

English Connects

Toolkit for English clubs



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Note: Original ideas are now incorporated in a new framework.
Activities are grouped according to main focus/type.

Introduction

Aims

A fun and enjoyable environment

Through a series of workshops in Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal, we identified the need for English clubs to develop learners':

- English language speaking skills
- negotiation skills
- peer teaching and learning skills
- social skills
- problem-solving skills
- confidence.

This toolkit provides you with some basic ideas, but you should also share your own ideas with each other through Facebook or WhatsApp. You can organise this among yourselves.

- Find out how to start a [WhatsApp](#) group.
- Find out how to start a [Facebook](#) group.

WhatsApp and Facebook groups already exist in Gabon, Cameroon, Senegal, Côte d'Ivoire, Djibouti, Mali, Niger, Angola and Guinea. Please contact your local British Council representative for information on how to join.

Theme

Set up activities and step away

Based on your input the main theme of the toolkit is that **learners do things by themselves** and you as a club leader/supervisor **facilitate the club sessions** rather than the club sessions being an 'English class'.

Club sessions are outside school hours, so **learners want a break from school class structures**.

This toolkit focuses on the methodology of setting up activities and **allowing the learners to practise all the skills** you identified as being part of the function of English clubs.

This means **setting up the activities and stepping away** to facilitate learners.

We hope that this toolkit will be easy to use, will make English clubs a fun place for learners to be, and will **encourage you** to become a fantastic club facilitator!

Rationale

Focus on products and activities

Products that learners can create in English clubs include:

- **debates and discussions:** give learners time to think about what they want to say, have them research vocabulary they need to talk about the topic, and give them time to think about their opinions. A debate may take more than one club session to prepare for
- **poems and songs:** learners choose topics, themes, styles and inspirations
- **stories:** learners create locations, situations, characters, moods, themes and plots
- **sketches and role plays:** learners decide on characters and settings, write their own scripts and perform for each other
- **community activities:** learners define social or environmental problems within their community, discuss potential solutions to those problems, create an action plan to conduct outside of school in the community, carry out the action plan, and then report back on success
- **articles for English club newsletters:** learners choose a topic of interest to their fellow learners, research it, create multiple drafts of articles and provide feedback on each other's work. They then publish their articles in a newsletter or on a school noticeboard.

Learner motivation increases if:

- they choose the topics for a debate/discussion

- they choose the characters in a sketch or role play
- they define a community activity
- they decide what to write and what to read
- they choose a song to listen to or sing.

Activities create steps towards the final products, making it fun for the learners and allowing them to create their own material and language along the way.

By creating their own language through the activities, learners have fun and develop the skills they need to be able to create the final product. It's OK if you want to skip some activities, but don't jump from the start of the club session to the final product.

Use as many activities as possible to support the final product, as the activities are designed to let the learners have fun while developing their spoken language, negotiation and co-operation skills, peer learning, social skills, problem-solving skills and confidence.

Deciding on topics for your club sessions

The best way to generate a list of topics is to ask the members. At the beginning of term, run a session to:

1. brainstorm all the topics the learners want to talk about during the school year
2. rank them in order and decide the top ten
3. create a list of sub-topics or discussion questions connected to the topic so that you know what they are interested in talking about
4. ask for volunteers to help run sessions on topics they are interested in (these might be future club leaders).

Every three or four weeks, look at the topic list again and revise it together. During the term, you may find that interesting topics come up in the news and these might become more important than pre-decided topics.

How to plan a club session

First, choose a topic or theme for your session. Then choose one activity from each section of the toolkit. Generally, the sequence we have ordered them in is a good way to run the session, but you can experiment with different orders.

1. **Guessing:** Engage learners by having them guess the topic or theme of the session.
2. **Questioning:** Deepen their engagement by having them form questions about the topic.
3. **Vocabulary:** Recall known words or introduce new ones through a vocabulary activity.
4. **Dictation:** Introduce texts with new information about the topic by dictating rather than reading. This improves listening skills.
5. **Discussion:** Develop speaking skills through interactive discussion in pairs, groups or among the whole class.
6. **Stories and sketches:** Bring learning together by having the learners tell a story or perform a sketch.

Giving feedback

Positive feedback is very important to learners. Always give positive feedback first, e.g. *That was great! Good job! Well done!*

Be specific about what was done well, e.g. *I really liked the way you told the story. The acting was really funny! The vocabulary you used really helped to paint a clear picture.*

Be constructive. Everyone can improve their performances. Help each other to improve by giving each other constructive feedback, e.g. *I think that if you did X, it would have been even funnier! Maybe these words would be useful in your story ... It would be nice if you spoke louder so we can hear what you are saying.*

Consider running a whole session on how to give feedback and ask your group what kind of feedback they want, like and find helpful.

1. Guessing activities



1.1 Slow reveal (words)

Materials: Board and chalk or whiteboard and pen

Stages:

1. Write dashes (-) for the same number of letters as there are in the target word you want learners to guess.
2. Ask learners to suggest letters. If they guess a letter correctly, add it on the correct dash on the board/paper.
3. Add one letter at a time and have learners guess what the word is. Go slow and allow multiple guesses from learners.
4. When a learner guesses correctly, congratulate them and thank the learners for their efforts.

Or



Slow reveal (picture)

Materials: A picture from a magazine or one you drew yourself.
Some paper/fabric to cover the picture

Stages:

1. Cover the picture with the paper/fabric BEFORE learners can see it.
2. Hold the picture and paper/fabric or put it where all learners can see it, for example on a table or chair.
3. Slowly move the paper/fabric across the picture, uncovering more each time. Ask the learners what they see. (If you have a computer, zoom into the picture as close as possible and then zoom out slowly, asking learners what they can see.)
4. Take all answers as correct. Encourage the learners until they generate as many words and as much language as possible. Then congratulate the learners and thank them for their efforts.

Or



Slow reveal (items)

Materials: Any real things you can find, e.g. leaves, pieces of wood, stones.
Some paper/fabric to cover the items

Stages:

1. Cover the items with the paper/fabric BEFORE learners can see them.
2. Hold the picture and paper/fabric or put it where all learners can see it, e.g. on a table or chair.
3. Slowly move the paper/fabric to reveal parts of the items and ask the learners what they see.
4. Take all answers as correct and thank the learners.



1.2 Name tag

Materials: Sheets of stiff paper or card, scissors and pens

Stages:

1. Make your own name card in advance of the lesson. Use this to demonstrate the activity.
2. Question forms may be a problem for learners, so write the questions you elicit on the board during the demonstration.
3. Ask the learners to take a piece of card and divide it into six boxes. In each box ask them to write/draw information about six categories: name, hobbies, family, favourite food, favourite animal and something they don't like.

For example:

A	

4. Ask the learners to walk around for a few minutes and look at the 'name tags'.
5. Ask the learners to find a partner and try to find out about them by asking questions about the information on the 'name tags', e.g. *Do you like swimming? Is your favourite animal a dog?*
6. This may be challenging for lower level learners. You may have to review question formation and write some example questions on the board.
7. Ask the learners to try to talk to at least three other learners.
8. Finally, ask the learners to sit in a circle and share what they found out about each other.



1.3 My numbers

Materials: Board and chalk or whiteboard and pen, paper and pens (optional)

Stages:

1. Start by demonstrating the game. Write four numbers on a board (or somewhere everyone can see). These numbers should be connected to you, e.g. *your age (34), number of children (3), lucky number (7), how long you've been a teacher (15)*.
2. Invite the learners to ask you yes/no questions to try to find out why each number is important, e.g. *Is one the number of children you have? (Yes.) Do you have seven children? (No.)* You may have to review how to do this with lower learners. Write some examples on the board as models and have the class check them for errors.
3. Don't let it take too long. Give clues if necessary.
4. Ask the learners to write down four numbers that are connected to them.
5. Put the learners into pairs or small groups.
6. Get them to take turns asking and answering yes/no questions and trying to guess what each number means.



