

A-Z Teaching Activities

Activity	Definition Ss: Students; S1: 1 st Student; S2: 2 nd Student SG: Student Group; T: Teacher	Category GP: Guided Practice CP: Communicative Practice	When Used
ADD-ON	Ss stand in circle to review vocabulary or names; to create or tell a story by repeating all that's been said plus his/her response.	GP--to learn CP--to create/tell story in own words Cool Down—to review	Opening all-class activity to learn names
ALPHABETIZING	Ss alphabetically arrange letters, words, objects, or themselves in a line.	GP—lower level Ss Cool-Down	
BRAINSTORM	Small groups think of/make a list of possibilities	Warm-Up or CP	
CATEGORIZING	Ss work in pairs or SGs to sort items with similar qualities.	GP	
CHAIN DRILL	S1 makes a statement and asks a question of S2; S2 replies and asks the same question of S3, etc.	GP (tight T-control, even though with oral interaction)	
CHARADES	T or Ss mime an action for others to identify.	CP	
CLOZE	T whites-out every 8-10 words in a text for novice Ss, every 6-7 words for high beginner, every 5 th word or so for more advanced students. An "underline" indicates blanks to be filled in. Blanks are numbered for easy reference. Jumbled answers in a box at the top of the exercise give help for lower-level students.	GP (good check on comprehension)	GP for lesson
CONCENTRIC CIRCLES	Ss form a circle within a circle, facing each other. Pairs practice a dialog/role play or share information. T signals for the outside circle to take a step to the right to join a new partner for further practice, etc. (Optional Arrangement: two equal lines facing each other)	GP for dialog (controlled) and CP for all other practice	
CUED ROLE-PLAY	In this semi-controlled activity, the T tells a S what to do but not how to do it.	CP (creating language, albeit with some measure of T-control)	
DEBATE	T divides Ss into two teams to defend opposite viewpoints, giving reasons for each.	CP	
DIALOG	Ss read parts "A" and "B" in a conversation.	Presentation of New Language or GP (to sequence sentences or fill in blanks)	Presentation of New Language for lesson
DIALOGUE JOURNAL	T engages individual Ss in an informal conversation in writing to focus on development of fluency and T-S relationship	CP (<i>creating</i> language in writing) Homework	Homework for lesson
DICTION	T reads words (for novices), phrases, or sentences three times: (1) normally, (2) more slowly in phrases, (3) and again at normal rate for Ss to check. T checks work or posts the text for Ss to self-check.	Warm-Up GP	
FILL-IN-THE-BLANK	Key words are omitted and indicated by a blank. Ss fill in the missing words for a check on comprehension or to guide reading.	GP	
FOUR-SQUARE-SHARE	Ss get in groups of four and number off 1-2-3-4. In the first round of sharing, partners are 1-2 and 3-4. In round two, they are 1-3 and 2-4. For the final round, partners are 1-4 and 2-3.	GP (if "canned information" e.g., name, address, etc.)	
FREE ROLE-PLAY	The T assigns a situation in which Ss assume parts and create appropriate conversation.	CP	

INFORMATION (or INFO) GAP	Partners give or request information, in order to arrive at all the information needed to complete a form, a graph, etc. They do this by <i>speaking / listening</i> , not by <i>reading</i> from the other's paper.	GP (manipulating rather than creating language!)	
INTERVIEW	Partners ask each other several questions.	CP	
JAZZ CHANT	Jazzy rhythms in verse teach the sound, stress, intonation patterns, functions, and cultural cues of American English.	Warm-Up GP Cool-Down	
JIGSAW TASK	T divides Ss into SGs that number off, then disperse to form other groups with an assigned task (all 1s together, all 2s, etc.). After becoming "experts," Ss return to their original grouping to share expertise, thus giving all Ss the "big picture."	CP	
MATCHING	Ss draw a line to match an item from one column with the appropriate item in another column.	GP	
MULTIPLE CHOICE	Ss choose the best response from several choices given.	GP	Presentation of New Language for lesson
PAIR-SQUARE-SHARE	After a pair shares information, they join another pair and report <i>their partner's</i> information (involving work on listening, speaking, and pronunciation).	CP	To get acquainted
PROBLEM SOLVING	The task for SGs is to find a solution for a specific "problem." The focus is on fluency rather than grammar.	CP	
QUESTION / ANSWER	Pairs or SGs ask and answer questions that require some thought and expression of opinion.	GP for factual information CP for thoughtful choice/elaboration	
RANKING	SGs work to assign the degree of importance for a list of items / ideas / concepts.	CP	Warm-Up for lesson
ROUND ROBIN REPETITION	Ss sit/stand in circle for repetition (as fast-paced as possible).	Warm-Up or review in Cool-Down GP	Warm-Up for lesson
SEMANTIC WEBBING	T encircles a word on the board and asks Ss to supply related words, which the T then writes on lines extending from the circle in all directions (like wheel spokes).	Warm-Up to see how much Ss already know Cool-Down for review of new learning	Warm-Up for lesson
SEQUENCING	Pairs or SGs arrange items (pictures, words, sentences, etc.) in correct order.	GP (arranging sentence strips or pictures) CP (arranging pictures/telling the story in sequence)	
SONGS	T uses any kind of music—recorded, instrumental or vocal, singing in class, etc.	Warm-Up Presentation of New Language (listening for words/phrases) Cool-Down	Cool-Down for lesson
STRIP STORY	T cuts apart a dialog or story to have each sentence on a separate strip of paper. Strips are randomly given out for Ss to sequence. A set of strips may be sequenced by a pair of Ss or even a single S. OR the T. can jumble sentences on a page for Ss to sequence.	GP (manipulating—not creating—language)	GP for lesson
SURVEY	Ss ask a few questions to get factual answers from a number of people.	GP if formulaic responses re: address/birthday, etc. CP if Ss give unpredictable responses	CP for lesson

TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE (TPR)	T gives a command and does the action; Ss listen. Next the T invites Ss to listen and join in the action. Then T gives the command and encourages Ss to do action without visual cues. Finally, Ss take turns as "T" and command-giver.	Presentation of New Language GP	
USING PICTURES	This inexpensive and simple technique enriches any lesson, whether to introduce a topic or launch conversation in pairs or SGs.	Warm-Up Presentation of New Language GP CP Cool-Down	
WALK-ABOUT MATCHING	Half of Ss have words on strips. Other half have strips with pictures, opposites, abbreviations, definitions, etc. Ss walk about to find their "match."	GP	