



ESL Games by alphabet

S: student **Ss:** students



Action Race: This is a fun game using actions. Use actions like jump, hop, clap, run etc. Have the Ss split into two teams and sit in lines with a chair by each team and one chair at the other end of the room. One S from each team stands next to their chair and T calls an action, e.g. "Jump". Ss must jump to the chair on the other side of the room and back, sitting down in their chair Ss say "I can jump". First one to do it gets their team a point. (Submitted by Gareth Thomas).

Adjectival Action: T writes on the board an activity like "brush your teeth." She/He picks one student, they come to the front of the class. The T then shows the S a card with an adjective written on it like "slowly" or whatever. The chosen student then does the activity in the way of the adjective. The other S have to guess the adjective. The one who guesses right gets a point and mimes the next action which the teacher writes on the board. To help them you can give them a list of options, if you think they need some help. (Submitted by Libby McArthur)

Airplane competition: First, have your Ss make some paper airplanes. Stand the Ss in a line and let them test fly their planes. For the competition, assign different classroom objects points (e.g. table 5 points, door 10 points, trash-can 20 points). Ask a S a question and if s/he answers correctly then s/he can throw and try to hit one of the target objects to win points. This works well as a team game.

Apple Pass: Have all Ss sit in a circle. Use a fake apple and toss it to one S. But you must say one English word as you pass. The S then throws to another S and says a different English word. If the student you threw it to drops it, he/she is out. And the game keeps going until you have one winner. It can be played with different categories, such as Food, Animals, Etc. My students love it! (Submitted by Kim.S.).

Art Gallery: This is a great activity for reviewing vocab. Draw enough squares on the board for each S to be able to draw in. Have the Ss write their names above their squares. T calls out a word and the Ss draw it (could be simple nouns e.g. "dog, bookcase, train", verb structures e.g. "draw a man running, eating cake, sleeping") or adjectives ("draw a big elephant, an angry lion, an expensive diamond ring"). For each S give a score for his/her picture, and then move on to the next picture. The S with the highest score at the end is the winner.

Attention: Call out commands such as: Attention, salute, march in place...stop, sit down, stand up, walk in a circle, clap your hands...stop, run in place...stop, jumping jacks...stop, swim in place....stop, etc. At first students will copy you but later they should be able to do the commands without you. (Submitted by Tania Bibbo).



Backs to the Board Game: This one is good for higher level kids. Make two teams and stand one S from each team in front of the board, facing away from it. Write a word or draw a picture on the board (e.g. "hamburger") and the Ss have to explain that word to their team member (e.g. you can buy it in McDonalds, it's got cheese and ketchup in it). The first S out of the two standing in front of the board to guess the word wins a point for his/her team.

Badminton: Good for reviewing target vocabulary (words or communicative expressions). Set a "court" into the classroom by placing a skip-rope tied up to two chairs. Make two small teams (the other Ss can be the crowd and or challengers). Give each S a flyswatter ("Racket"). Inflate a balloon (this will be the ball). Remember: the younger the Ss, the bigger the balloon must be (slower). Decides who serves and for every point one team scores, have the opposite team call out the flashcard or picture card by the T shown. Lots of fun! (NOTE: For very active Ss be careful since they might hit the others' faces when playing). (submitted by Salvador Domingo)

Banana Race: Children just love this! It is basically a QUIZ game in which you ask children questions (Target Vocabulary) like: "What's this? What fruit is red and round? How many chairs are there in the classroom?" or the T simply draws items on the board, makes animal noises so that they guess. You can work with Ss or split the class into small groups/teams if you have a large class. The T draws on the board a race track and each team or S will be a BANANA waiting at the Starting Line. They will approach the Goal line as they answer each question. Each right answer equals a step towards the Goal Line. The BANANA who arrives there first, WINS! (Submitted by Salvador Domingo).

