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Classroom activities to develop learning strategies and
stimulate conversation

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Мазкур Ўқув услубий қўлланма лицей, коллеж, олий ўқув юртлари талабаларига инглиз тилини ўргатишда ўқиш технологиялардан фойдаланган холда гапиришга ўргатишнинг самарали усуллари кўрсатиб беришни ўз олдига мақсад қилиб қўйган. Мазкур мақсадни амалга ошириш учун hozirги замонавий инновацион техникалардан қуйидагилар “brainstorming”, “pre-reading”, “eliciting” “information”, “while – reading”, “jigsaw reading”, “post-reading”, “matching task”, “case study”, “feedback and evaluation” техникалари қўлланилган ва дарснинг самарадорлигини ошириш борасида тегишли тавсиялар келтирилган. Ушбу Ўқув услубий қўлланмада грамматик машқлар, сўз бойлигини ошириш, матнда калит сўзларини топиш, сўзларни маъноларини изохлаш, оғзаки ва ёзма нутқ кўникмаларини бойитишга қаратилган.

Мазкур услубий қўлланма Тошкент молия институти Ўқув-услубий кенгашида муҳокама қилиниб, нашрга тавсия этилган.

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Preface

In recent years, the issue of the application of modern technologies in high school is becoming increasingly important. It is not only new hardware, but new forms and methods of teaching, new approaches to teaching foreign languages. The main goal is to show how technology can be used effectively in order to improve the quality of teaching foreign language, the formation and development of students' communicative culture, training practical mastery of a foreign language.

These innovative technologies are:

- Student-centred teaching technology;
- Gaming technology;
- The technology of communicative teaching of foreign culture;
- Problem-based teaching;
- Elements of intensive technique;
- Script writing context technology;
- Informational – communicative technology;
- Project technology;
- Cooperative learning and etc.

Let's consider some of them.

According to *pupil-centered teaching technology* in the center of teaching is a pupil himself, his motives, goals and unrepeatable psychological warehouse. The teacher determines teaching aim of the lesson, organize, direct and correct teaching process on the assumption of pupil's interests, the level of his knowledge and skills in the context of this approach.

Gaming technology. A game is the strongest motive in students' language acquisition. While playing, students are involved in teaching process with pleasure without any special effort. High school students of all ages play with joy especially if the game has a form of competition and requires savvy, quick reaction and good knowledge of the subject. Game methods are very diverse. Each game has its own function and contributes the accumulation of linguistic material, fixes acquired

knowledge and forms speech skills and competencies. Games develop concentration, remove the fatigue, raise pupil's mental activity, create the atmosphere of keenness. Teaching games help to make the foreign language teaching process interesting and creative.

The technology of communicative teaching of foreign culture is based on communication. The learning process is a model of real communication which allows achieving high adaptation level to foreign language communication.

Problem-based teaching supposes an independent decision of cognitive and creative tasks through critical reinterpretation and augmenting of knowledge and skills. This technology allows realizing the condition of formation in students cognitive universal activities, create the atmosphere of co-creation in communication, involving the emotional pupil's sphere, personal pupil's interest, joint searching for truth, self-assessment, self-correction and self-sufficiency.

At the heart of methodical system of *intensive technique* is the method of activization of personal and group opportunities which are characterized by active using of psychological and social – psychological personal and group opportunities (students communicate to each other actively, broaden their knowledge and improve skills and competencies).

Scriptwriting context technology is based on the principles of business communication and playing situation of business communication in learning process such as interview, discussions, high school business situation.

Informational – communicative technology is a powerful way of teaching, control and management of learning process, i.e. this is the most important option of social and cultural system. Internet resources are usual and comfortable way of knowing the foreign countries' cultures and nation, communication, getting the information and inexhaustible source of education process.

One of the methods of students' activization in the foreign language teaching process is *project technology* when the pupil plans, creates, protects his projects themselves, i.e. students are involved in the process of communicative activity. Tutorial project is a complex of search, investigative, calculated, graphical and

other types of work which are realized by students themselves with the view of practical and theoretical decision of significant problem.

Thus innovative technologies which were examined significantly enrich foreign languages teaching and make it diverse. Replacing monotonous work new intellectual creative searching form comes where a new type of personality appears. This person is active and purposeful and is oriented to permanent self-education and development.

Adapting materials for mixed ability classes can take different forms. One way to adapt materials is to rewrite reading texts and grade the language accordingly for different levels. In an ideal world where a teacher has all the time in the world to prepare their classes this may be the perfect solution. However, the reality is that this sort of adaptation is extremely time consuming and not many teachers can actually go to this length to adapt materials for mixed level groups. Another problem that can arise with this sort of adaptation is that it can be awkward to give out different texts to different students. There's a danger that they will instantly realize that they have been labelled as a weak or strong student and, in the case of the weaker students, this will no doubt effect their motivation.

A business letter

In this activity, learners attempt to re-write an inappropriately informal business letter in a more appropriate, formal style.



They then compare their version with a model text, helping them to notice the conventional formulae used in this type of letter, and incorporate some of this new language into another similar letter.

This activity is particularly suitable for higher level Business English students, or adult learners who need to write formal letters in English in real life.

Preparation

Make enough copies of these worksheets so that each student can have one.

Worksheet 1 Example letter

Fine Foods Ltd.
10 Bridge Street
London
SW10 5TG

Hello Mr. Roger Jones:

I got the letter you sent on 1st September, and the stuff about the stock control system you make. It sounds great for us, but I want to check some things before we buy it. You said the system is bang up-to-date, but what happens if you update it again soon? Do we get money off the new one? You said it takes 3 weeks to install the system – that's too long! Can't you do it any quicker? Hope you can reply soon, we're in a bit of a hurry.

Thanks,

Janet Brown

Worksheet 2 Example letter

Fine Foods Ltd.
10 Bridge Street
London
SW10 5TG

Mr. R. Jones
Sales Manager
Thames Software Systems
River Buildings
Stockwell Walk
London

12th September 2006

Dear Mr. Jones,

Stock Control Software System

Thank you for your letter of 1st September and the information you sent regarding the stock control system offered by your company. I certainly feel the system will meet our requirements. However, there are some points which I would like clarified before we go ahead and order the system.

Firstly, although you mentioned that the system has recently been updated, I wondered whether we might be eligible for a discount on any future upgrades. Secondly, the installation and implementation period of three weeks, to which you refer in your letter, seems rather long. Is there any possibility of getting the system up and running on a shorter timescale?

I would be very grateful for a swift response to these queries, in order that we can begin the process as soon as possible.

Thank you in advance for your assistance. I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

J. Brown

Ms J. Brown Purchasing Manager

Worksheet 3 Writing task

- In pairs, choose one of the following situations.

Situation 1: You are Head of Human Resources at an international cosmetics company. You have been in touch with an IT Training company about training for some of your staff. You have now received information about the training but need to change some of the details. With a partner, think of what kind of changes you might need to make (for example, the number of people taking the training course). Now underline the phrases and expressions in your own letter and on worksheet 2 which you could incorporate into the letter. Write the letter with your partner.

Situation 2: You are organising a conference for your company's sales representatives from all over the country. You have already booked the hotel where the conference will be held and the sales reps will stay, and have just received a letter of confirmation. However, you need to make some changes to the arrangements. With a partner, think of what kind of changes you might need to make (for example, the number of hotel rooms you need). Now underline the phrases and expressions in your own letter and on worksheet 2 which you could incorporate into the letter. Write the letter with your partner.

