather is rainy. In Australia, the weather is stormy." Makes for a great class!



# Angry Adverbs

Adverbs modify verbs in sentences to give more information about the verb being used. For example, "Andy travels to school every day" could be modified using an adverb at the end:

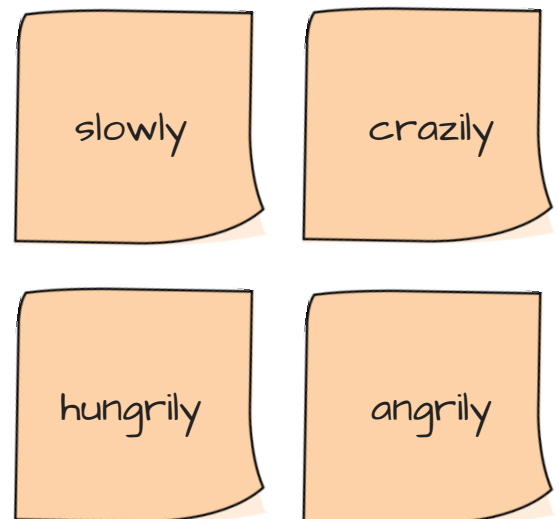
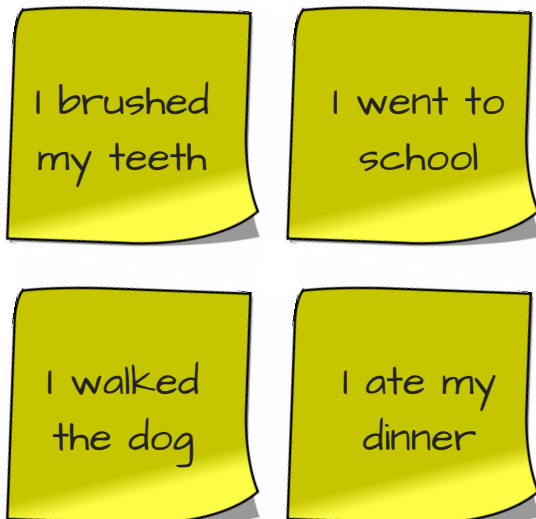
"Andy travels to school every day *slowly*."

"Andy travels to school every day *happily*."

"Andy travels to school every day *quickly*."

Using adverbs well is an important step for children learning English. This activity will help you to teach adverbs to kids

Make two sets of cards. One set of cards will have every day actions on them. The other set of cards will have a different adverb on each. Make your two sets of cards a different colour so they don't get mixed up. You can also keep them in your teaching resources cupboard for the next time.



Put your students into two teams and get the first student up from the first team. They need to choose one card from the action pile and another card from the adverb pile. They then mime the action i.e. "I walked my dog angrily". If their team can guess the action, then they get one point. If they can guess the adverb, then they get one point. If they can guess both together and get the correct sentence, then they get three points! If they can't guess, then the other team can try. Take turns and the first team to 20 points is the winner!

As a follow-up, ask the students which sentences they can remember.

# Scribble Out!

This activity is great for slightly older students and they'll need the same textbook or story book each.

Before your class, cut up 26 pieces of medium-sized bits of paper, and on each piece, write a letter of the alphabet. Fold them up and pop them into a bag. Head to class!

Pick a page from your book and ask all of your students to turn their book to that page. Ask each student to randomly pick four words on the page and then write them down in their note books.

Pick a student to come to the front of the class. Ask them to pick out a letter from the bag and call it out. Any student who has that letter in one of their four words, needs to scribble it out. Now pick out a new student to come up and pick a new letter. They read out the new letter and, again, any student with this letter is their letter should scribble it out.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz  
hijklm  
opqrstuv  
wxyz

Keep going. As time goes on, students will eventually scribble out the last letter of their words and are OUT! Keep going until there is only one student left and they are the WINNER!

Amazing game!

As a follow up, ask which words the kids chose and why the winning student did better in the game. This is a good vocabulary exercise.





# BUG SLAP!

Some teachers reading this may have a smaller class, and if so, then this ESL activity is perfect for you.