Bang: Materials: Small pieced of paper, shoe box or coffee can. Write words on pieces of paper and fold them in half (sight words, vocabulary, blends etc.). Also add a few cards that say "BANG!". Ss take turns picking cards and if they read the word correctly they get to keep the word. If they draw a BANG! card they yell BANG! And then return all their cards (except the BANG! card) to the can/box. Very simple but the kids love it and there are many variations for the game! (Submitted by Heather Gilbert).

Basketball: Ss take a shot at the trashcan/box/etc. First ask a question to S1. If s/he answers correctly then s/he can have a shot at the basket. If the S gets the ball in the basket then s/he wins 2 points. If the S hits the basket without going inside then s/he wins 1 point. The person who gets the most points is the winner. This can also be played in teams.

Bet you can't: This game can be played in millions and millions of different ways, and essentially it's just this: go to the toy store and buy toy money. Give each student the same amount of money at the start. Have the students bet each other that they can't do something - like this: make each S stand up and walk around. Have them say, "I bet you can't (e.g. count to 20, run around the room 5 times, sing the ABC song. etc.)". Get the Ss to bet using the toy money. You'd be surprised how much even adult students enjoy this game.

Bingo: Can be played with numbers, letters, pictures or even words. The winner is the first to either get a line or full house.

Blind Toss: Have Ss sit down in a circle. Place a mat on the floor with numbers and a flashcard (target vocabulary) on each number. Taking turns, each S gets blindfolded and tosses a beanbag so as to hit a number. S/he must call out that word the same number of times as the number indicates. For example: 4-dog, then "Dog, Dog, Dog, Dog!" and the S gets the equal points (4). At the end, the S with the most points wins! Good for memorizing vocabulary since they are repeating words. (Submitted by Salvador Domingo).

Blindfold Course: Make an obstacle course in your classroom (use desks, chairs, etc.), put a blindfold on a S and help guide him/her through the course by giving instructions (e.g. walk forward 2 steps, turn left, take on small step, etc.). This is a good pair game.

Blindfold Guess: Blindfold a Student and give him/her an object to feel. The S must guess what the object is. This works well with plastic animals as they are a little challenging to guess (I always throw in a dinosaur to spice things up!).

Blindfold Questions: Put Ss in a circle, with one student, blindfolded standing in the middle. Turn the S around a few times. Tell the S to point at the person in front of him/her and ask a question (e.g. "How old are you?", "What's your favorite food?, etc.). After the reply the blindfolded S must guess the name of the S s/he is talking to.

Board Scramble: T puts the whole alphabet on the blackboard in a scramble of letters here and there, but low enough that the Ss can reach it. Have two teams and call out a letter. The person that is able to find and circle it first wins a point for their team. To make things harder have capital and small letters. Even more challenging- have four teams all looking for the same letter. The kids just love it. You can do it with numbers and also words. (Submitted by Susie).

Buzz: A counting game. Have the Ss sit in a circle. The Ss pass the ball around while counting (1, 2, 3, etc.). When the number reaches 7 the S must say buzz. Any number with a 7 in it must be buzz (7, 17, 27, 37, etc.) and any multiple of 7 must be buzz (14, 21, 28, 35, etc.).



Can You Actions: Use this game for teaching "Can you...?" "Yes, I can" "No, I can't". These actions are fun: wiggle, dance, run quickly, hop, skip, do a star jump, do a handstand, touch your toes, cross your eyes, snap your fingers, whistle, sing. E.g. Ask a S "Can you cross your eyes?". If the S replies "Yes, I can" then say "Ok, go!" and the S does the action. If the S says "No, I can't" say "Too bad. Ok, can you (wiggle)?".

Category Spin: Sit Ss in a circle. Spin a bottle or an arrow - the S that the arrow points to is first. The S needs to say a word from a pre-decided category. The next S will say last word plus his own and so on until it gets to the one who fails. For example: S1: "zebra", S2: "zebra cat", S3: "zebra cat dog".