Procedure

- In order to get students thinking about business letters, ask how many reasons they can think of for writing this type of letter. Give a couple of examples, then get students to brainstorm in pairs, before feeding back to the class.
- Give learners the inappropriately informal letter (Worksheet 1). Ask a few simple comprehension questions.
 - Have they been in contact before?
 - What's it about?
 - What are the problems with the system?
- Then ask what's wrong with the text. (Too informal, doesn't follow letter-writing conventions). Elicit some of the kinds of things they will need to change to make it more formal (vocabulary, sentence structure, layout, paragraphing, greeting and close).
- In pairs, students re-write the letter to make it more appropriate as a formal letter. Don't help them too much at this stage - the idea is that students write the best letter they are capable of using their existing language resources. This creates a need for the conventional letter-writing language which may be 'missing' from their current knowledge.
- Give students the model letter (Worksheet 2) and ask them to compare it with their letter. Emphasise that the model is only one possible way of re-writing the letter - this can lead to a discussion on whether any differences are equally correct. Ask the students to identify language from the model which they could use to improve their letter. In this way, some of the conventional sentence frames which are so common in business letters are 'fed in'.

At this stage you might also wish to draw attention to the conventional greetings and endings for formal letters. (In British English, if the name of the person is used,

e.g. Dear Mr. Jones, then the ending is Yours sincerely. If you don't know the name of the person you are writing to, then the letter begins Dear Sir / Madam, and ends Yours faithfully.) It may also be worth highlighting the punctuation used here, i.e. a comma after the greeting, as this can vary between languages. In addition, some students are not familiar with the form of address Ms, which refers to a woman without specifying her marital status. Other issues which are problematic for your learners, such as paragraphing, over-long sentences etc., can also be dealt with here.

- Students choose a situation from Worksheet 3, brainstorm in pairs, and select appropriate language from their own letter and Worksheet 2. They then write the letter, working collaboratively. This stage could also be done individually for homework if time is short. The letters can be collected in by the teacher for assessment / correction purposes, or used for a peer-evaluation activity. (See the Peer evaluation form for an example of how this can be done).

A warmer is an activity at the start of the class to warm up the learners. They tend to be short, dynamic activities. Warmers can be compared to coolers, which are short activities to finish the class.

Example

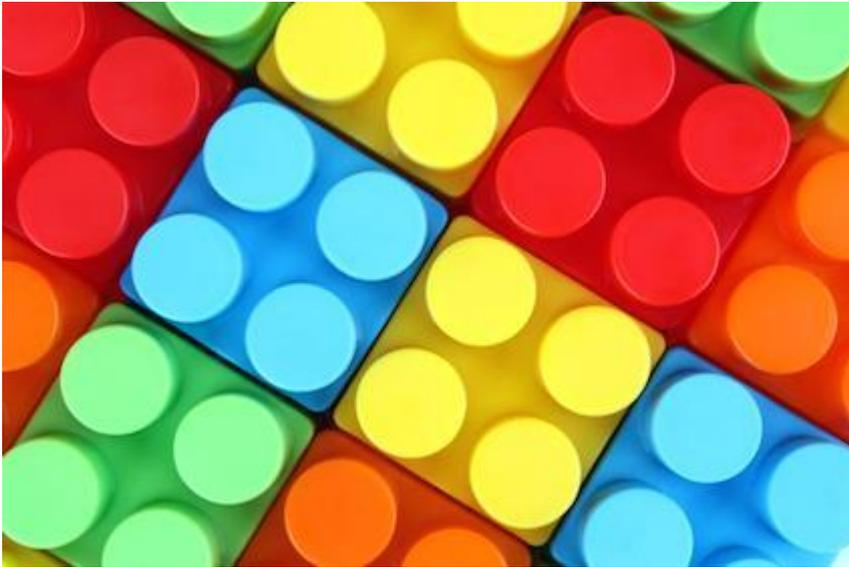
The learners are going to read a text about computers in the lesson. The teacher asks them to change their seating and sit down in an order based on how much they use a computer. This requires them to move around and talk to each other.

In the classroom

Warmers and coolers are not isolated activities but can serve to introduce a topic or to **recycle** some previously learnt language in an enjoyable way.

A class magazine

Class projects can be an excellent way to focus the whole class and get them working together towards a common goal.



Taking some 'time out' from regular classes and doing something completely different can really help group dynamics and you may also give quieter or less able students a chance to shine. Making a class magazine is a project that will appeal to most groups as it allows individuals to work on what interests them. Starting a project from scratch can seem a little daunting to begin with so here's a simple step-by-step guide on how to make a class magazine.

Planning

- Bring in some magazines. Let your students have a look through them. You could do a class survey on magazines at this stage or simply chat to your class about the type of magazines they like.
- On the board brainstorm the different sections that magazines have. Try to include as much variety as possible so there's something for everyone. (Horoscopes, beauty tips, sports pages, film reviews, cinema news, fashion, photo stories, comic strips,

puzzles, technology pages, music, interviews with famous people, recipes, jokes, problem pages etc. etc.)

- Ask your students if they would like to make a magazine in English. Hopefully they'll be keen to! Ask students for ideas for a name for the magazine and hold a class vote to decide on the name.

Organising the project

- Now you need students to choose who they want to work with (pairs or small groups) and what section they want to produce. Make a list of what everyone is going to do, in case you, or they, forget by the next class.
- Set the deadlines and plan the sections. Negotiate with your students about how long they will need to produce their section and allow sufficient class time for you to be able to help each group with their section and provide language input and error correction. You can also encourage students to look for information at home, on the internet etc. Set a date where everyone must bring their completed work to class and try to stick to it. Having said that, if your students get really into it and are producing good work you could always extend the deadline if you think their time is being well spent.
- Collect all the sections and work with your class to decide on the order they will go in. Students can now make a contents page and a cover for their magazine.
- Put the magazine together with a book spine or by stapling it. Before you do this you may want to make several copies of the magazine. If you have the facilities to do so, one for each student could be really nice and they can take it home to show their parents. If that's not possible, make a couple of copies and hang them in the classroom for other students to look at.

Exploiting the magazine

- If you teach several classes of a similar level you can take the magazines in to show your other groups and make some activities based around it or simply let the

students read it and do the puzzle pages. You may even inspire your other groups to make one too.

- If you have access to a computer room you could really make a professional looking magazine but don't worry if you don't, a homemade looking one can be just as good.
- Having an end product to work towards can be really motivating for a class. Making a class magazine should be an enjoyable experience for you and the students and it will also give you a chance to stand back a little and observe your students in action. You should be available to guide them and offer support and advice but it will also give you a chance to find out more about their interests which will help you to plan for following lessons.

A shopping role play

This activity gives learners at an intermediate level and above the opportunity to use interactional language in a role-play situation.



The task: going shopping along a typical British high street. Half the class have shopping lists and the other half own a shop.

There are five shops:

- a computer shop
- a newsagent's
- a fruit shop
- a small supermarket
- a language bookshop

The cards are structured so that some discussion and negotiation is necessary to find most of the things on the learners' shopping lists. In addition, each list also has a short task typical of normal interaction in the street, for example asking the time or directions to a bank. At higher levels learners can be encouraged to elaborate on the conversations and make them more complex.

Preparation

Before the class, copy and cut up the cards on worksheets A and B, so that there are an equal number of shoppers (worksheet A) and shop owners (B). The ideal number is five of each, you can duplicate the cards if your class is larger than 10. If you have less than 10, your learners won't be able to find everything on their lists, so warn them.

Worksheet A: Shopping lists (shoppers)

List 1

Here are the things you need to buy

- a blank CD to burn some music on your laptop
- a newspaper, preferably 'The Guardian' or 'The Independent'
- Some low-fat milk
- Half a kilo of nectarines
- A monolingual dictionary, English – English, but small enough for your pocket

You also need to change a 10 pound note for 10 one pound coins

List 2

Here are the things you need to buy

- An extension lead for your MP3 player
- This week's 'Film Review' magazine
- Some wholemeal bread
- Some bananas, but the ones used for cooking
- A good grammar practice book for your level

You also need to find out what time it is, as you have lost your watch

List 3

Here are the things you need to buy

- Some high quality paper for your printer

- Some chewing gum, strawberry flavour
- A couple of packets of instant noodles – you like them spicy
- A kilo of oranges
- A good guide to grammar in English

You also need to know where the nearest bank is

List 4

Here are the things you need to buy

- Some headphones for your computer so you can use the internet to make telephone calls
- A book of first class stamps, preferably 10.
- Four mangos, not quite ripe would be best
- Some black pepper corns for your pepper mill
- A bi-lingual dictionary, English – your language

You also want to put a card in the window of a shop saying that you are looking for a private teacher to help with your English

List 5

Here are the things you need to buy

- Some unsalted butter
- A black pen that you can use to write on CDs
- a telephone card to make international calls
- half a kilo of apples. You like them red and sweet
- a dictionary of phrasal verbs

You also want to know if there is somewhere to post your letters nearby

Worksheet B: Shopkeepers

List 1

You have a **computer shop**. You have the following in stock:

- Blank CDs to burn music – these are on special offer
- You are out of stock of extension leads for MP3 players
- Paper for printers – you have low, medium and high quality, but the high quality is very expensive
- Headphones for computers – you have them with a microphone or without
- Pens that you can use to write on CDs – you have blue and red only

You don't let people put cards in your window and don't know what time it is, or where the nearest bank is. You do know where the nearest post office is, and you have change for 10 pounds.