For this activity, you'll need around 50 cards per pair of students. These should be small flashcards. A good way is to get a cheap pack of poker cards, then stick small pictures of vocabulary your students have studied onto the playing side, leaving the back of your cards blank. For every six of your cards, stick a picture of a bug on your cards.

For each pair of students, deal out 50 cards face down. Students cannot turn the cards around to see what they have. The first student deals a card from the top of the pile, then the other student plays the card on top of their pile. They continue until a 'bug' card is dealt.

The first student to slap the top of the pile and shout 'BUG!', has to name all the cards underneath the 'bug' card. Any card they can name, they can keep, and put these card on their 'keep' pile. As soon as they get to a card they can't name or another 'bug' card, they stop. It's now the other player's turn.

Keep playing until both players have no more cards. The player with the most cards on their 'keep' pile is the winner!

A strong game for smaller classes, pair work or one-to-one.

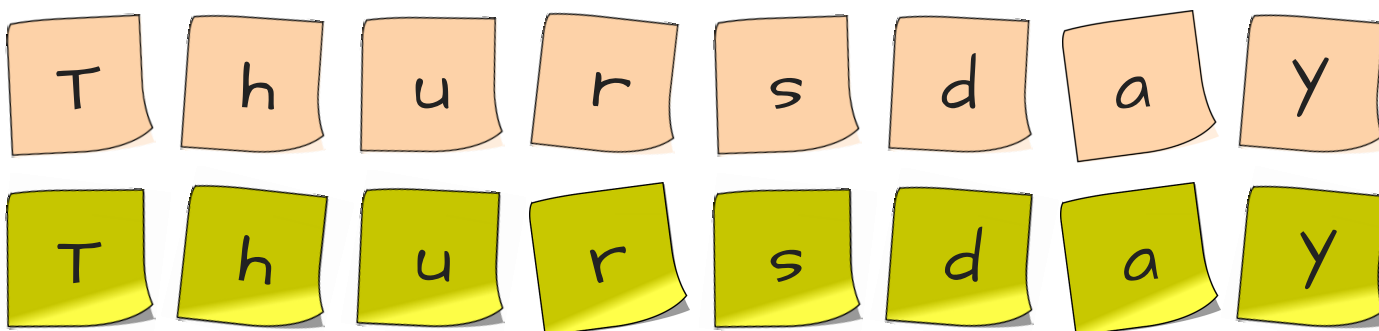




# Chopstick Snap!

Got a ton of chopsticks laying around at home? Make use of them and bring them to English class!

Choose a word you've been studying recently and write the word out in big letters on A4 paper. Cut out the word into individual letters. Repeat the same process on another sheet of paper with the same word and cut up the letters. You should be left with two sets of the same word, cut up into separate letters. To keep you organised, use a different coloured pen and paper clip each individual set. Time for class!



Divide up your class into two teams. Make sure the word you pick doubled totals the amount of students you have, otherwise a few of your students won't get a go.

Put your students into two lines and, at the other end of your classroom, scatter each team's letters on the floor. Fold each letter slightly, so they are easy pick up with chopsticks.

Give a pair of chopsticks to the first student in each line. On your command, the first student races out to pick up the first letter of your chosen word and dashes back with it. The student places it on the floor, gives the chopstick to the next student and then they dash off to get the next letter. Keep going until one team has come back with all the letters and put them in the right order. This team is the winner!





# Thank you!

Thanks very much for your purchase of this book, I appreciate you very much and thanks for following me on **TEFL Lemon**.

I've been teaching English since 2002 in both China and the UK and it's a privilege to pass on some of my ideas to you. However, many of the ideas in this book has been passed on by TEFL Lemon followers, and this book would not have been possible without the support of you guys. Many thanks!

Teaching English is not an easy profession and it's important for us to help, nurture and support each other in the difficult job that we do day in, day out. Your students benefit from your tireless work in not only teaching every day, but searching for new ideas, fresh games, new approaches and keeping up-to-date with the latest ESL methodologies. For those teachers out there who try their best to make lessons brilliant, you know who you are.

Keep up the good work and thanks for following.

Stuart Allen  
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