Category Tag: Choose a category (e.g. food, weather, transportation, etc.). Ss run around the room and the T chases them. When the T tags a S s/he must name a word from the category (e.g. food: cheese, fish, bread, etc.). Give a time limit to answer (e.g. 5 seconds). If the S cannot answer or says a word that has already been used s/he sits out until the next round.

Category Writing Game: Divide the classroom into two or three groups. Each group chooses their "captain". The teacher writes on the board a word like "FRUIT" or "COLORS" or "ANIMALS", etc. Each group has to tell their captain to write down as many words as they can which belong to that category. They have 1 or 2 mins. Each group takes 1 point for each word. Correct Spelling is very important in this exercise! (submitted by Eftychia Charalambous).

Charades: Have a S come to the front of the class and whisper a word or show a FC to that S. The S then acts out that word and the first S to guess can be the next player. This works very well with action verbs. *Variation:* divide the class up into teams - the first S to guess wins a point for his/her team.

Clothes Fun: Students form teams of 3. Each team has a bag with some clothes in it. The first team member puts on the clothes. He/She must say, "This is my shirt", "These are my trousers", "This is my hat" etc., with each item of clothing. Then when all the clothes are on, they say, "I'm dressed" and start removing the clothes, passing them to the next team member, who repeats the process. If you have some fancy high-heeled shoes and silly hats this is a really fun game! Very young beginner students will normally only say, "shirt", "hat" etc. but it's still a worthwhile game for the vocabulary. My students loved it!

Colours in the Air: This is good for very young ones. Give each S 2 pieces of different coloured paper (origami paper is ideal for this). T calls a colour (e.g. "Blue") and the Ss with that colour hold it up. (submitted by Jo Ruoss).

Colour Circles: A good activity for young kids. Get some pieces of A3 paper and draw a large circle on each one. Pin the circles on different walls in the classroom. Model the activity: Say "Blue", take a blue crayon, walk over to one circle and color a small part of the circle. Do this for each color you plan to teach. Then, say a color ("Blue") to a S and s/he should pick up the blue crayon and go over to the circle you coloured in blue. Let him/her color it a little and then call him/her back. Continue with other Ss.

Colour Game: This is a good one for teaching the names of colours to young children. Arrange various colors of construction paper in a circle. Play some music and have the children march around the circle. Stop the music and all the children must sit down next to a color. Pick a color and sing (to the tune of "Twinkle Twinkle Little Star"): "Who's beside the color (insert name of color)? Please stand up, if it's you." At that point, the child next to the color mentioned stands up. Continue until all of the children get a turn. (submitted by Josie Weisner).

Count-off: This game requires at least 10 kids or more. They stand in a circle or in lines. Gesture to one child and he or she says "1." Then move down the lines or around the circle counting up to 20. After 20 restart at 1. For a higher level, choose kids at random. If they're too slow or get the wrong number, they're out. Makes a great elimination game. (submitted by Michael J. Lopez).

Cross the River: Place flashcards on floor in winding manner. Each card represents a stepping stone in the river, as students must say word/phrase/question/etc in order to step on it and cross the river! (submitted by Michelle K).



Days of the Week March: see Months March.

Directions: Build a model of a town, including some streets. Use a radio controlled car (a toy) and give the controller to Ss. Practice directions, e.g. drive two blocks and turn right, and so on. (submitted by Francisco Amador).

Do as I say, not as I do: A 'Simon says' game with a difference. First practice Simon Says with the Ss so that they understand the game and body parts. I find it works just as well omitting the 'Simon says'. Now tell them to do as you SAY, not as you do, and repeat playing the game - only this time, when you say 'touch your knees' etc, touch your ears instead, or any other part of your body. This is a good way to see who is listening to you correctly and who is just copying your movements. Ss find this game much more fun than the original. (submitted by Lisa Coleman).