List 2

You have a **newsagent's**. You have the following in stock:

- Newspapers. You only have the 'Independent', the 'Sun' and the 'Mirror'
- 'Film Review' magazine. This week if people pay extra they can get the special guide to summer films also
- Chewing gum. You have peppermint, cherry and banana.
- Stamps. You have first and second class, in books of 10 and 20. Some wholemeal bread
- Telephone cards to make international calls, at different values

You let people put cards in your window but don't know what time it is, or where the nearest bank or post office is. You have no change.

List 3

You have a **bookshop** specializing in learning languages. You have the following in stock:

- Bilingual dictionaries for English and Spanish, French, Chinese and Arabic.
- Guides to English grammar for intermediate levels and below
- Vocabulary practice books, but no grammar practice books at the moment
- Special dictionaries for idioms and also for phrasal verbs
- Monolingual dictionaries, English-English, for all levels but only large size editions

You don't let people put cards in your window and don't know what time it is, but you do know where the nearest bank is. You have no change.

List 4

You have a **shop selling fruit and vegetables**. You have the following in stock:

- Mangos, ripe and ready to eat today
- Oranges
- Bananas, for both dessert and cooking
- Peaches, which you are trying to get people to buy instead of nectarines
- Apples, green and crispy

You don't let people put cards in your window and don't know where the nearest bank or post office is. You have no change but do know what the time is.

List 5

You have a small **supermarket**. You have the following in stock:

- Salted butter

- Instant noodles, in pots and packets, but only spicy ones
- Full-fat and low-fat milk
- Black pepper, in powder and as corns
- White bread

You let people put cards in your window but don't know what time it is, or where the

nearest banks or post offices are. You have change for 10 pounds.

Procedure

- If you are practising language, review useful structures with the class first, e.g. *'I'm looking for a...'*, *'I wonder if you can help me, I...'*, *'How much is that?'*, etc.
- Hand out the cards to the students making sure there is an equal number of shopping lists and shops.
- Give the learners time to read their cards and ask you about any problem language. They also need to think about what they are going to say, and what language they will need. You can group the shoppers together and shop owners together to do this.
- Point out to the shop owners that they may need to decide how much their products cost before starting.
- Set up your classroom to represent a street, with each table being a shop if possible. Ask the learners who own a shop to prepare a card (folded piece of paper) saying what shop they own.
- Start the role-play. The shoppers need to find everything on their lists and complete their short task also.

- Monitor the activity for interesting language or for problems, which you can feedback afterwards. Try not to intervene too much at this stage.
- Keep the role-play going until enough shoppers have completed their tasks.
- Put the class into groups and ask them to explain how the shopping (and selling) went, and what problems they had.
- Feedback open class on any interesting language points.

N.B. These cards can be exploited in any way, e.g. as practice after looking at interactional language or common vocabulary, as a spontaneous speaking exercise, or as a diagnostic for you to see what your learners know. You can review the language needed for the task before or after the role-play, depending on your aims

Active listening activities

Students are often asked to listen to tapes or to their teacher talking, but it can be just as useful to encourage them to listen to each other in a more active way.



Learning to listen to each other more carefully can build their ability and confidence in real-life situations, in which they will need to focus on both listening and speaking. The following activities are a fun way of getting students to concentrate more and to remember information.

- **Dual dictation**

Ask students to get into pairs to write a dialogue. When student A is speaking, student B should write down what they are saying and vice versa. When they have finished the conversation, they should check what each other has written and put the two sides of the conversation together. You could then ask students to perform their dialogues again to the rest of the class, or to swap with other pairs.

This activity works best if you give students a theme or role-play, e.g.

- A conversation between friends about holidays
- An argument between siblings
- An interview with a famous person
- A scene from a film

- **Class memory quiz**

Ask one student at a time to go to the front of the class. Ask the rest of the class to ask them any questions they like (as long as they are not too personal!),

e.g.

- What is your favourite colour/food/band?
- What did you have for lunch?
- Which country would you most like to visit?

Try to make a note of some of the answers. When all of the students (or half of the students, if you have a large group) have been interviewed, explain that you are going to hold a quiz about the class. Get the students into small teams and ask them to put their hand up if they know the answer to a question, e.g.

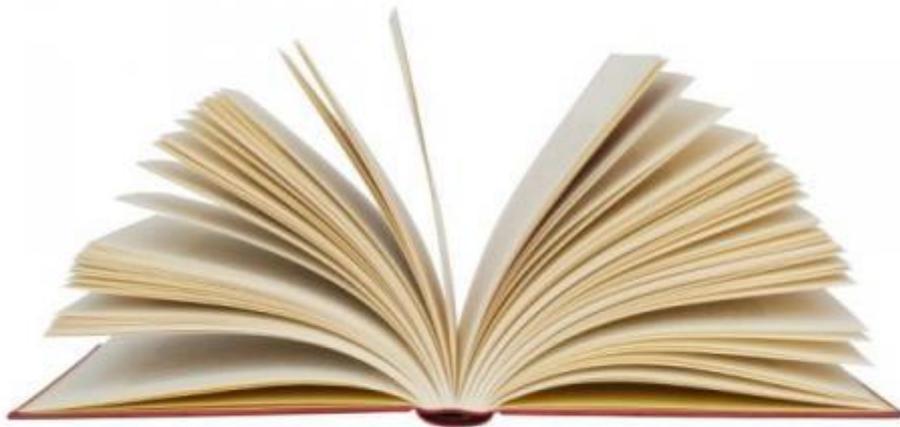
- Which student likes Oasis?
- What is Marie's favourite food?
- Which two students would like to be famous actors?
- Award a point to the first team to answer correctly. This game can be a lot of fun, and encourages students to listen to each other.

- **Listen for lies**

Divide the class into two teams A and B. Ask one student at a time to come to the front of the class and read aloud a passage which you have chosen, e.g. a story or newspaper article. Then ask them to read it aloud again, but to make some changes. Each time a lie (or change) is read out, the students must stand up. The first team to stand up gets a point. This game requires students to listen carefully and encourages them to remember important information and details.

A perfect story

The present perfect is a tense that many students have problems with. Most course books provide only controlled grammar sentences where students choose the correct tense.



This activity leads students into writing a short story using the past simple, present perfect simple and continuous, but in a more creative way.

Procedure

- Tell the students they are going to write a short story.
 - Get the students to read the following questions and decide, with a partner, what the missing words are, but not answer the questions now.
 - Monitor well to check they understand the activity. There are no 'correct' answers, they should use their imagination.
1. What is his / her name?
 2. What is _____ about them? (e.g. strange / unusual / nice...)

3. What was their --problem last year?
4. What happened?
5. Why have they become so _____ ?
6. How many _____ have they - _____ ?
7. Who have they been _____ recently?
8. What have they been _____ for the last five years?

- Now the students, working in pairs still, have to answer the questions. The answers should link the questions together to form the basis of a story.
- Next ask students to draw their characters. This is fun and brings the character to life. Students can laugh at each other's drawings.
- Using the notes above, students put the story together. They can add more information if they wish but they should not make it complicated.
- Students then swap their story with another pair to edit. They read the story and underline any errors they notice, or question any word or phrase they don't understand.
- The stories are returned to their owners who make changes as necessary depending on the comments that were made by the editing pair.