1.4 Three true, one false

Materials: Paper and pen (optional)

Stages:

1. Start by demonstrating the game. Write/dictate four sentences about you. Three should be true and one false. For example:
 - *I can speak three languages.*
 - *I'm married.*
 - *I don't like rain.*
 - *I have four sisters.*
2. Tell the learners they can ask you five *Wh-* questions to try to find out more about each sentence, but they cannot directly ask you which sentence is false. For example: *What languages can you speak? (good) Can you really speak three languages? (bad)*. Note that they cannot directly ask you which sentences is false.
3. After they have asked five questions, they should discuss with a partner which of the sentences they think is false and why.
4. Ask the learners which sentence they think is false and why before revealing the answer.
5. Ask the learners to write down four sentences that are connected to them. Remind them that one sentence should be false.
6. Put the learners into small groups and get them to take turns asking and answering *Wh-* questions and trying to guess which sentence is false.



1.5 Guess who I'm talking about

Materials: Small pieces of paper and a pen/pencil for each learner. One container, e.g. a bag or bowl, per group

Stages:

1. Put learners into two groups. Give each learner a piece of paper and a pen/pencil, and ask them to write three adjectives to describe themselves.
2. Get them to fold the paper, and collect the papers in a container for each group.
3. Get each group to sit in a circle. Put a container in the middle of each group.
4. Ask one learner in each group to take a piece of paper out of the container, read the adjectives and try to guess who they are about.
5. If they guess the person correctly, they keep the paper. If they don't guess the person, they fold the paper and put it back.

Note: Set up the activity and leave the learners to do it and have fun.

Extension:

6. When the game is over, ask the group to use all the adjectives they collected and write a poem, story or sketch with the title 'My English club group'.
7. Each group performs the poems, stories or sketches, with each member reading one line of them.



1.6 Who am I?

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Start by demonstrating the game.
2. Explain that you are thinking of someone. The learners need to guess who it is by asking you yes/no questions. (Check they know how to form yes/no questions). Tell them the maximum number of questions they can ask is 20.
3. Play the game, clearly indicating the number of questions asked.
4. Once the learners have guessed the correct answer, or used up their 20 questions (if that is the case tell them the answer), get the learners to play the game in groups.
5. Put learners into groups of four to six and tell them to take turns thinking of someone while the other members of the group ask questions.
6. Monitor, but let the learners play without you stepping in unless they ask you to. Even then, try to keep your involvement to a minimum.
7. This can be done with people living today (simple present tense); people not alive today (simple past tense); fictional characters from novels and movies; things; animals; concepts; news stories, or anything else at all!

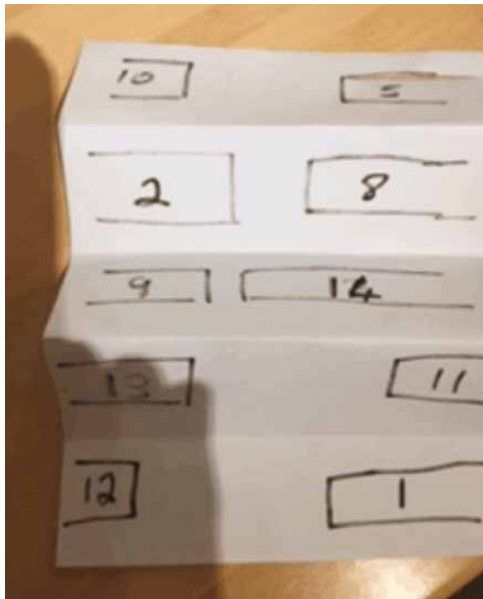


1.7 What is it?

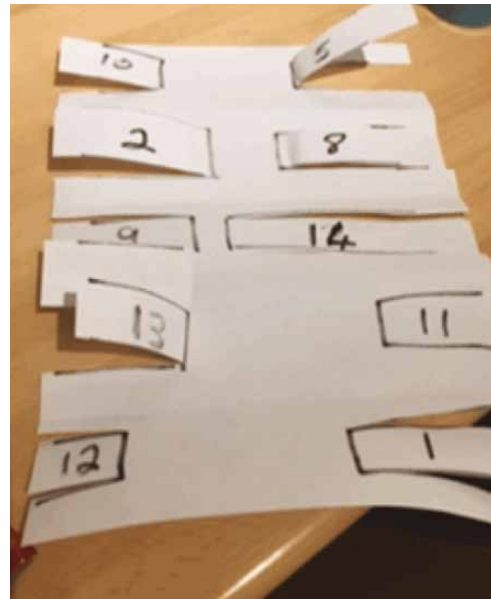
Materials: Some A4-size pictures of something (anything). One piece of paper that covers the pictures with cut-out windows for each group

Before the session: Gently fold and mark the pieces of paper as in picture 1 and cut openings as in picture 2.

1.



2.



Stages:

1. Divide the group into groups 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.
2. Show and give one learner in each group one picture and the cover window above (closed as in picture 2).
3. Ask the learner with the picture to choose another learner to pick a window and open it. Then each member of the group can try and guess what the picture is, e.g. *It's a ... It might be a ...*
4. If they are correct, they get a point. If they are wrong, it's the next learners turn to open a window.

Or



What's in the box?

Materials: A box and a real thing, pen and paper for each group

Stages:

1. Put the thing in the box before the session. There should be a connection between the thing and the theme of the following activities. For example, a toothbrush for talking about daily habits, a bottle cap for exploring recycling, or a baseball cap for describing clothes.
2. Pick up the box and shake it. Ask the learners: *What's in the box?* They will shout out random answers at first. Tell them to stop guessing randomly and to ask questions. However, you can only answer yes or no.
3. Occasionally shake the box or give it to a learner to shake. Do not allow repeat questions. Point out illogical questions in a light-hearted way.
4. Keep count of the number of questions it takes the learners to guess the thing on the board.
5. After seven to ten questions, or when questions start repeating, ask them to stop and ask: *What do we know so far?* Have them write as many qualities of the thing that they know on a piece of paper. Ask them to tell you and then continue the game. This creates a reflection point and gives them a chance to collect their thoughts.
6. If the game is taking too long, give them a clue.
7. When they successfully guess the thing, congratulate them and thank them for their efforts.
8. Note the number of questions they took to reach the answer. Tell them that they need to beat that next time you use this activity. This will encourage conscious thinking about guessing skills.



1.8 'Coffeepotting'

Materials: Paper, pencils/pens (materials are optional for this activity)

Stages:

1. Ask some learners (between one and four depending on the size of your group and their language ability/confidence) to leave the room (or go far enough away that they can't hear).
2. Ask the remaining learners to think of an activity, e.g. *making breakfast or riding a bike*.
3. Ask the other learners to return. They need to guess what the activity is by asking yes/no questions, e.g. *Is 'coffeepotting' fun? Do we 'coffeepot' every day?*
4. They should guess what 'coffeepotting' is, but don't let the game go on too long or it will become boring.

Variation:

5. Have the learners write down five activities on five pieces of paper, but keep them secret from each other. In groups of four, they mix up the pieces of paper and, one by one, choose one and turn it over. The others have to guess the activity on the piece of paper.



1.9 Hidden phrases

Materials: Strips of paper with phrases (to be hidden) written down – enough for one per group

Note: This game can be combined with an activity from Section 6: Stories and sketches.

Stages:

1. When groups are preparing a story, sketch or role play, explain that you are going to give each group a phrase to hide in their story or sketch.
2. Hand out a strip of paper with a phrase on it to each group and tell them to include it in their story or sketch.
3. When they read out their story or perform their sketch, the other groups need to guess the hidden phrase.
4. If the class cannot guess the phrase, the performing group tells them the answer and explains what it means and how it is used.