Dog & Cat Chase: Have Ss sit in a circle. T walks around the outside of the circle patting the Ss on the head saying "dog" each time. Suddenly, T says "cat" as s/he touches a S's head and then that S must chase the T around the circle. The T must try to sit in the S's spot before being tagged by the chasing S. If the T is tagged s/he must touch the heads again. If T makes it back without being touched then the chasing S walks around the circle touching heads. This can be done with any variation of words.

Draw and Roll: Split class into 2 teams. T says Draw a _____ and Ss should draw that vocabulary word. If the drawing is correct then the student rolls a dice for points. This game can be played 2 ways: The fastest person to draw the picture rolls the dice. Or the other way is to allow any student to roll the dice as long as the picture is recognizable and correct. I made my dice out of a box from the 100 Yen store. (Submitted by Tania Bibbo).



Exercises: This one is great for over excited Ss who need to burn off a bit of energy. It's also good for classroom commands and numbers. Stand the students in a line and call out instructions: "Jump 10 times", "Turn around 4 times" etc. Other good ones to use are: run (on the spot), hop, hands up & down, touch your (body part), stand up & sit down and star jump.

Explosion: Give the students a topic and an object to pass around. Each student has to say a word in that topic (e.g. food - apple, cake etc.) before the time runs out. If the time limit ends the student left holding the object loses. (submitted by Ben).



Fish: Before this game you need to have the students in pairs draw and cut out a picture of a fish for each pair. While they are doing that put 2 parallel lines of tape on the floor a few meters apart. Have Ss play in twos - each student behind a different line. T asks S1 a question. If the S answers it correctly s/he can blow once to propel the fish forward. Next, T asks S2. The S who blows the fish over the taped line is the winner.

Fly swatter game: Divide the students into 2 teams. Give the first in each team a fly swatter. Write the same array of answers on the board for each side. Ask student A a question (a letter, blend, word, math problem, number, definition, etc.). The first one to slap the write answer on the board wins a point. They get three questions and then they pass it to the next one. When the first player gets back to the front. Change the answers and do it again! (Submitted by Tammy Edwards).

Follow the leader: Ss line up behind the T and follows him/her around the classroom. The T does an action and shouts out the word for that action. The Ss copy the action and repeat the word. Good actions include: wave, hello, goodbye, it's cold/hot, stop, go, run, hop, skip, crawl, walk backwards, jump, sit down, stand up.



Give Me Game: You can use with objects or flashcards. This works well with plastic fruit: Gather and elicit the different kinds of plastic fruit you have. Then throw all the fruit around the classroom (it's fun just to throw the whole lot in the air and watch the chaos of the Ss scrabbling to pick them up). Once the Ss have collected the fruit (they'll probably do their best to hide it in their pockets, etc.) T says "Give me an apple". The S with the apple should approach the T and hand him/her the fruit "Here you are". Avoid having the fruit thrown back to you as they can go anywhere and takes a long time to finish this game.



Hangman: The old favorite. Very good for reviewing vocabulary from past lessons.



I spy: T says "I spy with my little eye something that begins with B". Ss try to guess the object (e.g. "book"). Colors are a good alternative for younger Ss ("... my little eye something that is red").



Juice: Bring a small bottle of juice (e.g. orange juice) to class. At some point during the lesson take out the bottle and have a sip. This almost certainly will cause a mini-riot of kids asking for some. Here's an ideal opportunity to teach "Can I have some juice, please?". Say this sentence to the first S and get him/her to repeat it - only give him/her some if the sentence is said correctly. Bring juice along every week, and before long your Ss will be requesting a drink in perfect English! (If you don't want your Ss to be drinking out of the same bottle as you bring along a few plastic cups).



Knock-Knock: This can be used at the beginning of each class. Teach the Ss to knock on the door before entering the classroom. There are 2 variations for the

next step: 1. When the S knocks, T says "Who's there?". The S replies "It's (Juan)" and then the T says "Come in (Juan)". 2. When the S knocks the T must guess who it is "Is that (Juan)?". The S replies yes or no - if no, the T continues guessing. Having your Ss develop their own knocking styles makes this even more fun.