By slowly guiding them through the stages the end result is their own and usually grammatically correct. Don't forget to ask students to read each others stories, they are sure to be amusing.

Adopt a word

At the start of the school year I ask my students to 'Adopt a word' and share it with the class.



Procedure

- I give my students templates with headings:

Word	Meaning	Part of speech	Example of usage

- The students choose a word that they would like to adopt and do some research on it using the template above.
- Each student then gives a short presentation on his or her adopted word until all the class has had a chance.
- The words are then stuck to a large paper chart on the wall.

- This activity carries on the entire year with students sharing more and more words.
- In between we have quizzes about the new words. The students greatly enjoy contributing words, researching and presenting.

Chain drawings

This is a fun activity using music which can be used with all groups.



Just select a follow-up activity that is appropriate for the age and level of the class but the basic procedure is the same for everyone.

Procedure

- Give each student a piece of paper and some coloured pencils.
- Tell them that you are going to play some music and you want them to draw whatever comes into their heads.
- As music is playing, all students should be drawing.
- After 20 or 30 seconds, stop the music.
- Students stop drawing and pass their picture to the person to the left of them in the circle.
- Play the music again and they continue with the drawing the person next to them had started.

- Stop the music again, pass pictures on and this continues until the end of the song.
- When you have finished each student will have a picture that several students contributed to.
- Then it's up to you what to do with the pictures. Here are some ideas:
 - Label everything on the picture.
 - Describe the picture to the group or a partner.
 - Imagine that the picture represents the dream you had last night. Explain your dream to the group. (You could ask another student to analyse the dream.)
 - The picture is actually a postcard. Write the postcard to a friend telling them all about the place where you're on holiday.
 - If there are people in the picture, use them to create a dialogue.
 - Imagine the picture was a photo taken at 5pm yesterday. Describe what was happening.
 - Put the pictures up around the room and create your own art gallery.

Note: Different types of music tend to produce very different pictures. Reggae or Latin American music tends to get tropical island or beach scenes, dance music tends to get cityscapes and classical or chill out tends to get more abstract pictures. Experiment and see what your students produce and adapt follow-up activities accordingly.

Creative group writing

This activity really makes writing in class fun. I have used this activity for years and it has always been a hit. It's good practice for writing creative stories using narrative tenses.



I have used this activity with children and adults from pre-intermediate level and up. At the end of this activity, students usually get a funny story written by at least 7 students or pairs of students from their class.

Preparation

- Make copies of the fold-over [worksheet](#) or a blank page.
- Prepare questions for the story (see procedure below).

Procedure

- Tell the students that you they are going to write a story together. They can write in pairs or individually.
- Give out the worksheet or a blank page. Make sure the students write their names on the top of the worksheet.

- Tell the students what their story is going to be about and ask them a question. They have to write their answer on the worksheet. The questions should be who/what/when/where/how questions.
- I usually use this activity when I cover the topic of aliens with a class, but you can use this activity for most topics. I tell the students that they have seen an alien and they are going to write a story about what happened. Then I read out (or if necessary write on the board) the first question:

When did you see the alien and where were you?

- After the students have completed the answer for the first question they fold the worksheet over so that their answer cannot be seen and then they pass it to the student/s on their right. Then ask the second question and the procedure is repeated with the remaining questions. Here are the rest of the questions I usually ask:

Who were you with?

What were you doing?

What did the alien look like?

What did you do when you saw the alien?

What happened in the end?

- The students shouldn't read what the previous student/s have written. This makes the end result even more amusing.
- When the students have completed all the questions tell them to open out the worksheet and pass it to the person whose name is written on top.
- Tell the students to read their stories. Usually they get a few laughs!
- Ask a few students to read their stories to the class

Alternatives

This activity can be used for many other topics. Here are another few examples:

Meeting someone famous

1. What famous person did you meet?
2. Where did you meet them and who were you with?
3. What was the famous person wearing and how did he/she look (e.g. glamorous/ taller than I thought/ not too beautiful)?
4. What was he/she like? (e.g. friendly/ funny/ annoyed)
5. What did you do when you saw the famous person?
6. What happened next? (e.g. He/she signed an autograph/walked away)

A great holiday

1. Where and when did you go?
2. Who did you go with?
3. Describe the place you went to.
4. What did you do there? (e.g. snowboarding, trekking, swimming, climbed Mt. Everest)
5. What sights did you see? (e.g. The Eiffel tower, the Pyramids, the Great Wall of China)
6. What was the weather like?
7. Did you have a good time?

Error correction

If you would like to correct some of the students writing errors take note of the most common errors and write their sentences (or change the sentence so that the student can't be identified) on the board for the students to correct. Alternatively, you could make a worksheet for the next class to correct these errors.

Creative group writing

Name _____

Listen to the questions and write the answers.

Then fold over the answer and pass it to the person on your left.

1. _____

-----fold here-----

2. _____

-----fold here-----

3. _____

-----fold here-----

4. _____

-----fold here-----

5. _____

-----fold here-----

6. _____

-----fold here-----

7. _____

Good manners

This activity is all about manners and etiquette. This can be an interesting topic to discuss with your students, especially if there are cultural differences regarding norms of behaviour between the country you're working in and the UK.



Preparation

Write up two columns with headings on the board:

Good Manners	Bad Manners

Procedure

- This is a simple introductory activity to get across the idea of manners, both good and bad.

- Draw the table on the board and give students a few ideas to get them going.
- Then they should fill their table with as many examples of good and bad manners as they can think of.
- Ask students to read the statements about manners in the UK. There are three that are FALSE. See if they can find them. (The three false ones are: 3, 4 and 6.)

In the UK...

1. ... do stand in a queue when you wait for a bus or to pay for something in a shop.
 2. ... don't spit on the street.
 3. ... do burp loudly after a meal.
 4. ... don't apologize if you bump into somebody on the street.
 5. ... do say 'please' and 'thank you' at every opportunity.
 6. ... don't cover your mouth when you yawn or sneeze.
 7. ... don't greet people with two kisses.
 8. ... don't pick your nose in public.
- Once the students have finished, ask them to decide on a list of do's and don'ts for good manners in their country.

Getting the whole class talking

These are designed to get everyone talking. They can be used with all levels because the language required to communicate is determined by the students.



Remember to set up and demonstrate these activities carefully before letting the class go ahead.

Jigsaw puzzle challenge

Take 3-4 large pictures/photos and stick them on card. Pictures can come from Sunday supplements, travel brochures, calendars, magazine adverts etc. Pictures specific to students' interests will motivate them e.g. film stills, cartoons, news stories, famous paintings, famous people.

- Draw puzzle shapes on the back of each picture (4-5 shapes) and cut out the picture pieces.
- Give each student in the class a jigsaw piece. They must not show their piece to anyone.
- Students then mingle and question each other about what is on their puzzle piece to try and find people with pieces of the same jigsaw.

- The object of the game is to find all pieces and put together the jigsaw. The first complete picture puzzle wins.

Something in common or 'give me five'

Explain that we can all find something in common with those around us. The object of this game is to discover as many things you have in common with fellow students. You can limit this to 5 things in common.

- Brainstorm examples with the whole class, noting suggestions, e.g.
 - We both have long-haired cats
 - they both went to see Robbie Williams in concert
 - We all like Harry Potter
 - We both have a younger sister called Georgia
 - Our favourite colour is green
 - Our families go to the same supermarket, church, club, holiday place
 - We both believe in love at first sight, ghosts, god.
- Give students a time limit to mingle and find out as many things they have in common. The one who finds the most is the winner.
- Alternatively ask them to find five things and the first person to shout 'five' is the winner.

Create a biography

Take a biography of a famous person and write each detail on strips of paper. Keep the identity secret so they have to guess, if appropriate.