Variation:

1. Give the groups/pairs a topic to discuss.
2. Give each group/pair a few minutes to think about their topic and how to include their 'hidden' phrase.
3. Explain that the other pairs/groups should shout *stop* when they think they have heard the 'hidden' sentence, but they can only do this twice during the game. If they are correct, they get a point. If they are wrong, they lose a point. A pair/group that successfully completes their conversation without the 'hidden' sentence being 'found' gets two points.
4. Play the game with each group/pair getting a turn.
5. If the class cannot guess the phrase, the performing group tells them the answer and explains what it means and how it is used.

Suggested topics:

- Hobbies
- The weather/climate
- Travelling
- The weekend
- A funny story
- An unusual event

Ideas for phrases/sentences to hide:

- I really don't agree.
- I really hate Mondays.
- The sky is always blue.
- London is the capital of England.
- I've never been to Australia.



1.10 Lateral thinking puzzles

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Explain you are going to tell the learners a puzzle. They need to solve the puzzle by asking you yes/no questions.
2. Read out the following puzzle:

A woman had two sons who were born on the same hour of the same day of the same month of the same year. But they were not twins. How could this be so?

Answer: She had triplets (three babies).
3. Put the learners into pairs or small groups and get them to think of two or three questions to ask you.
4. Get the learners to ask their questions. Give them time after a few questions and answers to discuss things with their partner(s) and come up with more questions.
5. Once they have solved the puzzle, see if the learners know any lateral thinking problems. If they do, get them to replace you and repeat the process with their puzzle.
6. Use the puzzle to lead into a group discussion. For example, triplets are less common in Africa. However, the birth rate for twins in Nigeria is high. You could move from this observation into a speaking activity about the changes in birth rates and family sizes and societal causes of this in your country. This could lead into reading and discussion of articles on connected topics such as <https://africacheck.org/reports/does-nigerias-yoruba-tribe-have-the-worlds-highest-twin-birth-rate-and-are-yams-to-blame/>

Here are other lateral thinking puzzles you can use. Answers are at the end in brackets.

A man is lying dead in a field. Next to him there is an unopened package. There is no other creature in the field. How did he die? (He fell/jumped out of a plane with a parachute which didn't open.)

A man walks into a bar and asks the barman for a glass of water. The barman pulls out a gun and points it at the man. The man says 'thank you' and walks out. (The man had hiccups. The barman recognised this from his speech and drew the gun to give him a shock. It worked and cured the hiccups – so the man no longer needed the water.)

Can we agree that at the North Pole it is impossible to look north and at the South Pole it is impossible to look south? Then where in the world is it impossible to look east or west? (At the centre of the earth you can look north and south but not east or west.)

Brainteasers/riddles are also good to use.

A family has a chicken coop containing 12 egg-producing hens. One night, a terrible storm came and killed all but eight chickens. How many chickens did the family have in the morning? (The family still had 12 chickens: four dead ones and eight alive!)

It is flat as a leaf, round as a ring, has two eyes, yet cannot see a thing. What is it? (A button.)

2. Vocabulary activities



2.1 Slow reveal (letters)

Materials: Letters from Activity 1.1: Slow reveal (letters)

Stages:

1. After the learners see the letters from Activity 1.1, give each group a letter.
2. Then ask each group to list ten words beginning with that letter.
3. Get the groups to swap their word lists, correct any spelling mistakes, and together decide on a title and write it on the paper before returning it to the original group.
4. When the feedback comes back to your group, decide whether you like the title, or suggest an alternative.

Or



Slow reveal (picture)

Materials: Pictures from Activity 1.1: Slow reveal (picture)

Stages:

1. After the learners see the pictures from Activity 1.1, ask each group to list ten words connected to the picture.
2. Get the groups to swap their word lists, correct any spelling mistakes, and together decide on a title and write it on the paper before returning it to the original group.
3. When the feedback comes back to your group, decide whether you like the title or suggest an alternative.

Or



Slow reveal (items)

Materials: Items from Activity 1.1: Slow reveal (items)

Stages:

1. After the learners see the items from Activity 1.1, ask each group to list ten words connected to the items.
2. Get the groups to swap their word lists, correct any spelling mistakes and together decide on a title and write it on the paper before returning it to the original group.
3. When the feedback comes back to your group, decide whether you like the title or suggest an alternative.



2.2 From A to Z

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Use the topic of today's session, choose a topic, or ask the learners to choose a topic, e.g. *food, animals, names of countries*.
2. Put learners into pairs or small groups.
3. Tell the learners to work together and write down a word that starts with each letter of the alphabet connected to the topic.
4. Check the learners know how many words they need to write (26 – one for each letter of the alphabet).
5. Set a time limit of three minutes and start the game.
6. Once the time is up, check the words each group has as a class. (You can also check the spelling and pronunciation at this stage.) You can extend the activity if no group has the full 26 words.
7. If you want, each team can be awarded a point for each correct word. (If teams have the same word, they don't get a point.) The group with the most points wins.



2.3 Pictionary

Materials: List of words, paper and pens/pencils

Before the session: Make a list of the words you want the learners to draw.

Stages:

1. Put the learners into groups of four to six and make sure each group has some paper and a pen/pencil.
2. Explain that you have a list of words. Each group will send a volunteer to the front and you will show them the first word on the list.
3. The volunteers then need to return to their groups, and draw the word. The other members in their groups should try to guess the word.
4. Make sure the volunteers understand that they must NOT speak or write, only draw.
5. When someone in each group guesses the word, another volunteer should come up to you and whisper the word to you. If they are correct, show them the next word. They will return to their group and draw the word for the others to guess.
6. Explain that all the learners in the group will have to draw and they need to take turns. The team that finishes all the words first 'wins'.

Variation:

7. Give each group a set of cards with the words written on them.
8. Each group puts the word cards face down on the table. Then one person picks up the top card and tries to draw the word.
9. The other group members guess it.
10. When they guess correctly, it is the next person's turn.

Or

11. Have the learners write words connected to the topic of the session on cards.
12. Have them swap their cards with another group.
13. Continue as above.



2.4 Noughts and crosses

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils. A paper with a numbered grid of three squares across and three squares down

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

Stages:

1. Divide the group into smaller groups of four: A, B, C and D. Ask each group to copy the grid.
2. Then get each group to put their group letter on the paper and write the last two letters of the name of a food in each box in the grid.

Note: You can also use any other word groups such as sport, hobbies, music types, fruit, adjectives to describe a person or verbs connected to school.

3. Groups swap their grids, e.g. B gets A's grid and C gets B's grid.
4. Ask each group of four to make two pairs numbered 1 and 2.
5. Tell number 1s to pick a square and say a word. If number 2 agrees it's OK, 1 writes the word in that square. Then it's number 2's turn.
6. The person who gets a straight line across, down or diagonally is the winner in each group.

Extension:

7. Put the learners into new groups and ask them to write a poem or title for a debate, discussion, story or article for the school newsletter with the words from their grid.
8. Each group performs/says what they have written to the whole class.



2.5 Word chains

Materials: Board and chalk or whiteboard and pens

Stages:

1. Write a word on the board, e.g. *lion*.
2. Ask the learners what the last letter of the word is and elicit 'n'.
3. Ask the learners for a word that starts with the letter 'n'.
4. Get the learners to spell the word they come up with and write it on the board.
5. Ask what letter it ends with.
6. Now make sure the learners realise that they should start the next word with the last letter of the previous word.
7. Put learners in pairs and get them to play the game with each other.
8. Monitor, but don't interfere unless you realise there is a problem.

Note: You could play the game using topics, e.g. *animals* or *food*, so that every word has to be connected with the topic.