Label It: This works well with newcomers of all ages who need an introduction to basic vocabulary. As long as the learners are able to identify beginning letter sounds, they should be able to do this activity. To familiarize my students with names of objects found in the classroom, I label everything with an index card that has the item's name on it. Then I have them repeat what I read as they point to the item. The next day, I remove the cards and go through them one at a time and we place them on the correct item together. The third day, I let them label whatever they can on their own. I continue this for a few days. When they are able to independently label most of the items, I surprise them by having them labeled incorrectly. Then they have to straighten out the mess. You can adapt this to any noun-based vocabulary list (e.g. types of foods, body parts, parts of a room in a house, animals, etc.) that you can post pictures of. Your website has amazing flashcards and pictures that can be printed out and used for this. (submitted by KMMP).

Last Letter, First Letter: (A popular Japanese game called Shiri Tori). Have the Ss sit in a circle with you. T starts by saying a word, then the S to the T's right must make a word that starts with the last letter of the word that the T said (e.g. bus --- steak --- key --- yellow --- etc.). Continue around the circle until someone makes a mistake.

Line True or False: Put a line of tape on the floor and designate one side "True" and the other "False". Hold up an object or flashcard and say its word. If Ss think the you have said the correct word they jump on the True side, if not they jump on the False side. Incorrect Ss sit out until the next game.



Machine: This is good for practicing emotions and sounds. Pick one S to start. Give that S an emotion or a feeling to act. They must do an action and make a noise. One at a time Ss can add to it and you essentially create a "machine". This is a really fun game! (Submitted by N. Budoy)

Make Words Game: Write a few random letters on the board. Have the Ss work in pairs/small groups to make up as many words from the letters as possible (e.g. letters: g, h, a, t, p, e, c. Possible words: cat, peg, tea, hat, get, etc.). The team with the most words is the winner.

Months March: For some reason my kids LOVE this game and request it every week! You'll need a fairly long classroom with space for everyone to march up and down. T stands at one end of the room against the left wall. Line the Ss up along side T and T says "Go!". As you all march together, T starts calling out the months in order ("January", "February", etc.). Ss repeat each month (T: "January" Ss: "January"). March along at a slow pace, but smartly (backs straight, arms swinging). At certain points T suddenly shouts "Stop!". Everyone must stop and be EXACTLY in line with the T. If someone is out of line order them back in line and

then continue marching where you left off. Turn around each time you reach the end of the room and continue the march. Once finished start again, but this time walk briskly. You can do it the final time running! This is even more fun when there are tables, etc, in the room that the Ss need to climb over/under. After a few lessons you shouldn't have to chorus the words - just get the students to chant together as they march.



Name Game: Good for a first class. Sit the Ss in a circle. Point to yourself and say your name "I'm Carolina". Then Ss say their names around the circle.

Name Memorizing Game: Have children sit in a circle. Start by saying "my name is..." and then answer a question about yourself. For example "My name is Jo and I like the color Purple." The next person says "This is Jo and he likes the color purple and my name is Rose and I am 8 years old." The next person says "That is Jo he likes Purple, this is Rose and she is 8 and I am Jeremy and I like the color blue." It's a chain and the kids have to repeat what the last people have said about themselves. It's really hard to be the last person in the circle! (Submitted by Danielle)

Number Codes: Cut out some squares and write numbers from 0-9 on them. Put the numbers in a box and then instruct the students to place the numbers in a line as you call them out. This also works well for phone numbers.

Number Group Game: Play some music and have your Ss walk around the classroom. Stop the music suddenly and call out a number (up to the number of Ss in your class). The Ss must quickly get together in a group of that number. Any Ss who didn't make it sit out until the next round.