- Draw a table on the board for students to copy and make notes e.g. place of birth, early years, famous for..
- Give out the strips (split the class in two if large and give out 2 sets)

- Students mingle and ask each other questions until they have as many details as possible about the person.
- Take away the strips and put students in pairs or small groups to use their table of notes to write the biography.

Grammar auction

This is a teacher led auction. It can be played with mixed language points which are causing difficulty or on a specific area.



You may need to check that the students understand the concept of an auction.

Procedure

- Put the students into pairs or small groups and give each pair a sheet of sentences and their money limit. If you can find monopoly or other fake money to use it adds to the fun.
- Ask the students to plan which sentences they are going to bid for.
- Conduct the auction in a brisk and fun way.
- After all the sentences are sold, run through and get a class vote on which sentences are correct. Confirm the answers.
- Ask them to add up their money. Who has lost money on incorrect sentences?
- Ask pairs to decide why the sentences are not correct.

Example auction sheet:

Decide which of these sentences is correct. You have 1000 Euro to spend. Try to buy the best sentences with your money. Only buy correct ones if you can!

1. I am living in Paris since 1998.

2. Has Pascal ever been to London?

3. Betty hasn't went to England yet.

4. Nobody in the class has been to America.

5. How long are you studying English?

6. I haven't seen my cousin since a long time.

7. We have seen each other last summer .

8. When were you born?

9. I've been born in 1987.

10. I've never seen a film in English but I've read a book.

11. Sally's lived in London for 10 years now.

Horse race dictation

This is an activity in which students try to predict the order of words in a jumbled sentence before listening for the answer.



It is enjoyable because students are asked to predict the first word, in the same way people try to guess which horse will come first in a race, giving a strong motivation for the short but very intensive listening activity, in the form of a horse race commentary, which gives the solution.

Preparation

Choose a sentence and write words in random order on the left of the board, as in the example below. You also need to prepare a commentary, which should be challenging enough to make it interesting but not too difficult. In the example below there is only one major change in order, when, and other minor changes during the race.

finally
was
o'clock
eleven
home
when
I
it
got

Example commentary

They're off! *I* has made a strong start, with *finally* close behind, and *home* and *got* following. *When* is at the back, *eleven* and *o'clock* are just ahead. *Was* and *it* are in the middle of the field and it has just passed *was*. Both are ahead of *eleven* and *o'clock* and *when* is coming from behind fast, passing *eleven* and *o'clock*, and look at *when* go, flying up the field! He has passed *finally* and is now passing *I*, and into the lead. They're coming to the finish line, what an incredible finish! It's *when* first, *I* second, *finally* third, *got* beats *home* to finish fourth, with *o'clock* coming in last.

Example answer

When I finally got home it was eleven o'clock.

Procedure

- Make sure students are familiar with words showing order in races eg first, second, last, at the back, following, ahead, in(to) the lead, behind, up the field.

- Tell the students to imagine that the words are horses who are going to race to the other side of the board. The winner will be the first word in the sentence, the second to finish will be the second word and so on. Ask them to choose the word that they think will be the winner and write it down.
- Ask students to compare their predictions in groups.
- Tell the students they are going to hear a horse race commentary and that they have to listen carefully to find the winner and the order of words. They can make notes during the commentary and should write the sentence at the end.
- Read the commentary. Stress the words in italics to differentiate them from the other words. Note that commentaries are spoken fast in real life, so read it fairly fast the first time.
- Check the answers. You may need to read it more than once for the class to agree. Ask who predicted the winner correctly.

Have you ever...?

This activity practises 'have you ever...?' to talk about life experiences. It is student led in terms of the content and is satisfying as a result.



Preparation

Print out and copy a [grid worksheet](#) and [bingo card](#) for each student.

Procedure

- Elicit and write a list of about 20 irregular verbs (infinitive forms) on the board.
- Give out bingo cards and ask students to choose any 9 verbs from the board to write the past participle form on their cards.
- Play bingo by randomly selecting the verbs and calling out the infinitive forms.
- Students identify the verbs on their cards and cross them off until they have a line or full house depending on how you want to play.
- Elicit some life experiences from the students. Examples could include get married, have a baby, win a prize etc.
- Put students into groups, give them a piece of paper and ask them to brainstorm other life experiences. Monitor and provide help if necessary. Set a time limit.
- When finished write up all the experiences on the board.
- Give out the grid handout and ask students to fill in the grid with life experiences of their choice from the ideas on the board.
- Students then mix together and ask and answer questions to try to find someone who has had that experience. They should be encouraged to ask follow up questions and to talk to as many people as possible.

- Feedback by asking students to comment about their information.

Extension

Students could write a short paragraph about another student and then read this out without saying the name. The other students must guess who it is. For example: *This student has been to Africa. She went there in 1992 with her family. She saw lots of wild animals including a lion and rhino. She would like to go back again. Who is it?*

Have you ever?

(go) – to Africa			

Bingo Card

Bingo Card

Bingo Card

Listening for key words in songs

This is a fun activity which helps students listen out for key words.



It's particularly useful for encouraging students to recognise familiar words even in difficult texts. This activity works well with all kinds of songs, and can be used to introduce a song, or simply as an enjoyable warmer or cooler.

Preparation

You will need to choose a song for your class and have copies of the lyrics. You also need to produce a set of cards per group of 4 / 5 students, so work out how many you need for your class. The sets of cards (each in an envelope) should consist of around 20 words, some taken from the song (words your students will recognise), whilst others are not from the song, but are similar in meaning / sound to the words from the song.

Procedure

- With each group around a table, I tell students that I'm going to give them some words from a song. They have a few minutes to lay out the cards and decide what

they think the song is about. If students need help brainstorming, I ask a few questions:

- 'Do you think it's sad or happy?'
- 'Is it a love song?'
- 'Why? Which words make you think that?'
- I then tell my students that in fact only some of these words are in the song, and that they'll listen to the song to find out which.
- If they hear one of the words, they should grab that card. I clarify here that this is not team-work, but a competition. At the end of the song, they'll check their cards and get +1 point for correct cards and -1 point for wrong cards.
- I play the song once for students to listen and 'grab'.
- I then ask students how many cards they've got. I hand out the lyrics (or have one copy large enough for all to see) and ask students to find their words.
- Each group announces the student with the highest number of points for the class to clap.
- Following this activity, I can then go on to use the song for a variety of purposes, for example as a text for reading comprehension or language work, or for the class to sing together.

Note: this activity can be used at all levels - it just depends on the words you put on the cards. 'Difficult' songs can be made doable if the words chosen are simple and easy to pick out. Similarly, an 'easy' song can be made more challenging for high-level students by choosing words that are difficult to hear, or putting in words with very similar sounds

'The World's Greatest' by R. Kelly.

<i>valley</i>	<i>forest</i>	<i>Vision</i>
<i>river</i>	<i>lion</i>	<i>Television</i>
<i>Face</i>	<i>eagle</i>	<i>Tall</i>
<i>Home</i>	<i>Star</i>	<i>High</i>
<i>Hero</i>	<i>jungle</i>	<i>Wind</i>
<i>Country</i>	<i>Tree</i>	<i>Sing</i>
<i>Small</i>	<i>mountain</i>	<i>Moon</i>

Mingling: True or false?

This is a simple mingling activity that can be used with low level groups to provide practice in asking and answering questions. The lesson is designed for adults but could also be used with older teenagers.



Preparation

Write these two incomplete statements on the board:

1 has got a bike.

2 goes to bed late.

Fill the gaps with the names of two students who are present.

1 (Paulo) has got a bike.

2 (Jan) goes to bed late.

Explain that you want to find out whether these statements are true or false. In order to do that, you need to ask (Paulo) and (Jan) a question. Elicit the questions that need to be asked.

1 Have you got a bike?

2 Do you go to bed late?

Invite another student to ask the first question to (Paulo). If (Paulo's) answer is yes, write true at the end of the statement. If the answer is no, write false. Repeat the process with the second question.

Procedure

Give each student a copy of the worksheet and tell them to fold it along the dotted line.

Students complete the first column by writing the names of their classmates. They should write everybody's name at least once. They should not write their own name but they can include the teacher's name.

