



How to be a Creative English Teacher

Grammar & Vocabulary Games

ALPHABET SOUP

Use this activity to practice/review the alphabet and general vocabulary. Write the letters of the alphabet on separate pieces of paper and spread the letters out in a wide area. Divide the class into four teams, and space the teams out around the area. Students take turns throwing a paper ball and have to give a word that starts with the letter they land on (or near), in which case they 'win' that letter for their team. The team with the most letters at the end is the winner.

ANIMAL BOOGIE

Use this game to practice/review animal vocabulary. Have students walk clockwise in a big circle. Call out the name of an animal. Students stop walking, turn around and begin walking in the other direction in imitation of the animal you've called out. Continue with various different animals and encourage students to repeat the name of the animal as they dramatize it.

BLIND DRAWING

Use this activity to practice/review body parts and prepositions of direction. Draw a circle on the board. Explain to the class that this is a face. Call up a student to the board and blindfold him/her. Using directions such as up, down, left, right, draw a/an..., the class gives the blindfolded student instructions in order to complete the face. This activity can also be done in pairs, with students

drawing on a piece of paper, and it can also be done with the whole body. If done in pairs, you can have students vote for the best drawings as a conclusion of the activity.

CHALLENGES

Use this activity to review key concepts throughout the school year. Create a series of challenge cards which you can add to at the end of each unit. At the beginning or end of each lesson, hold a few challenges, calling on different students each time to draw a challenge from the pack and try to answer the question/do the task. Keep track of how many challenges each student succeeds in doing on a chart, and give a prize to the most successful student at the end of the year/end of semester.

HAND TO HAND

Use this game to practice/review the body parts. Play some music, and have the students walk around the room. When you stop the music, shout out two body parts, i.e. "Hand to hand!" or "Nose to foot!" Students find a partner and make this formation before repeating the body parts. However, if you shout, "Head!" students have to find a partner and sing a body part song together (e.g. "Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes".)

INTRODUCTIONS GAME

Write a short story with around 10-15 interesting facts (family,



hobbies, favorites, etc.) about your life. Read to the class. Afterwards, in teams, quiz the students in how much they remember. The team with the most correct answers is the winner. Example: *My name is Michael. I'm originally from the United States, but I live in Italy. My family is very large...I have four sisters and two brothers. My parents, brothers, and sisters live Arizona. Rome is my favorite Italian city, and pajata with rigatoni is my favorite Italian dish. In my free time, I like reading, walking, going to museums, and watching movies. I don't like going to the disco, cleaning, or ironing.*

MAKE ME SAY YES

Use this activity to practice/review question formation with a variety of grammatical structures. Model the activity by having students ask you questions based on the target structure. For each time you answer in the affirmative, students score a point. For each time you answer in the negative, you score a point. Then have students continue in pairs, having them first brainstorm questions if they need extra support.

PREPOSITION FORMATION

Use this activity to practice/review prepositions of place. Students move around a large designated space, mixing constantly until you call out a formation. Pre-teach how they should make each formation with a partner; for example, "on" could be one student on all-fours and the other student sitting on, and "under" could be one student passing under the legs of the other, etc. When you call out a formation, students stop mixing and form the

preposition with a partner. After a few rounds, you can eliminate any student who doesn't find a partner as well as the pair that makes the formation last. Introduce and reiterate the question: "Where is...?" after each formation. Eliminated students can also become the announcers.

SHAKEDOWN

Use this activity as a warm-up and to practice the numbers 1-10. Stand in a circle. As a group, count down from 10 while shaking out your arms and legs (go in order: 10 shakes with the right arm, 10 with the left arm, 10 with the right leg, 10 with the left leg). After you count down from 10, count down from 9, starting with the right arm again; then 8, etc. As the leader, you can vary the pace and volume of the counting (ex. shouting quickly, slow motion, whispering).

TIME BOMB

Use this activity to practice/review the numbers. Have students stand or sit in a circle. Draw a bomb on the board and a number inside of the bomb. Choose a student to start counting, with the count continuing around the circle one by one. When a student calls out the number inside the bomb, everyone shouts, "KABOOM!" and that student is eliminated. Ask that student to write the next number in the bomb and continue play.

TRUE OR FALSE

Divide students into two teams. Place two chairs at the front of the room: one "false," the other "true." Only one player at a time from each group participates. Ask a question, and the first player to



sit on the correct chair wins a point for his/her team. Examples:

*An elephant has a long nose.
Four times four is sixteen.
...is wearing...
...means...in English.
It is ...o'clock.
You are from Japan.
This is a/an...
You live in Italy.
The Italian flag is green, red,
and blue.*

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS MY TEACHER?

Tell students that you love travelling around the world and that you want them to follow you on a journey. Read out some clues about

places/shops/planets/countries/monuments, and have students guess where you are. It can be set up like a quiz, with students working in pairs and competing to score the most points. Examples:

- *I am buying some chicken for dinner. Where am I? Butcher shop/grocery store*
- *I am buying stamps for a letter. Where am I? Post office/Tobacconist*
- *Dancing is my favorite hobby. Where am I going this weekend? The disco*
- *I am visiting the planet furthest from the sun. Where am I? Neptune*
- *I can see real lions, tigers, bears, snakes, but I'm not in danger. Where am I? A zoo.*
- *It's dark. I'm sitting down comfortably. I can see George Clooney. Where am I? A cinema*
- *I am in the country that has a red maple leaf on the flag. Canada*
- *I am in the country with the biggest population in the world. China*
- *I am in the home of Big Ben, Buckingham Palace and a famous Queen. United Kingdom*
- *I am in the country of The Great Barrier Reef. Australia*
- *I am in the country that is famous for ancient architecture, such as temples, pyramids and the Sphinx. Egypt*
- *I am in the city that has The Statue of Liberty. NYC*
- *I am in the largest country in the world. Russia*
- *I am in the country that has got the Taj Mahal. India*
- *I am in the country that has got the Eiffel Tower. France*
- *I am in Moscow. Which country am I in? Russia*