Odd-One-Out: Write 3 or four words on the board. Ss must circle the odd-one-out (e.g. cat - horse - **cake** - bird).



Pass: Sit the Ss with you in a circle. T holds up an object or flashcard and says its name (e.g. "Pen"). T passes it on to the next S who also says its name and passes it on to the next S. *Variations:* change directions, speed rounds, have many objects going round at the same time.

Pictionary: Good for reviewing vocab. Pick a S and show him/her a picture or whisper a word into his/her ear. The S draws the picture on the board and the first S to guess the picture gets to draw the next picture. This can also be played in teams with a point system.

Picture Fun: Have students cut out a picture of a person in a magazine. Students should describe the person, how old they are, what their job is, what their hobbies are, etc. and then present that person to the class. This is good for practicing adjectives. (Submitted by Kelly).

Preposition Treasure Hunt: For prepositions of location and yes/no question practice. You need something sticky, like 'Blue Tack' (used for sticking posters to the wall) that you can roll into a ball and stick on anything. Model first: give the Blue Tack to a S and indicate that they should put it in a difficult-to-find place. Leave the room and give them a few moments to hide the Blue Tack (e.g. on the underside of a desk, on the wall behind a curtain, etc.). Then come back in and ask yes/no questions to locate it (Is it on the desk?, Is it near the desk? Is it in the front half of the classroom? Is it under the chair? etc.). When you finally find it have a S take the questioner's role. In a large class try having Ss play in pairs.

Puppet Conversation: Hand puppets really liven up a classroom, especially for young learners who are shy when talking to the T. You'll probably find that some Ss prefer talking to the puppet than to you! Fun puppet characters (such as Sesame Street's Cookie Monster) that talk to Ss can produce unexpected results. I always use Cookie Monster at the beginning of my young classes. Here's what I do: 1. Cookie Monster is sleeping in a bag. Each S has to shout "Wake up Cookie Monster!" into the bag. Cookie Monster only wakes up when the whole class shout together into the bag. 2. Cookie Monster says hello to each S and asks them questions (their names, how they are, how old they are, etc.). Ss reply and asks Cookie Monster the same questions. 3. Ss and Cookie Monster sing the 'Hello Song' together. 4. Cookie Monster says goodbye to each S individually and then goes back to sleep in the bag. The actual lesson can now start.



Question Chain: Have the Ss sit in a circle. T asks the S next to him/her a question (e.g. "What's your name?" "Do you like chocolate cake?" etc.) and the S has to answer the question and then ask the S next to him/her the same question. Continue around the circle and then start a new question. It helps to use a ball to pass around as the questions are being asked and answered.

Question Ball: Have the Ss sit in a circle. Throw/Roll a ball to one S and ask a question. The next step has 2 variations. *Variation 1:* S1 throws the ball back to the T and the T throws to another S asking a different question. *Variation 2:* S1 throws the ball to a different S and asks that S the same question.



Rope Jump: you need a rope for this one! Have Ss stand behind each other in a line. Hold a rope (have a S hold the other end) at a height that the Ss should be able to jump over. On the other side of the rope spread out some objects or flashcards and a box. Call out the name of one of the objects/flashcards to the first S. S/he has to jump over the rope, pick up the correct object and put it in the box. For other rounds you can hold the rope down low, so Ss have to crawl/roll under.

Rhythmic Reading: This activity is fast-paced and lively, and improves their word recognition, speed, and confidence in reading. Choose a reading passage (one page if using a basic text, maybe one paragraph if using a more advanced one). Start a rhythm (clapping or tapping on your desk). Choose one student to start. Each student must read one sentence (or word, if you want), exactly on the beat and pronounced correctly. Immediately after the first student finishes, the next one starts with the next sentence, and so on. If someone misses a beat or stumbles over words, they lose a 'life' or they are 'out'. If you use the 'out' method, it isn't so

bad, because the 'out' students help to keep the beat and follow along. In my experience, all students, whether 'out' or not, have focused intently on the reading - waiting like hawks to hear someone's mistake. Of course you can vary the tempo, making it much easier or much harder. This can also be played as a team game (which team can make it to the end of the passage, on beat, with no stumbles or mispronunciations?). Good luck! (Submitted by Melanie Mitchell).