Students then unfold the worksheet and read through the statements. Explain the meaning of any unknown vocabulary as necessary and encourage students to work in pairs, anticipating the questions that they will need to ask.

At this stage you can elicit the first few questions and write them on the board:

Do you read the newspaper every day?

Do you like sushi?

Can you make a cake?

Students then mingle, asking and answering their questions and writing true or false.

Extension

For stronger groups, encourage them to ask for further information about each statement. For example, if a student reads the newspaper every day, ask: "Which newspaper do you read?"

Mingling: True or false?

Names:

True or false?

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|-------|
| 1 | reads the newspaper every day. | ..... |
| 2 | likes sushi. | ..... |
| 3 | can make a cake. | ..... |
| 4 | drinks coffee every morning. | ..... |
| 5 | plays a musical instrument. | ..... |
| 6 | eats in a restaurant every week. | ..... |
| 7 | loves The Beatles. | ..... |
| 8 | can speak French. | ..... |
| 9 | has got a pet. | ..... |
| 10 | is vegetarian. | ..... |
| 11 | can juggle. | ..... |
| 12 | is very happy at the moment. | ..... |
| 13 | chats online every day. | ..... |
| 14 | comes to class by bus. | ..... |
| 15 | hasn't got a car. | ..... |
| 16 | gets up early every day. | ..... |
| 17 | has got three brothers and a sister. | ..... |
| 18 | thinks Madonna is great. | ..... |
| 19 | goes to the gym. | ..... |
| 20 | can say "Hello" in five languages. | ..... |

One word story

This activity is extremely simple. Each student adds a word to create a group story. Despite the simplicity it can be really challenging and I would only use it with higher levels.



Preparation

Students should be in a circle (if this isn't possible make it clear they know who they are going to follow on from).

Procedure

- The teacher can begin by saying the first word and each student adds the next word, without repeating what has come beforehand.
- The stories can develop in any number of ways. Some groups may need the teacher to provide punctuation and decide that the sentence should end and a new one should begin. The great thing about this activity is that all students have to concentrate and listen carefully to their colleagues to be able to continue the story coherently.

- Good starting words are “Suddenly” or “Yesterday” to force the story into the past tense.

Example:

* Teacher – “Yesterday”

* Student 1 – “I”

* Student 2 – “saw”

* Student 3 – “a”

* Student 4 – “strange”

* Student 5 – “man”

* Student 6 – “who”

* Student 7 – “was”

* Student 8 – “wearing”

* Student 9 – “a”

* Student 10 – “yellow”

* Student 11 – “hat”

* Teacher – “Full stop, new sentence”

* Student 12 – “He”

* Student 13 – “was”

* Etc. etc.

- It is great for highlighting word collocations and practising word order. It also highlights problems students may have with tenses or prepositions for you to focus on in future classes.

The perfect teacher

The aims of this activity are for students to revise and practise open question forms.



This activity is designed to be used with Pre-Intermediate / Intermediate level learners. It could be used as part of an introduction lesson and / or to negotiate classroom behaviour contracts between teacher and student.

Preparation

- Make a copy of handout 1, cut up the adjectives, and stick them around the room
- Make copies of handout 2 (one per student)
- Make copies of handout 3 (one per student, cut up)
- Make copies of handout 4 (one per student) - if doing the discussion follow-up activity

Procedure

Before the class arrives

- Write up the following list of ten adjectives that describe the perfect student on the board. You can change these to suit your level of students: *diligent, hard working, punctual, talkative, friendly, sharing, intelligent, motivated, creative, inquisitive*.
- Cover each adjective so the students cannot see them.

When the class arrives

- Put students into groups. Tell students that you have written ten adjectives on the board that describe a perfect student. Set a time limit and have students work together to guess the words.
- When the time is up, students swap lists and check their answers. You could award points for any correct answers.
- Now ask students to discuss their ideas for a perfect teacher. Bring it to a class brainstorm to elicit adjectives. Write these on the board.
- Give out handout 2 and ask students to walk around the room and write the adjectives on the walls next to the correct definition on the handout. To make this more challenging you could add more adjectives than gaps available.
- Students check in pairs and then with the teacher. Establish what the two negative adjectives are.
- Give out cut-up adjectives (handout 3) to each individual student and have them rank them in order of what is most important to them.
- After ranking students can compare and discuss their lists with each other.

Follow up

Discussion

- Students work alone and use handout 4 to make short notes about their favourite teacher.
- Students then work in pairs or small groups depending on class size and talk about their favourite teacher.

Handout 2

The perfect teacher

Look at the words around the room and write them under the definitions below.

1. saying or doing things that show that you care about other people and want to help them or make them

happy

2. knowing a lot

3. easy to meet and talk to

4. behaving towards someone in a way that shows you like them and are ready to talk to them or help them

5. giving help or encouragement, especially to someone who is in a difficult situation

6. enjoyable to be with because they are happy and amusing

7. good at using their imagination to make things

8. Always ready to do something or deal with a situation

9. expecting people to obey rules or to do what you say

10. often changing quickly from being in a good temper to being in a bad temper

Answers

Handout 3

The perfect teacher

Kind	saying or doing things that show that you care about other people and want to help them or make them happy
knowledgeable	knowing a lot
accessible	easy to meet and talk to
Friendly	behaving towards someone in a way that shows you like them and are ready to talk to them or help them
Supportive	giving help or encouragement, especially to someone who is in a difficult situation
Fun	enjoyable to be with because they are happy and amusing
Creative	good at using their imagination to make

	things
well prepared	Always ready to do something or deal with a situation
Strict	expecting people to obey rules or to do what you say
Moody	often changing quickly from being in a good temper to being in a bad temper

Handout 4

Adjectives to be used for ranking stage

kind

knowledgeable

accessible

friendly

supportive

fun

creative

well prepared

Understanding dialogues

These are two simple listening activities which test students' understanding of two dialogues.



They can both be used with low level students.

Preparation

- Make copies of the scripts to give to your students as feedback and download the audio recordings to play in class.
- Make copies of the worksheets.

Procedure

- Hand out the worksheets and check that your students understand them.
- Play the recording of the audio once, then ask the students to check their answers in pairs.

- Play the audio again one or two more times as needed.
- Hand out the script and ask the students to read the script and check their answers against it.
- Clarify the correct answers for them.

Listening activity 1: In a Language School Café

Listen to two students talking in a language school cafeteria, and decide if the following statements are **true or false**. You may listen twice.

1. Both Hong Lei and Ricky are new students in the language school.
2. Hong Lei is in the Advanced One class.
3. Ricky's teacher has curly hair.
4. Ricky's teacher is a new teacher in the school.
5. Ricky just arrived a week ago.
6. Hong Lei advises Ricky to apply for boarding at the YMCA.

Dialogue 1: Two students in a language school café.

A: Hi! I'm Hong lei. What's your name?

B: Hello, Hong Lei. My name's Ricky.

A: Hi Ricky. Are you a new student here?

B: Yes, I had my first lesson this morning. Are you a new student too?

A: No, I've been here for six months.

B: Six months. That's a long time.

A: It's not so long really. What class are you in? Intermediate or ...?

B: Intermediate Three. And what about you?

A: I'm in Advanced One. Who's your teacher?

B: I can't remember her name, but she's got curly red hair.

A: Ah! Does she wear glasses?

B: Yes, I think so.

A: That's probably Anne Wallis.

B: Yes that's right. Do you know her? Is she your teacher too?

A: No. But she taught me last term. How long have you been here?

B: Only a week.

A: Wow, not long. Where do you live? With a family?

B: Well, I'm staying at the YMCA at the moment. I'm looking for somewhere more permanent. Do you know of any good places?

A: Yes. Actually my friend has a spare room in here apartment and she's looking for a flatmate. Would you like her phone number?

B: That would be great! Thanks for your help. Can I buy you coffee?

Video lesson

TV adverts - jigsaw viewing. This is based on the idea that student partners are only given half the complete information i.e. one learner only watches the video and the partner only listens to it. In order to recreate the complete advert, they will need to share their information.