2.6 Words connected to one word

Materials: Board and chalk or whiteboard and pens, paper and pens for learners

Stages:

1. Put a word with some missing letters on a board or paper. Cover the letters and slowly reveal the letters and the missing letters. At each stage, ask the learners what they can see.
2. Put learners into groups of four or five.
3. Ask the learners to complete the word with the missing letters.
4. When a group says the word, write the word where learners can easily see it.
5. Divide each group into two (A and B). Make two 'onion rings', with the As inside facing out and the Bs on the outside facing in so they have a partner (see [Activity 3.1](#)).
6. Ask the As to say a word and Bs to ask a question that uses that word.
7. Then, Bs move to the right. As say a word and Bs ask a question that uses that word.



2.7 Back to the board

Materials: Board and chalk or whiteboard and pens, paper and pens for learners

Stages:

1. Place a chair in front of the board facing the room.
2. Choose a learner (or ask for a volunteer) to come to the front and sit on the chair facing the class and with their back to the board.
3. Explain that you will write a word on the board. The other learners need to explain the meaning of the word to the learner who can't see the word as it is written on the board behind them.
4. Tell the learners to use English only and not to use gestures or drawings (just verbally explain the word).
5. Once the learner at the front guesses the word, get them to choose the next learner to come and sit at the front with their back to the board and repeat the process.

Note: You could play the game using topics, e.g. *animals* or *food*, so that every word has to be connected with the topic.



2.8 Things that are ...

Materials: Paper and pens for learners

Stages:

1. Tell the learners you have a list of five things and each one is 'red', e.g. *apple, sunset, blood, tomato, stop sign*.
2. Explain that the learners need to guess the five things by asking you yes/no questions.
3. Set a time limit of three minutes and play the game.
4. Give the learners a point for each correct answer.
5. Next, put learners in pairs and get them to write down five things that are ... (Choose a colour, for example green, or another link such as round, in the sea, edible [you can eat them]. It is a good idea to connect these to the topic of the session.)
6. Make groups of four by putting two pairs together and get them to take turns to play the game.



2.9 Word groups

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Tell the learners they are going to play a vocabulary game against each other. Demonstrate by playing the game once: you versus all the learners as a group.
2. Choose a topic, for example colours.
3. Explain that you will say a word in the category (for example red) and they have three seconds to say another word in the category (for example yellow). You then have three seconds to say another word, etc. This goes on until either someone repeats a word or doesn't say a word in the time limit.
4. Put the learners into pairs and get them to play the game against each other. You can use two or three different categories to make it fun and last longer, e.g. *colours, animals, fruit, cooking verbs, countries, things in a kitchen*. Connect the categories and the topics of the session.



2.10 How many words?

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils

Stages:

1. Put the learners in pairs or small groups and make sure each pair/group has some paper and a pen or pencil.
2. Write a long word on the board, for example environment.
3. Explain that you will give the learners five minutes to write as many words as they can using only the letters in the word on the board. They can use each letter only as many times as it appears in the word on the board in each of their words, but they can use it again in any new words (e.g. *men, time, one, vine, tenor*).
4. Once the time is up, get the pairs to swap their list with another pair and check the words are correct (including the spelling). See which pair has come up with the most words.

Extension:

5. Make groups of four by putting two pairs together, and ask them to write a poem, story, article or sketch using the words they have come up with and on the theme of the word on the board.
6. Ask the groups to read out or perform their poem, story, article or sketch to the whole class.

3. Question activities



3.1 Inside outside circle (onion rings)

Materials: Paper and pen (for extension activity)

Stages:

1. Divide the class into two groups (A and B).
2. Ask Group A to form a circle and Group B to form a circle around A's circle.
3. Ask As to turn and face Bs so everyone has a partner.



4. Ask As to say a sport and Bs to ask a question, e.g. *tennis – do you like playing tennis?*

Extension:

5. Ask the groups to use the words to write a poem, story or sketch.
6. Groups perform in front of the whole class.

Note: You can use this activity for any vocabulary, e.g. *food, colours, people, sport, a community activity*. If some of the learners in Group A don't know the word in English, have them act it out and have Bs guess and ask a question.

You can adapt this activity depending on the English language level of the club members. You can use it as a get-to-know-you activity for new groups of learners or to discuss opinions about a topic. It could also be used for role plays, with people in each circle having a different role such as a market stall owner and a customer.



3.2 Find someone who ...

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils

.....

Stages:

1. Choose a topic, e.g. *likes/dislikes* or a *food* or *sport*.
2. Elicit seven to ten questions the learners could ask about the topic, e.g. *Do you like watching television? Have you ever eaten Italian food?*
3. Next, ask the learners to copy the following grid:

Question	Name	Other information
1.		
2.		
3.		

4. Get the learners to write their own list of questions in the space provided. They can use the ones suggested by the class or add their own.
5. Ask all the learners to stand up, walk around and ask other learners their questions.
6. When someone says yes in response to a question, learners should write the name of the person in the second column and then ask some follow-up questions to find out more information.
7. Tell the learners to speak to as many other learners as possible and get a different name for each question (if possible).
8. Finally, get the learners to sit in a circle and say what they found out about each other.

Extension:

9. Put the learners in new groups and ask them to use some of the information they found out to write a poem, story or sketch.
10. Groups perform in front of the whole class.



3.3 Opinion poll

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils

Stages:

1. Divide the class into small groups of four or five people.
2. Ask Group 1 to think of and agree on a sport, Group 2 to think of and agree on a hobby, Group 3 to think of and agree on a favourite food, and Group 4 to think of and agree on a community activity.

Note: If there are more groups, repeat with sport, hobby, favourite food, etc. For more advanced groups, use opinions or current events and have the learners choose their own topic to survey their classmates.

3. Ask each group to write five questions about their topic which they want to ask other groups.
4. Give each group participant a number from one to four in each group. Then re-group participants so all 1s sit together, all 2s and so on. When the four new groups have been formed, each member takes it in turn to ask their questions. Adjust this depending on the size of the groups.
5. Get the learners to return to their original group and share what they found out.

Note: You could also do this as a large class 'mingle' where each person in the group has to ask five people in the class. Then get groups to use the information to create graphs or charts showing the data results, and present them to the class.



3.4 Self-directed interviews

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils

Stages:

1. Ask the learners to work alone and write six to ten questions they would like to be asked.

Note: You can leave the topic open or restrict the questions to, for example, *likes/dislikes, personal life, family, hobbies, questions about a specific issue or news story.*

2. Put the learners into pairs (or get them to pick a partner).
3. Ask the learners to swap their questions with their partner.
4. Tell the learners to interview their partner with the questions they were given.
5. After the interview, get the learners to share what they found out and discuss the type of questions that were asked.



3.5 Johari window

Materials: Board and chalk or whiteboard and pens, paper and pens/pencils

Stages:

1. Draw the following grid on the board and ask the learners to copy it down:

You/Your partner	✓	✗
✓		
✗		

2. Put the learners into pairs.
3. Explain that they need to interview their partner and complete the grid with the information they find out.
4. In the top left box they write three things that they both like, and in the bottom right corner three things they both dislike. In the top right box they write three things they like but their partner doesn't, and in the bottom left box three things their partner likes but they don't.
5. Monitor and help if you are asked.

Note: You can play this game with other topics, e.g. *food, daily routines (things they both do/don't do), beliefs, opinions.*



3.6 What would happen if ...

Materials: Slips of paper with situations (see below)

Before the session: You need as many slips of paper with events/situations written on them as there are learners (see suggestions below).

Stages:

1. Sit the learners in a circle and hand each learner a slip of paper with an event or situation written on it.
2. Choose a learner to start. They should read their sentence and ask another learner to answer. That learner can either answer or ask a different learner. If they answer they can read their sentence out and ask another learner.

Note: Make sure all the learners have a turn answering a question.

3. The activity is completed when all the sentences have been read out and answered.

Suggested situations/events:

What would happen if ...

- men were not allowed to become doctors?
- children from the age of ten could vote?
- people turned green if they told a lie?
- you could become invisible?
- people could get a driving licence at 14?

What would you do if ...

