

## Games that Reinforce English Teaching in Primary Classrooms

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### 1. Classroom Management –

#### a) **Sponge Activities – “Kids soak up language” and “Time is soaked up by practice activities”**

##### 1. **Line-Ups**

- (a) Purpose: Students use English to arrange themselves in line based on a criterion. Required language should be previously taught, e.g., numbers, number words, colors of the rainbow, age in years, months of the year, month born, date of birth, ABC order.
- (b) Teach language needed for following instructions: What month were you born? What is your name? What number do you have? You go first. I go first...
- (c) Procedure: Provide props/cards if needed.
- (d) Students are asked to line up or get into the queue based on a given set of criteria, i.e. birth date. They must ask many others, “When is your birthday?”
- (e) Demonstrate with a small group, the first time. Have children practice the task in small groups then larger groups

##### 2. **Q and A or Quiz Show**

- (a) Select a topic, generally one that is being studied. Example:
- (b) Names of vegetables, school equipment, students in the class, etc.
- (c) Teacher can ask questions or select a group of students to ask questions. The responders can be individual students or teams.
- (d) Points can be given to teams or they can get a privilege like leaving first at the end of the day; first in line for lunch; extra time at recess; etc.

##### 3. **Total Physical Response (TPR)**

- (a) TPR focus on listening comprehension and understanding, not speaking.
- (b) Plan a series of commands to introduce in a lesson.
- (c) Introduce those commands by doing the action associated with the command.
- (d) Then ask the students to do the command with you as you say it.
- (e) As reinforcement/sponge activity – Give the command but do not do the action. Example:
  1. Ask all the students to stand up.
  2. Give a command.
  3. Students who do not do the command sit down.
  4. Continue until just a few students are standing.
  5. Repeat the next day with the same or similar commands.

6. Continuation: Ask the best students to be the teacher and give commands to others.
7. Advanced: Say an action sequence:
  - a. Sit down. Open the book.
  - b. Turn to page 22.
  - c. Raise your hand.
  - d. Close the book.
  - e. Stand up.

#### 4. Songs

Rounds: Encourage students to focus their attention. Language is predictable but some substitutions can be added. Example:

Group 1: Are you hungry?  
Are you hungry?

Group 2: Yes, I am.  
Yes, I am.  
I am very hungry.  
I am very hungry.

Group 1: I am too.  
I am too.

(Focus on adjectives: thirsty, angry, busy, nervous, sleepy, tired)



#### Activities with or without the course book – cooperative learning

1.

##### a) Think, Pair, Share

**Purpose:** To think about the theme or topic of the lesson and to tie this back to their own experience.

**Procedure:**

1. **Think:** Invite students to think about a topic (e.g. a time when they were separated from someone, something, and somebody.)
2. **Pair:** Next students find partners. They tell their story to their partner and they listen to the story their partner tells them. They can take notes to remember a detail if this helps.
3. **Share:** The first pair gets together with another pair of students. Each person takes a turn retelling his or her partner's story. The group can then select one or two stories to share with the class.

##### b) Numbered Heads Together

**Purpose:** Assures that all students know the answer to a question and are ready to respond to a question.

**Procedure:**

1. Students number off with in their groups.
2. Teacher asks a question.
3. Heads together. Group comes to consensus on an answer and makes sure that all members know the answer.

4. Teacher calls a number at random; students with that number raise their hand to be called upon. Additional responses may be added by others with the same number.

## 2. Vocabulary

### a. Clothesline

*Purpose:* Reading Skills Reinforced: Letter Knowledge, Phonological Awareness, Graphophonic Knowledge and Lexical Knowledge.

*Procedure:* Attach a sturdy string or rope between two points or walls in the classroom. If possible, the string should be at a level so that pupils can reach it to attach word cards on to the string. There are many different activities for you to select from depending on your class' speaking and reading ability at the time of the lesson and the reading/spelling skill that you wish to reinforce. Write words from the lesson on stiff cards (larger cards for younger pupils.) These fun activities should only be done after the vocabulary has been introduced in a lesson as they reinforce learning.

#### i. Activity 1:

1. Lay an assortment of cards on the table.
2. Ask pupils to find words that begin with a specific sound, example: "Find the words that begin with the sound "bah" or end with "duh"). Teach students both the names of letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make. This will help with spelling and sounding out words while reading.
3. Then hang them on the clothes line in groups or next to a letter card that matches the initial sound.

#### ii. Activity 2:

1. Color a set of cards and write the name of the colors on other cards in black.
2. Lay the cards on a table and ask a pupil to come to the table, read a card and attach it on the clothes line, next to the correct color with a clothes pin (peg) or a large paper clip.

#### iii. Activity 3:

1. Draw the shapes of some clothes, i.e. shirt, pants, socks, skirt on the blackboard. Ask pupils to draw similar shapes on their cards. Then label each item.
2. Pairs of pupils can roll play sorting clothes, washing the clothes and hanging them on the line.

#### iv. Activity 4:

1. Lay cards on a table and ask a pupil to come to the table, read a card and attach it on the clothes line with a clothes pin (peg) or large paper clip.
2. Other pupils do the same until all the words are read from the cards.
3. Then randomly point to a card hanging on the clothes line and ask the class to read it aloud.

4. Cards can be grouped by initial letters or placed in alphabetical order on the clothes line.

v. **Activity 5:**

1. Write words or phrases from potential sentences on cards.
2. Ask pairs of pupils to find cards on the table that go together to make a sentence. Pin the cards in order onto the clothes line.
3. They ask another pair of pupils to read their sentence aloud to check it.