Secret S: Students form 2 different groups in the class, each group prepares 3 questions to ask. Other group members try to give answers to these questions without saying the letter 'S'. The group which does not say this letter wins the game. (Submitted by Gamze Yýldýz).

Shirt Game: Divide the children into two teams and give a man's shirt to each team. Be sure each shirt has the same amount of buttons down the front. At the signal, the first person on each team puts on the shirt and buttons all of the buttons down the front. The one who is buttoned-up first gets to answer the question you ask. Of course a question equals points. If the answer is incorrect, the person from the other team gets a chance to answer.

Shopping: This can be used with a wide range of objects (plastic fruit works very well). Gather all the Ss and show them all the objects you have. Ask a S "What do you want?" (or maybe "What would you like?" to higher levels). The S should reply (e.g. "An apple, please"). T then says "Here you are" and the S finishes with "Thank you". At the end collect the objects by playing the 'Give Me' game.

Shopping Game: This is an oral communication activity appropriate for EFL learners in elementary/primary school (optimal for grades 3-6). This game is designed for practicing "shopping" dialogue and vocabulary. Materials: "produce" and play money. Object of game: To accumulate as many products as possible.

Students are divided into clerks and shoppers. Clerks set up "stands" to allow easy access for all shoppers (e.g. around the outsides of the room with their backs to the wall). Shoppers are given a set amount of money* (e.g. dollars, euros, pounds, etc.) and begin at a stand where there is an open space. Students shop, trying to accumulate as many items as possible (each item is 1 unit of currency). Periodically, the instructor will say "stop" (a bell or other device may be needed to attract attention in some cultural and classroom contexts) and call out a name of one of the products. Students with that product must then put ALL their products in a basket at the front of the room. The remaining students continue shopping. Students who had to dump their products must begin again from scratch (with fewer units of currency). The student with the most products at the end wins. Students then switch roles.

*It is recommended giving students as much money as possible since students who run out can no longer participate.

Alternative play for more advanced students: Clerks set the price of items. Shoppers have the option of negotiating the price. There are two winners in this version: The shopper who accumulates the most products and the clerk who makes the most money.

Silent Ball: If the Ss are being loud and off task play this game with them. It really works and they love to play it. Have all the Ss stand up and give one student a ball (make sure it is soft). Have the students toss the ball to each other without

saying a word. Any student who drops the ball or talks must sit down. (Submitted by Samantha Marchessault)

Simon Says: A good review for body parts ("Simon says touch your knees"). You could change Simon to your name to avoid confusion. When T says a sentence without the word "Simon" (e.g. "Touch your knees") then Ss shouldn't follow that instruction. If a S makes a mistake s/he has to sit out until the next round.

Slam: Sit the Ss in a circle and place some objects or flashcards in the middle of the circle. Tell Ss to put their hands on their heads. T shouts out the word of one of the objects and the Ss race to touch it. The S who touches it first get to keep the object. The S who has the most objects at the end of the game is the winner.

Smells Game: Preparation: Take eight small, empty jars; opaque jars work best (e.g., plastic vitamin containers). Put good-smelling things (e.g., shampoo, syrup) in four of the jars and bad-smelling things (e.g., vinegar, strong dried herbs) in the other four. Only a small amount is needed. Place all the jars in a big paper bag. Execution: Write "It smells good" and "It smells bad" on the board. You can also draw a happy face and a disgusted face to clarify things. Teach the phrases. Each S then comes up to teacher, one at a time. S is then blindfolded and you hold an open jar under his/her nose. S must say whether it smells good or bad. Great fun! (Submitted by Max Becker-Pos).