- you could choose any job in the world?
- it snowed in your country?
- you found a snake in your house?
- you got lost?
- you couldn't get to sleep at night?
- you met someone famous?



3.7 If this is the answer ... what is the question?

Materials: Board and chalk or whiteboard and pens. Paper and pens/pencils for learners (optional)

Before the session: Think of the answers to some questions and write these on the board.

Note: Alternatively, you could dictate the answers to the learners: don't write the answers on the board; read them aloud. Then the learners need to write down what you say. Have different learners write the answers on the board to check spelling.

Stages:

1. Put the learners into pairs or small groups.
2. Explain that you have written the answers to some questions on the board. You want each pair to come up with what they think is the question for each answer. For example, if the answer is *1991* maybe the question is *In which year were you born?*
3. Put the pairs into groups (up to four pairs) and get them to compare and discuss their ideas.
4. Open it out to a whole class discussion. You can either accept any possible question or tell the learners the questions you had in mind.
5. The questions could all be connected to the session theme.



3.8 Be someone else

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Choose a learner to come and sit at the front opposite you (or ask for a volunteer).
2. Tell the learner/volunteer you are going to ask them four questions and you want them to tell you the true answers.
3. Ask the following questions:
 - What's your name?
 - How old are you?
 - Where are you from (country/nationality)?
 - What do you do (i.e. job)?
4. Next, explain you are going to ask the same four questions but now the learner should give completely different answers and use their imagination and creativity.
5. Once they've given their answers introduce them to the class using the new information. For example, *This is Lydia. She's 96 years old. She's from Australia and she's a ballet dancer.*
6. Now ask the other learners to ask the learner at the front more questions about their new character.
7. The learner at the front should use their imagination and creativity to answer the questions as their invented character.

Note: We learned this activity from Ken Wilson. It's a really good way for learners who are the same age or nationality to practise basic questions without it being boring as they already know the answers. You could leave the character choice open, or have learners imagine they are characters from history, famous people, inspirational people, characters from a novel or people connected to a current news story.



3.9 Don't say 'yes' or 'no'

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Demonstrate the game with the learners.
2. Explain that they should ask you questions as quickly as possible to try and get you to say yes or no. Your task is to try and answer the questions without using either of the words.
3. Once you've demonstrated the game, put the learners into small groups and get them to play the game together with one learner answering the questions and the others asking. Each learner should take a turn answering questions and trying not to say yes or no.
4. Stop them after one or two rounds and ask what strategies or phrases they are using to not say yes or no. Share these among the class. Introduce other possible language points, and have them do it again using new or different language.



3.10 Questions about statements

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils (optional)

Stages:

1. Write, or say, a statement – it can be true, false or absurd, e.g. *The moon is made of green cheese.* (You could also use an opinion or debate proposition.)
2. Put the learners into pairs or small groups and ask them to write as many questions about the statement as they can, e.g. *What kind of cheese? Is it dark green or light green? Can you eat it? What does it taste like?*
3. Set a time limit and at the end see who has the most questions and what the questions are.

Extension:

4. If you ask the learners to write the questions down you can get them to swap their questions with another pair, check the questions are correctly formed and then try to answer as many as they can.

Note: We learned this activity from Andrew Wright. It's a really good way for learners to practise forming questions. If you use opinions/propositions, this is a good way to start finding out how much everyone knows about the topic.

4. Dictation activities



4.1 Draw my picture

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils for learners

Stages:

1. Tell the learners to draw a picture. The picture can be of anything, or could be themed on the topic of the session.
2. Have learners swap their pictures.
3. Learners get into pairs with people whose picture they don't have.
4. Label pairs A and B.
5. Pairs sit/stand back to back. As and Bs have a picture and a blank paper each.



6. As tell Bs about their picture and Bs draw the picture.
7. When finished, As and Bs compare pictures.
8. Now it's B's turn. Bs tell As about their picture and As draw the picture.
9. When finished, Bs and As compare pictures.

Extension:

10. As and Bs either describe their partner's picture or use the two pictures to write a story, article, poem or song.
11. Pairs perform their story, article, poem or song for the whole group.



4.2 Running dictation

Materials: Paper, scissors, Sellotape/Blu Tack and a paragraph of five simple sentences in the correct order. Use a short, simple poem; words from a song or paragraphs from a short news story. You could also use five separate sentences on the same topic.

Before the session: Write the sentences on paper with space between the sentences. Cut up or tear the sentences so each paper has a full sentence. Stick or put the sentences around the room or outside.

Stages:

1. Divide group into pairs (As and Bs).
2. Tell the learners that there are five sentences in the room/outside.
3. Ask Bs to stand up and go to read one sentence at a time. They should return to their partner and dictate the sentence to A, who writes the sentence.
4. As and Bs should work together to put the sentences into the correct logical order. (There may be more than one correct answer for this depending on the sentences.)
5. Have the pairs swap their completed paragraphs with another pair to check and correct any mistakes.

Note: Monitor at this stage and only help if asked.

Extension:

6. Divide the whole group into smaller groups and ask each group to write a story of their own with five to eight sentences.
7. Ask each group to cut up or tear the paper with the sentences. One member from each group puts the sentences up on the wall.
8. Divide the learners into new A and B pairs.
9. As must find, read, remember and say the sentences from one story to Bs, and Bs write the sentences.
10. Once they have all the sentences, they need to put them in the correct order.
11. Then they need to check with a member of the story author group that they have:
 - a. copied the story correctly
 - b. put the sentences in the correct order.



4.3 Musical dictation

Materials: Two pieces of music (without any lyrics/words), smartphone with speaker or other audio device, paper and pens/pencils

Stages:

1. Tell the learners they are going to hear information about two different people and have them write the following:
 - name
 - age
 - gender
 - nationality
 - appearance
 - personality
 - likes/dislikes
 - hobbies/interests.
2. Ask the learners to write this list down and explain you want them to complete as much as they can when they listen (but don't tell them that they will hear music and NOT words).
3. Play the first bit of music. Don't be worried if the learners look surprised and puzzled. Encourage them to use their imagination/creativity.
4. If necessary, play the first piece of music again (this is about Person 1) before playing the second piece (Person 2).
5. Put the learners into small groups and get them to compare and discuss the information they have written about the two people.

Note: At first this seems like a very strange activity, but once learners get started it can produce amazing results.

Extension:

6. Put learners into groups and get them to write a dialogue, story or role play using some of the characters they have created.



4.4 Guided visualisation

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Ask the learners to clear everything away and to find a comfortable place to sit.
2. Ask them to relax and close their eyes.
3. Tell them to listen to you, and use the following script or a version of it. Speak slowly, clearly and calmly. Don't shout or go too fast. Pause for at least five seconds after each question. The point here is to give the learners time to think and remember the situation.

I would like to invite you to relax ... relaxing deeper with every breath ... breathing gently in through your nose and out through your mouth ... As you focus on your breath your body and mind soften and relax ... and as you relax ... your memories become crystal clear ... happy memories ... You may notice you begin to smile as you remember an event that was important to you ... See the picture in your mind ... Where are you? What is around you? What can you see? What can you hear? What can you smell? Who is with you? Look at their faces. How do they feel? How do you feel? What is happening? What can you see? What can you hear? What do you smell? What can you taste? Feel the moment. Enjoy the memory (long pause) ... and get ready to let it go ... In a moment I am going to count from one to five and as I do, you will feel more awake and aware of your body and physical sensation ... Coming back now ... one... two ... three ... four ... opening your eyes ... five ... coming back fully alert and refreshed and ready to share. Now open your eyes. (Thanks to Fiona Malcolm for this script.)

4. Either:
 - a. put the learners in pairs and get them to share their memories
 - b. have them write their memories in as much detail as possible, then tell each other their memories.
5. Open this out into a whole class discussion: Who had a very vivid memory? Was there anyone who had a memory that surprised them?