Topic: TV adverts

Aims

- Listening for global comprehension
- Speaking , language of description
- Presentation of language

Level: Intermediate upwards

Procedure

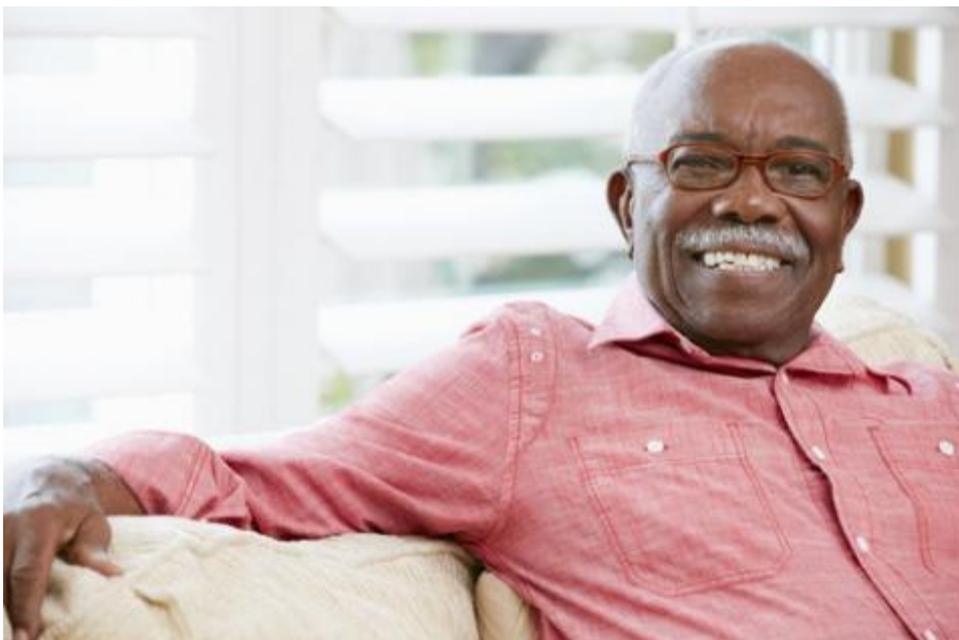
- Pre-viewing
- Discussion about advertising. Are there too many adverts on TV?

- Would you rather pay than watch adverts? What do you do when the adverts come on? Have you ever wanted anything because you saw it on an advert. Any favourite adverts on TV at the moment?
- While-viewing
 - Divide class into 2 groups. 1 group will watch the video with the sound off and then the second group will listen to the advert with the picture covered. Ideally the group that is not watching or listening should be sent out of the room. Where this is not possible however, students not watching or listening should turn their chairs round and face the back of the classroom.
 - Group 1.
Watch the video with no sound. Note down ideas what the advert is for. Compare answers in pairs.
 - Group 2
Listen to the advert with picture covered. Note down any information about the video, i.e. what's being advertised. Compare answers in pairs. (If Group 1 are still in the room they should at this stage be comparing answers and therefore not paying attention to the sound.)
 - Group 1
Watch video for a second time trying to imagine what's being said. In pairs after the video has finished give learners 10 minutes to try and write a dialogue for the advert.
 - Group 2
Listen to the advert for a second time. Try to visualise the images. In pairs, after the video has finished give learners 10 minutes to note down any images they think would fit what they heard either writing or drawing.
 - The learners now work in different pairs - 1 from Group 1 and 1 from Group 2. They explain what they visualised or the imagined dialogue. Their partner tells them if the ideas were similar to the advert.

- Both groups watch advert with sound and pictures.
- Identify language point from video - adjectives, superlatives.
Learners note down any they hear.
- Post-viewing
 - Learners make storyboard for an advert.
 - Do further work on language point e.g. make posters of positive /negative adjectives.

When I'm 75

This is a speaking exercise for the future perfect and future continuous forms for intermediate and upper-intermediate students. The forms themselves are used in a highly controlled way, making it suitable for a class who have just been introduced to them.



- The open questions that follow some of the gap-fill sentences provide freer practice and can generate a great deal of discussion both in a class where people know each other well and in one where nobody knows anybody!
- The content is a mixture of concrete items - '*...will have raised many children. How many?*' and more abstract, which may require sensitive handling, e.g. '*...will have learnt many lessons. Which?*'.

Preparation

Before the class, prepare enough photocopies of the worksheet for each learner to have a copy. You can download the worksheet below.

Procedure

- Ask the class to imagine they are 75. Ask them to imagine what they look like. If you have a flashcard of someone old, show them and tell them this is you at 75.
- On the board, write two sentences, using the two forms, about you. For example, *'When I am 75, I will be living in the South of France on a farm'* and *'When I am 75, I will have lived and worked in 10 different countries'*. Use exaggerated ideas if necessary, e.g. *'..I will have had 20 children!'*
- Get your learners' opinions.
- Ask learners to complete the worksheet, working in pairs. If you are working with a new class, make sure they know each other's names.
- When learners have finished completing the sentences, ask them to get up and walk around to check their ideas with the people they have named.
- Give them time and encourage discussion, but monitor closely, both for the target language and potential areas of sensitivity.
- Elicit any interesting answers open class to finish the exercise.

Note: An extension of this could be to ask learners to write their own sentences rather than completing yours, providing freer practice of the forms.

When I'm 75

- What will our class be like when they are 75?
- What will they be doing?
- What will they have done?

Work in pairs. Choose a person from your class for each sentence below.

Write their name in the space.

What will your class be doing when they are 75?

1. _____ will be living here.
2. _____ will be living on another continent
3. _____ will be planning another long journey
4. _____ will not be stopping work
5. _____ will be playing with their grandchildren
6. _____ will be looking forward to stopping work
7. _____ will be falling in love again!

What will they have done when they are 75?

8. _____ will have raised many children. How many?
9. _____ will have changed their plans a lot. How?
10. _____ will have had many different jobs. Which ones?
11. _____ will have been very successful but not in their work! How?
12. _____ will have changed their priorities. How?
13. _____ will have learnt many lessons. Which?
14. _____ will have been very very happy for a long time!

Why?

Now find each person and see if your ideas were right!

- 'Fish for language' by going through life with an open eye and attentive ear.
- 'Soliloquize', i.e. translate along in your mind silently
 - as you are doing things (as if you were speaking to an imaginary friend by your side)
 - as you are listening to the news
 - as you watch people doing something
 - as you see any object around
- Read aloud to yourself from printed text.
 - Increase your exposure to words
 - Television
 - BBC Radio (shortwave world receiver)
 - Books
 - Magazines Newspapers (from UK/USA)
 - English-language films on video
 - Pop songs (wonderful for vocabulary and grammar!)
 - Correspondence with an English native speaker pen-friend

The Press Conference

This is a great activity for practising question forms in a fun way and gives structured speaking practice to lower levels.



You will need a sticky label for each student or a pack of sticky notes.

Preparation

- Tell students that they have got the job of reporter for a magazine about famous people. They are going to interview some famous people and they need to prepare some general questions they can ask any famous person – actors, singers, sports stars, politicians etc.
- Give some examples, like, ‘Do you enjoy your job?’ or ‘Are you happy being so famous?’ and get students to write four questions and put them into a table with the questions going down the left hand side and space for five columns to the right.
- Then ask students which famous person they would like to be and give each one a sticky label or a sticky note for them to write the name of the famous person on and stick on themselves.

Procedure

- Put students into two concentric circles with the inner circle facing out and outer circle facing in.
- Tell students that they are going to interview the person directly in front of them for two minutes and note down all the information they find out. They are also going to be interviewed.
- The facing pairs take turns in the different roles of interviewer and famous person. At two minute intervals shout 'stop' and ask the outer circle to step one person to the right. Shout 'start' to give students two more minutes with a new famous person.
- When each student has interviewed and been interviewed five or six times stop the activity and seat students. The information they have gathered about the famous people can then be shared with the group orally or used for a piece of writing for a gossip magazine.
- If you have an odd number rotate one person out of the circle each time you move the other circle around. This person can help you to monitor and can walk around the circle listening to the others in action and making a note of any mistakes they hear.