**b. Inside-Outside Circles**

*Purpose:* To give English Learners real opportunities to give and get information from a number of other students. To practice asking and answering questions.

*Procedure:* Ask students to stand in two circles, one inside the other. The students in the inside circle facing out and the students in the outside circle facing in.

1. Students in the inside circle ask the students in the outside circle a question. Then the students in the outside circle answer the question.
2. After asking and answering a question the students on the outside circle move to the right. They face a new partner and ask and answer questions again. Students rotate after each question.
3. The questions for Inside-Outside Circle can be presented in two ways.
  - a. the teacher asks a question and the students respond to their partners
  - b. the students hold flash cards with the question to be asked. The students show their partners their flash cards and get a response before rotating.

**c. Ask and Answer Variation Table Variation**

- i. **Listening:** Students tick boxes that agree with the teacher's statements. Student can then check their ticks in pairs to see if they have the correct answers. If there is disagreement in the pair, they must ask the teacher to repeat the statement.

The cup is on the table. -  
Girls wear dresses.  
The dog has a bone.

The ball is yellow.  
That is an apple tree.  
Cows have spots.

- ii. **Questioning:** Half the class asks questions while the other half answers the questions. Students record results on the table by ticking or recording an answer. Reverse roles often.
  1. Do you have a pencil? Have you got three pencils? (like, been, want, seen, eaten, - negatives.)
  2. Then summarize results by telling the class - "How many students have a ruler?"

**3. Drama and Storytelling**

- a. Story Reading

Purpose: Allows students to practice critical listening skills and develop insight into critical listening by discussing listening, comparing listening to reading, comparing active to passive listening, and discussing ways to listen actively and accurately

**i. Activity 1: Preview-Review**

1. Preview: The teacher tells the students generally what the story is about in their L1.
2. Read Aloud: Then the teacher reads the story aloud in English without translating. If questions are asked during the reading the teacher responds in English.
3. Review: At the end of the story, the discussion occurs in the L1.
4. Activities: Follow up activities can be in either language depending on the students' proficiency.
  - a. Ask students to predict what happens next to each of the characters.
  - b. Ask students to provide an alternate ending.
  - c. Select new vocabulary and ask students to tell what happened when those words were used in the story.
  - d. Ask selected students to pretend to be the characters in the story and role-play.
  - e. Ask students to tell why they like a character in the story and why they don't.
  - f. Allow individual students to play teacher and "read" or retell the story to other students.

**Activity 2:** In this lesson, five students are asked to leave the room. Next, the teacher reads a story (The Three Bears, Cinderella, etc.) The teacher asks the remaining students to listen very carefully.

1. When the story is finished, one student from class brings in student #1 and retells the story. Then student #1 tells the story to student #2, etc.
2. After all the students have been told the story, the class discusses how the details of the story changed. "Were details left out? Added?"
3. Explore with the students the implications of changes to a story retold five times
4. Discuss how to judge the accuracy of conflicting versions of a story.
5. Help students recognize when to suspend judgment
6. Help students explore how one's point of view can shape one's interpretation of events.  
(from *Using Our Language*, Dr. Anne D. Ross. Bowmar Noble Publishing Inc. Economy Co., 1977. p. 55.)

## 5. Evaluation/Assessment

Purpose: Assessing students is done regularly. Assessment tells the teacher and student:

- a. What is known and understood.
- b. What skills and knowledge can be built upon?
- c. Which individual strengths and weaknesses exist
- d. How effective the lesson was and
- e. What should be taught next or reviewed.

Procedure: Collect baseline information on student skills aligned with standards or curriculum goals

- f. Record assessment regularly using a basic tick sheet with student names on the right side and standards or lesson objectives across the top.
- g. Involve students in the assessment – be sure they are aware of the targets. Tell them what you expect them to learn.

Checking oral comprehension:

1. thumbs up – students put their thumbs up to indicate understanding
2. sign language – students give a sign, selected by the teacher, to indicate they don't understand
3. clap – ask students to clap if another student says the correct answer (watch who claps)
4. Punctuation mark – punctuation marks are written on cards, each student has a set (.=stop ? = I don't understand, , = slow down, ! = I've got the answer)
5. unison responses – groups respond with the correct answer in unison
6. one question quiz – ask one question, a number of students at the board write the answer, students at their seat tell which are the correct answers.
7. draw a picture to demonstrate you understand something that was said....
8. tell your partner the correct answer.

## Internet Sources for Young Learner Games and Activities

<http://yahooligans.yahoo.com/> Web Guide for kids

<http://www.zelo.com/family/nursery/index.asp> Nursery Rhymes

<http://www.theideabox.com/> Early Childhood Education and Activity Resources

<http://www.teachnet.com/> Smart tools for busy teachers.

<http://www.kididdles.com/mouseum/index.html> Musical Mouseum - Songs and lyrics

<http://members.tripod.com/~ESL4Kids/> EFL Playhouse – a resource for young learners

<http://www.esl-images.com/> Reproducible activities and games. (Fee based membership)

<http://pbskids.org/> Activities linked to PBS kids TV shows. Excellent.

<http://www.readingrockets.org/> Reading Rockets guides teachers as they teach reading.

<http://scholar.google.com/> Search engine for educators.

<http://iteslj.org/links/ESL/Games/> List of websites with games for EFL/ESL students.

<http://www.childrenonlyesl-efl.com/index.asp> Lots of games, activities and songs. Some free and some by subscription.