Note: Don't pressure learners to share with the class if they don't want to. Sometimes these memories can be very emotional and involve people who have died, for example, so be sensitive to the learners and their feelings.

Extension:

6. Put the learners into new pairs or small groups, and ask them to write a poem, story or sketch based on their memories. They can either choose one learner's memories or combine a number of different ones.
7. Ask a few groups to perform their poem, story or sketch.

Note: Guided visualisations can be very powerful. They can be used to focus attention on events, people, stories, fictional characters and plots.

The senses are an interesting topic for a session. One nice activity is to have learners identify all five senses – sight, hearing, touch, taste, smell – and dictate a list of words (e.g. *coffee, baby, happiness, yellow, television*) and then ask the learners to write each word under the one sense they associate strongest with it. Then get them to share their feelings. This brings up all sorts of discussions, e.g. *Do you associate coffee with smell or taste? Is happiness a mental state of a whole-body experience?*

This could also lead into a discussion on learning preferences. Do you prefer to learn by listening? Speaking about it? Taking notes? Reading? Using pictures to help understanding? Copying? Doing something with the information you are learning? Organising it spatially? Learning with music on in the background, or silence? Studying lying down, or sitting up at a desk?



4.5 Shadow dictation

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils. A text for you to read

Stages:

1. Divide your learners into two groups (A and B).
2. Put the learners in pairs (one A with one B).
3. Ask the As to sit facing you.
4. Ask the Bs to sit behind the As with their backs to you and their partner.
5. Make sure all the Bs have paper and pens/pencil, but NOT the As.
6. Explain you will dictate a short text. The Bs should write what they can. The As should listen carefully to you.
7. Read the text out once at a normal pace using mime and gestures where appropriate.
8. Bs will need to hear the sentence more than once to be able to write the sentences. It is A's job to repeat the sentences you said. (This is called shadowing).
9. Once you've finished ask the As and Bs to face each other and check the text that Bs have written. Have them work together to reconstruct the text.



4.6 Phone numbers

Materials: Board and chalk or whiteboard and pens

Stages:

1. On the board write the following: 0 – *hat*, 1 – *hot*, 2 – *hoot*, 3 – *hut*, 4 – *heat*, 5 – *hate*, 6 – *hurt*, 7 – *heart*, 8 – *hit* and 9 – *height*.
2. Make sure the learners can distinguish between the words (and practise drilling the pronunciation).
3. Next, explain you are going to tell them a phone number (it can be a real number or a made up one), but you are going to use the words. The learners should listen and write down the number (not the words).
4. Say a number (e.g. 0659832 is *hat*, *hurt*, *hate*, *height*, *hit*, *hut*, *hoot*) – see if anyone is confident to tell you the number. If not, say it again.
5. Put learners in pairs and get them to check together.
6. Repeat this a couple of times with different numbers until most of the learners seem confident.
7. Then, ask the learners to write down a couple of phone numbers (again, real or made up).
8. Put the learners in pairs or groups of three and get them to take turns saying the numbers (using the words).



4.7 Directions

Materials: Paper, pens/pencils and maps (optional)

Stages:

1. Display a map of the town or area you are in so that all the learners can see it (or draw a simple map of the town on the board).
2. Explain you're going to dictate some directions and the learners need to work out where your destination is.
3. Tell the learners where you are starting on the map and then give them a set of directions to follow.
4. When you finish, encourage the learners to discuss where the destination is together.
5. Put the learners in pairs or small groups and ask one of them to give some directions and the others to follow the directions and say what the destination is.

Note: You might want to check that the learners understand basic vocabulary connected to directions, e.g. *turn left/right, go straight on, take the second left, it's opposite, at the traffic lights*.

You can use any town or city for this, but starting with the learners' home town makes it familiar and easier to picture mentally.

Variation:

- Rather than use 'real' maps, get the learners to work in groups and produce hand-drawn maps of their own.
- Also, you could physically set up the room to resemble a town using pieces of paper to show buildings and landmarks and get learners to actually follow the directions and move around the room. This can be fun with learners giving each other directions.



4.8 Categories

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils

Stages:

1. Dictate a list of words connected to the theme of the session. (Choose words they [should!] know.)

Note: Alternatively, use a list of random words with no obvious connection, e.g. *flower, heavy, rain, bananas, dog, smile, dangerous, computer, cloud, drum, shoes, plastic, time, sing, photo, mistake.*

2. Put the learners in pairs or small groups.
3. Ask the learners to put the words into groups and to label the groups.
4. Put the pairs/groups together in larger groups and get them to compare their ideas.
5. Open out into a whole class discussion on grouping and group naming strategies.

Note: Some learners will use grammar to group words. That is fine, but sometimes hides detail. For example, in a list of sports words, stadium, player, athlete and ball would all be in the 'noun' group, while there could be three different groups here (people, places, equipment) which might be more useful depending on your task. This is a good way to get learners to generate mind maps.

Extension:

6. Have the learners make sub-groups of words. For example, players could be split into individual and team players with terms for individual sports (high jumper, shot putter, snooker player) and team roles (midfielder, left fielder, striker). This extends the mind map.
7. Ask the groups to use the words to write a description, story, sketch or poem.
8. Groups perform in front of the whole class.



4.9 Him or her?

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils (optional)

Stages:

1. Dictate some incomplete sentences to the learners and ask them to start each sentence with *he, she, his, hers, him* or *her*.
2. Put the learners into pairs or small groups and get them to compare and discuss their completed sentences.

Suggested sentences (you can add others):

- [Beep] drove a taxi.
- [Beep] cooked dinner.
- [Beep] lived alone.
- [Beep] went out for a drink.
- [Beep] wasn't paid very much.
- [Beep] visited [beep] parents.
- [Beep] looked after the baby.
- [Beep] stood for election.

Note: This is a good activity to explore stereotypes.

Extension:

3. Ask the groups to use the words to write a poem, story or sketch.
4. Learners could describe gender roles in their family. For example, *How often do you or your mother/father/sister/brother ... cook, clean, go out, go shopping?*
5. Groups perform in front of the whole class.



4.10 Word by word

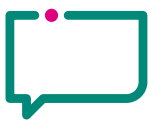
Materials: Paper and pens/pencils

Stages:

1. Divide the learners into groups of about four to six.
2. Give each group a large piece of paper and a pen.
3. Ask one group to give the first word of a sentence and ask all the groups to write the word on their piece of paper.
4. Then ask the second group to give the next word of the sentence, the third group the next word and so on until you have a sentence of about ten to 12 words in length.

Note: Groups should challenge a group if they think the word they have given doesn't fit the sentence (grammatically).

5. Now have them do it within their group. Assign, or have groups appoint, a leader to take the teacher's role.
6. Each individual in the group takes it in turn to give a word and complete sentences.
7. The content of the sentences could be connected to the theme of the session.



5. Discussion activities



5.1 Four corners

Materials: Four pieces of paper with the words *strongly agree*, *agree*, *disagree* and *strongly disagree*

Stages:

1. Put one piece of paper in each corner of the room.
2. Tell the learners you will say a phrase and they should go to the corner that is 'good' for them. Say a statement, for example *I love bananas*.
3. Ask the learners to talk with the other learners in their corner about why they went to that corner.
4. Repeat with another phrase.



Extension:

5. Have the people standing in each corner explain their opinion and why they have it.
6. Use the results to lead into a group discussion or debate.

Note: You can use different statements about different topics depending on the level of the group and their interests.

Variation:

- For a low-resource version simply indicate which corner is which without using the pieces of paper.
- You can also give each corner a different word, e.g. *banana*, *apple*, *orange*, *coconut*.