This activity gets very noisy with a large group but it can be a great way to keep students speaking English for quite a long period of time and you will probably see how their confidence grows as they get the hang of asking and answering the questions.

Talking points

This is a great student-centred speaking activity.



You need scraps of paper and dice for this activity. You will need 12 bits of paper and two dice for each group of between 3 and 6 students.

Procedure

- Put the students into groups and ask each group to write 12 topics they are interested in on the scraps of paper.
- Tell the students to put the bits of paper face down on the table and to write the numbers 1 to 12 on the side facing up.
- Give each group two dice. Students take turns to throw the dice, they turn over the corresponding bit of paper and the whole group talks for two minutes about that topic.
- After two minutes call out 'throw again'. If a different number comes up they turn over that paper and change topic, if it's the same number they keep talking about the same topic for another two minutes. And so on until they have no bits of paper left, or you run out of time!

Where were you...?

This is a controlled writing activity which focuses on using the past continuous verb form to talk about events in the past. Learners write about what they were doing when they heard about an important event, either personal or public.



This activity can be used as semi-controlled practice of the target language. There are activities for two levels, elementary to pre-intermediate and intermediate+.

Preparation

Before the class: Choose an event that was significant for you and your learners. You need to be able to remember what you were doing when you heard about it, e.g. when your child was born, when your team won the World Cup, or when the September 11 attacks occurred. Choose something relevant to your learners' culture.

Download the appropriate worksheet and make copies for each of your students.

Procedure

- Explain this event to your learners. Use the following as prompts:
 - a. What the event was
 - b. Where you were
 - c. What you were doing
 - d. How you felt
 - e. What you did after you heard about the event
- Encourage your learners to ask you more questions also if they are interested in your example.
- Elicit examples of other events that were important for your learners, either personal or public. Write these on the board.
- Ask your learners to choose one event to write about.
- Hand out worksheet 1 (for elementary/pre-intermediate) or worksheet 2 (pre-intermediate+) and ask the learners to write about their experience.
- Monitor the writing work and guide as you think appropriate.
- Get students to share their experiences.

Follow-up activities

- Collect written work and correct in any way appropriate.
- Correct work and then ask learners to present their work to the class.
- Correct work with learners, and then 'publish' group work, e.g. just by photocopying, displaying on walls, on a class blog or website, etc.
- Ask learners to talk about their experiences in pairs and then report back to the class.
- Ask learners to develop a questionnaire based on their work, to ask others.

worksheet1

Complete the spaces in the text with your own ideas.

a) I am going to talk about (an event)

b) This happened on (a date)

c) At that time I (wasing)

d) and (.....ing)

e) I remember that I felt (an emotion)

f) This event changed me because afterwards

g) (?)

worksheet2

Think about an event that was important for you. Answer the questions.

- a) What was the event?
- b) When did it happen?
- c) What were you doing when you heard about the event?
- d) What did you feel?
- e) How did the event change you?
- f) Is there anything else you remember?

Now combine your answers together into a paragraph. You could start by saying:

I remember the day

that... ..
.....
.....
.....
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.....
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.....
.....
.....

Text lingo

Most of our teenage students now have mobile phones and enjoy sending text messages to each other. This activity introduces them to some English text messages that they could start to use with their friends.



Preparation

Photocopy the text messages and their real English translations. You can either hand these out as a worksheet or cut them up into strips for students to match.

Procedure

Ask your students how they send texts and to teach you a few tricks for messaging in their language. Then tell them that in English there are lots of ways to send short texts.

- Give out the cut up the strips or matching exercise to each group of 3 or 4 students.
- Ask them to read the messages and to match them with their real English equivalent.

- Tell them the answers and ask them if they have any equivalents in their L1.

Text lingo

How's your English text lingo? Match the text message on the left with its 'translation' in real English on the right.

Text	Translation
1) C U L8R M8	a) As far as I know
2) B4	b) Love you with all my heart
3) AFAIK	c) Boring
4) W8 4 ME, I'M L8, SOZ	d) Text me back
5) KIT	e) Have a nice day
6) RUOK?	f) See you later mate
7) LUWAMH	g) Keep in touch
8) HAND	h) Easy

9) ZZZZZZZZZ	i) Are you okay?
10) KOTL	j) Wait for me, I'm late, sorry
11) TMB	k) See you tonight or tomorrow
12) O ME	l) By the way
13) EZ	m) Before
14) BTW	n) Ring me

Answers: 1 – f, 2 – m, 3 – a, 4 – j, 5 – g, 6 – i, 7 – b, 8 – e, 9-c, 10 – o, 11 – d, 12 – n. 13 – h, 14 – l

Using magazines

Magazines are a great source of ideas and materials for teaching and can keep your students interested and talking for hours on a whole range of subjects.



A simple way to get students talking and sharing ideas, predicting the content of your lesson and so arousing their interest is the following:

- Cut or copy magazine titles from a range of magazines - football, fishing, computer, teenage, business, mother and baby, housekeeping etc. and put them randomly onto the floor or board.
- In pairs the students have to count how many different types of magazine titles they see and try and work out what each magazine is about.
- After comparing answers with other pairs and feeding back as a whole class you can get them to say which ones they're more interested in and why. You can then lead onto their reading habits.
- How often do they buy magazines?

- Do they buy particular magazines because of the subjects featured on the front page or because they always buy the same magazine?
- How do they read the magazine - from cover to cover or do they go straight to the featured articles or horoscopes?
- Most importantly, why do they do what they do?

Problem pages are great to use with teenagers as they can relate to the issues being addressed. As a language focus they are also very useful for practising 'giving advice' modals such as: should, could and must, and agreeing or disagreeing.

- Start by brainstorming the kinds of problems you find on a problem page.
- Give pairs a cut up copy of either a problem or the advice given.
- Give them time to read and understand the gist.
- They could write a one-sentence summary and then walk around the room reading their sentence to other pairs until they find the corresponding problem or advice. Then in their new groups of four they can decide whether they agree or disagree with the advice given.

Teenage magazines generally have a few articles based on thought-provoking subjects which can really stimulate a class of teenagers.

- With a set of different teenage magazines let the students flick through them until they find an article which interests them.
- Make sure they are careful with the magazines so you can use them again with another class. Also for this part give them a limited amount of time to find an article.
- They should read the titles, look at the pictures and skim the texts to get a general idea of what the article is about rather than read the whole magazine.

- Once they've chosen their article give them time to read it in full. Remind them though that they don't need to understand every word.
- If you have a large class then in groups of four they can take it in turns to tell the others about their article. If your class is relatively small you can feedback in two groups or as a whole class.
- Each time someone tells the others about their article pre-designate a couple of people to ask questions at the end. This way they feel more involved and are more likely to listen.

Horoscopes interest a lot of people, young or old, even if they don't always like to admit it! In your English class you can use them to find out about your students' personalities while having fun with the future.

- Give your class a list of adjectives from which they choose five that correspond to their personality. If they know each other well they could choose the adjectives for their friends.
- Briefly discuss the zodiac signs and the typical traits of each. Then from their choices either you or the class could try and guess what zodiac sign they are most likely to correspond to. If they do know each other very well then this is something they may already know which is why you ask first and then guess yourself if that is the case. You can go on to discuss whether they think they correspond to their zodiac sign or not.
- Have a look at a magazine first to be sure you have an idea of the typical traits of each sign. In any case they should know for their own sign.
- Find out about their reading habits and whether they read the horoscopes and to what extent it can determine how they plan their day or week. This could then lead on to a reading of the horoscopes for that week from the teenage magazine.

- Each person could read their own, as they might do in their own language, and feedback to the class on what they've read. Ask them what tense is most used (the future) and using this tense and the personality traits seen earlier they could create their own horoscopes for someone in the class. If they do this in pairs they'll have another opportunity to speak in English.
- To decide who they write it for put everyone's names into a hat and then pick them randomly so each pair writes for two people.

List of literature

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