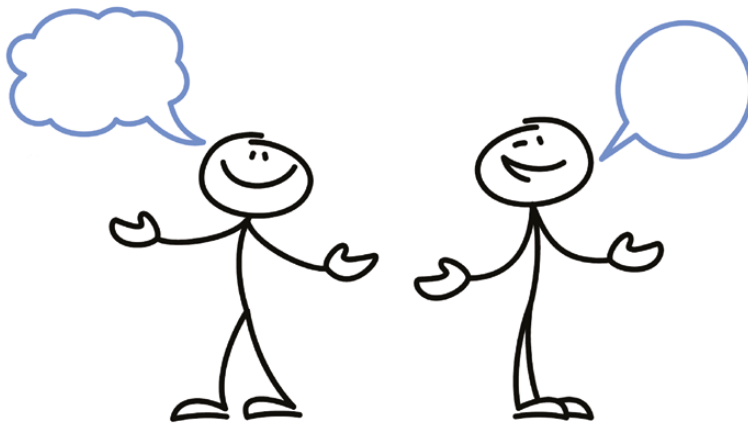


5.2 Same or different?

Materials: Music on a phone or machine. If you don't have any music, just clap.

Stages:

1. Ask the learners to stand up, walk around and look at each other's clothes, hair and shoes.
2. Play some music (or clap). When you stop the music (clapping), the learners should find a partner and stand back to back.



3. Next, tell the learners to talk to each other saying what makes their partner the same as you and the things that make them different to you. (Demonstrate once if necessary.)
4. Let the learners do this activity on their own. Do not interfere.
5. Then ask the learners to write down three ways they are the same or different from their partner.
6. Get them to check their sentences with each other.

Extension:

7. Ask the pairs to write a poem, story or article about how they are the same and different.
8. Get the pairs to perform their poem, story or article to another pair.



5.3 Ordering qualities

Materials: A funny picture of a person, some paper and pens/pencils for learners

Before the session: Draw a funny picture of a person. This is only a suggestion:



Stages:

1. Put the learners into groups and show them the picture.
2. Ask the groups to draw their own picture of a funny person.
3. Ask the groups to swap pictures with another group.
4. Ask the groups to look at the new picture and write seven words to say how the person looks and seven words to describe their personality. Encourage participants to use their imagination. Use adjective words for appearance and feelings.

Extension:

5. Then swap the pictures and words back and ask the groups to write a poem, story or article about the person using some or all of the words.
6. Ask the groups to read out their poem, story or article to the whole group.



5.4 Lost

Materials: Board and chalk or whiteboard and pens, paper and pens/pencils (optional)

Stages:

1. Explain that the learners are part of a group who have got lost in the rainforest or desert (choose an appropriate place).
2. Either write a list of items on the board or read them out and get the learners to write them down.

Suggested items: Some rope, a knife, five litres of water, five energy bars (nuts and dried fruit), a tent, a torch, a compass, a map, three (emergency) flares, a first-aid kit, an axe, a radio (for listening to), an extra set of socks, a mirror, a box of matches, a cooking pot, a pen, insect repellent spray, a gun with a box of bullets, a lucky charm.

3. Explain that they can't carry all of these things anymore so they have to choose just five items from the list.
4. Give the learners a few minutes to think of their own choices.
5. Put the learners in pairs or small groups. Tell them they need to discuss their choices and they must agree together on the five items they will take. They should justify their choices to each other.
6. Put pairs or groups together and repeat the process until the whole group has an agreed list.

Extension:

7. Put the learners in groups and get them to write a story, poem, article or role play about a situation. This could be:
 - If you were on a desert island, what would you do (second conditional)?
 - Tell the story of how you came to be on the island (past perfect/simple past).
 - Tell the story of an adventure you had on the island (simple past).
 - What is a day in the life of a desert islander (simple present)?
 - Write a journal entry of your time on the island to date (present perfect).



5.5 The perfect ... X

Materials: Paper and pens/pencils (optional)

Stages:

1. Put the learners into pairs or small groups.
2. Ask them to work together and make a list of what makes the perfect X.
X could be:
 - a person: teacher, friend, boss, husband, wife
 - a place: home, school, park, market, hotel, workplace
 - a thing: mobile phone, toy, computer game, car, bike
 - an event: party, concert, dinner, exam.
3. Monitor and help if you are asked. (Some learners might want to know how to say something in English that they don't know yet.)
4. Start in small groups, then put groups together to compare ideas and give feedback.
5. Give them time to revise their ideas before opening out into presentations of ideas with full group discussion.



5.6 Job prestige

Materials: Board and chalk or whiteboard and pens

Stages:

1. Elicit a list of ten jobs from the learners and write them on the board, e.g. *teacher, politician, footballer, taxi driver, police officer, journalist, actor, doctor, farmer and shop assistant*. If you want to limit the discussion, for example to focus on a particular group of professions, provide your own list.
2. Put the learners in pairs or small groups and ask them to rank the jobs in order by how much they are paid.
3. Have a whole class discussion to see if everyone agrees.
4. Next, ask the learners to rank the jobs according to importance.
5. Have a whole class discussion to see if everyone agrees. It is much more likely that there will be differences of opinion at this stage.
6. Finally, ask the learners for other criteria by which the jobs can be ranked and repeat the process with the new criteria.
7. Discuss reasons for the differences in ranking.

Extension:

8. Ask learners to write or give a presentation about their ideal future job and why they want to do it.
9. Explain in detail the role of a person with a specific job. Research this. Interview a person who actually has this job. Report back to the class.



5.7 Mad discussion

Materials: Pieces of paper

Before the session: Cut or tear slips of paper. Each should be big enough to write a word on it. On each piece write one word, e.g. *banana, telephone, books, glasses, London, eggs, socks, school, wheel, scissors, doctor.*

Stages:

1. Ask two learners (volunteers) to come to the front of the room and pick a piece of paper.
2. Get them to read out the word on their piece of paper.
3. Next, explain that they have one minute to argue why the word on their piece of paper is more important for people than their opponent's word. For example, they may have the word banana and the other learner the word school. They need to argue that bananas are more important for people than school is.
4. The rest of the learners listen and decide who has the best argument.
5. Repeat the process with other learners and the other slips of paper.

Variation:

- If you have a large group, play the game in smaller groups so that there is more opportunity for learners to speak.
- You can use things, people, places or events. Use your imaginations!



5.8 Secret topic

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Ask two learners to quietly decide on a topic to discuss.
2. Ask the two learners to start discussing the topic. The other learners should listen and when they know what the topic is, they should join in the conversation.
3. When around half the group have joined in the conversation, stop and check the topic and then repeat with two new learners deciding on a topic to discuss.

Variation:

- Stay with the same topic and have each person in the group write three questions about the topic.
- They then have to introduce their questions into the discussion at appropriate points.
- The first person to ask all three of their questions is the winner.
- The discussion continues until everyone has asked all of their questions.



5.9 Plus/minus debates

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Choose a topic and a statement. Something slightly controversial can be good and it could be linked to community engagement. For example, *Everyone in the community should give some money or time to help build a new community centre to be used mostly by young people.*
2. Divide the class into two groups (+ and –). Explain that all the learners in the + group need to think of reasons the statement is correct/a good idea and all the learners in the – group why it is a bad idea.
3. Point out that it is important/useful to be able to see both sides to any argument as it helps you make a stronger case for your viewpoint.
4. Set a time limit and allow each group to come up with their ideas.
5. Hold a debate. This can be done as a whole class or in smaller groups as long as you have an equal number of + and – learners in each new group.

Variation:

- A third group can only ask questions about the statement.
- They decide if the other two groups have answered their questions satisfactorily.
- If not, they ask questions until they are satisfied with the answers. This group judges the debate.



5.10 A rubbish session

Materials: A selection of items collected by you before the session, e.g. *an empty plastic bottle, a used candle, a scrap of paper, a small stone, a leaf, a pen that doesn't work*

Stages:

1. Start by displaying the items one at a time and checking the learners know what each one is in English and what it is made from.
2. Put the learners in small groups and ask them to decide if they think each item is useful or rubbish. Ask them to give reasons for their answers.
3. Check what each group thinks and compare their ideas.
4. Next, ask the learners how much rubbish they produce every week.
5. Finally, have a class discussion about how we can reduce the amount of rubbish we produce and how we can recycle, reuse or upcycle the things on the desk.

6. Stories and sketches



6.1 Create a poem

Materials: Word lists and titles from Activity 2.1: Slow reveal (letters), Slow reveal (picture), Slow reveal (items)

Stages:

1. Ask the learners to work in pairs or small groups and write a poem, rap or song with the title you have and using all the words on the list.
2. Get each group to perform the poem, rap or song in front of the whole class. Each member of the group reads at least one sentence.

Or

Create a story

1. Ask the learners to work in pairs or small groups and write a story with the title you have and using all the words on the list.
2. Get each group to tell the story to the whole class. Each member of the group reads at least one sentence.

Or

Create a sketch/role play

1. Ask the learners to work in pairs or small groups and write a sketch or role play with the title you have and using all the words on the list.
2. Get each group to perform the sketch or role play in front of the whole class.



6.2 Crazy picture

Materials: Paper and pens. If the club doesn't have paper, use some big leaves (banana leaves work well) to draw on or take club learners outside to draw pictures on the soft ground.

Stages:

1. Draw a crazy picture.
2. Slowly reveal your crazy picture to the learners and ask them what they can see.



3. Put learners into groups and ask each group to draw a crazy picture.
4. Put the crazy pictures where learners can see them.
5. Ask each group to write ten words for ALL the pictures.
6. Then get the groups to swap their word lists and correct spelling if there are any mistakes.
7. Next, make three groups. Ask Group 1 to write a poem, Group 2 to write a story and Group 3 to write a poem, song or sketch using the words on the list.

Note: Repeat if you have more groups.

8. Invite groups to perform their poem, song or sketch for the rest of the class.



6.3 Draw a sketch

Materials: Blank paper and pens/pencils

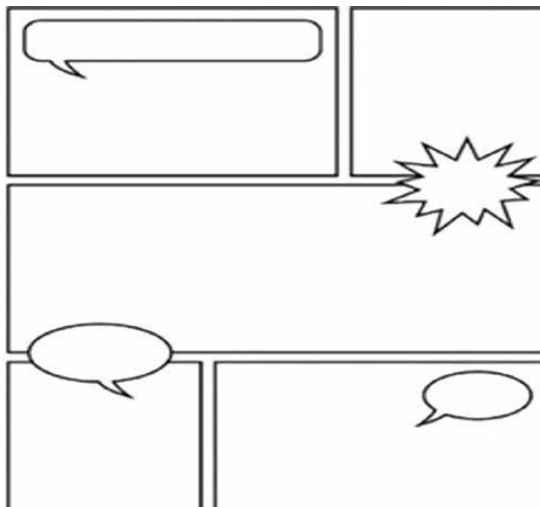
Stages:

1. Make four groups: A, B, C and D.
2. Ask each group to agree on a topic.

Note: If the groups can't think of a topic try some of these:
*learning English, a visit to the doctor, meeting a new friend,
sport/animals/environment.*

3. Next, ask the groups to swap their topic with another group.
4. Ask each group to take a piece of paper and draw some boxes and shapes like those in the picture.
5. Next, ask the groups to plan out (using drawings) a sketch (role play) on the topic they now have.
6. Ask the groups to swap their sketches and correct any mistakes or make some suggestions about how to improve the sketch.
7. Get the groups to return the sketches and then ask each group to perform their sketch to the rest of the class.

Note: Ask each group to take notes when a sketch is being performed and to write a story or article about the sketch. Ask groups to swap stories or articles for correction of any mistakes. The teacher or club supervisor can monitor here.





6.4 Mime activities

Materials: Pieces of paper

Before the session: Prepare slips of paper with short descriptions of people written on each one, e.g. *an old man, a taxi driver, a pregnant woman*.

Stages:

1. Ask the learners to choose a slip of paper.
2. Ask the learners to mime the person described on their slip of paper and the other learners to guess the person.
3. Put the learners in groups of four to six and ask them to write a short sketch with the characters they have on their pieces of paper.
4. Ask each group to perform their sketch.

Note: If you want you can ask the learners to add dialogue when they are writing their sketch.

6.5 Chain story

Materials: A ball or a screwed-up piece of paper



Stages:

1. Get the learners to sit in a circle.
2. Ask for one of the learners to start a story by saying one sentence.
3. Next, ask the learner to throw the ball to another learner in the circle. The other learner should continue the story by repeating the first sentence and adding another.
4. They then throw the ball to another learner and repeat the process until a complete story has been created.

Note: If you have a large group divide them into smaller groups to carry out the storytelling/creation.



6.6 What's my problem?

Materials: A picture of a face you have drawn

Stages:

1. Put the picture on the wall or a chair.
2. Look at the face, point to your head and say: *Ow, I have a headache. What should I do? Pretend to be speaking to the picture.*
3. Pretend the picture is speaking and say: *You should go to bed.*
4. Look at the face, rub your stomach and say: *I'm hungry. What should I do?*
5. Pretend the picture is speaking and say: *If I were you, I would eat.*
6. Look at the face, yawn and pretend to be sleepy and say: *I am tired. What should I do?*
7. Pretend the picture is speaking and say: *What about sleeping?*
8. Divide the learners into two groups (A and B).
9. Ask Group A to form a circle and Group B to form a circle around A's circle.
10. Ask the As to turn and face the Bs so everyone has a partner.
11. Tell As to say a problem and Bs to give advice or make a suggestion.
12. Then ask them to swap, with Bs saying a problem and As giving advice.
13. Ask Bs to move two places clockwise and repeat the activity with their new partner.





6.7 Community radio phone-in

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Divide the learners into four groups: A, B, C and D.
2. Ask groups A and D to decide on two problems in their community.
3. Tell groups B and C that they are the hosts of a radio phone-in programme.
4. Put groups A and B together and groups C and D together.
5. Groups A and D start with: *Hello, we are ... and we have two problems ... Can you give us advice please?*
6. Group B gives advice to A and Group D gives advice to Group C.



6.8 Modern folk tale

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Ask the learners if they know any folk tales.
2. Ask them what people, animals and objects are usually included in traditional folk tales and write their ideas on the board.
3. Next, ask them to think of modern things that could replace these things. For example, if they had a king or queen you could now have a journalist or politician. Other items that could be added are things like a mobile phone, torch, etc.
4. Put the learners into groups and ask each group to create a 'modern folk tale' including some (or all) of the list of modern things you got from the learners before.
5. Give the groups enough time to come up with a story.
6. Finally, ask the groups to share their stories with the whole class.



6.9 Shrinking story

Materials: Paper, pencils/pens and a story (to read or listen to)

Stages:

1. Ask four or five learners to leave the room.
2. Ask the rest of the group to read or listen to a short story.
3. Put the learners into pairs or small groups and ask them to write a few notes to remind themselves of the main points of the story.
4. Ask the first learner to come back and ask the learners who read or listened to the story to repeat it to the learner who has come back into the room.
5. Then, ask the second learner to come back in and get the first learner (who came back in) to retell the story.
6. Repeat with the third learner getting the second learner to retell the story, etc.

Note: Get the learners who read or listened to the story to note down any differences each time the story is retold.

6.10 How did you feel?

Materials: None

Stages:

1. Start by asking the learners if they can remember a situation when they had to hide the way they felt, e.g. when someone gave them a present for their birthday, but they already had it.
2. Divide the learners into groups of between five and eight.
3. Ask each group to come up with an idea for a situation where they might need to hide how they really feel. You could elicit some emotions that they can think about, e.g. disappointment, anger, boredom, shock.
4. Ask the groups to spend about six to ten minutes discussing the situation and emotion and preparing a short sketch.
5. Ask each group to perform their sketch. The other groups need to guess the situation and the hidden emotion/feeling.