Snowballs: The T or the Ss draw on the board items related to the Target Lesson (fruits, animals, veggies, etc.) Make two teams. One S from each team gets a wet tissue ("Snow ball") and stands up. The rest of the class picks a card which can not be seen by the two Ss standing, who will throw their "snow ball" as they hear the other Ss call an item out (eg: "Apple!"). The team whose participant hits closer to the item called out, gets a point. (Submitted by Salvador)

Spelling Bee: Have all your Ss stand at the front of the class. Give S1 a word to spell. The S orally spells the word and the T writes it on the board as it is being spelt. If the spelling is wrong the S is knocked out of the game. The last S standing is the winner. This also works well as a team game.

Spin the Bottle: Sit Ss in a circle with a bottle in the middle. T Spins the bottle. When it stops spinning the S it is pointing to has to answer a question. If the answer is correct then that S can spin the bottle. This is a good class warm up activity.

Squeeze: Divide the Ss into two teams with their desks facing each other. The Ss closest to the teacher must keep their eyes open, the other Ss close their eyes. The Ss on each team must all hold hands except for the two on the ends. The two farthest away from the teacher will be reaching for a small object, like a koosh ball or bean bag. The teacher flips a coin for the Ss whose eyes are open. When it lands on heads the Ss must squeeze the hand of the next person, and then the next person and so on. When it reaches the student on the end s/he must quickly reach for the object. The team who picks up the object first wins a point. Then the line rotates, the Ss with their eyes open move to the next seat. The Ss who reached for the object come to the front. (Submitted by Lynette Jackson)

Stop the Bus: All Ss need pencil and paper to play this game. The T writes a letter on the board, and shouts, "Start the bus." The students then write down as many words beginning with this letter as they can think of. When one S shouts out, "Stop the bus!" everyone has to stop writing. The students all get one point for each word. The S who has the most words wins an extra 2 point. This may or may not be the one who shouted, "Stop the bus." (Submitted by Katie McArthur)

Story Pass: Put up a picture or a first sentence as a writing prompt. Divide students into small groups and have them create a story from that prompt. Each student takes a turn writing one sentence to add to the story and passes it on to the next student. Keep it going around in the group until they have finished it (it may be helpful to have a length limit or time limit so the stories don't get too out of control!). Vote on the best story, based on creativity and flow. (Submitted by Christina Deverall)



There is/there are: To practice there is/there are. Give your students a list of questions, and have them go around the school, park in order to answer the questions. Questions could be:

How many doors are there in the school?

how many teachers are there in the school in this moment?

how many plants are there in the hall?

how many tables are there in the classroom?, etc. (Submitted by Claudian Torres)

Time Bomb: you need a timer (such as an egg timer) for this exciting game. Set the timer, ask a question and then throw it to a S. S/he must answer and then throw the timer to another S, who in turn answers and then throws it to another S. The S holding the timer when it goes off loses a life. This can also be done with categories (e.g. food, animals, etc.).

Tingo Tango: sit with students in a circle after teaching any topic. Give a bean bag to one student in the circle to start passing around when another student (sitting looking out) begins to chant "tingo, tingo, tingo, tango". When s/he says "tango" the student who ends up with the bean bag must either answer a question or ask one about the topic learned. (Submitted by Maria Pineda)

Tornado: Supplies: flashcards (pictures or questions on one side, numbers on the other), 'Tornado Cards' (flashcards with numbers on one side and a tornado picture on the other). Stick the numbered cards on the board with either pictures or questions on the back (depending on the age group) facing the board. Also include 6 Tornado cards and mix them in with the picture cards. Students then choose a number card. If they answer the question correctly then their team can draw a line to draw a house. If they choose a tornado card then they blow down their opposing teams part drawing of a house. The first team to draw a house wins. (submitted by Sally Lloyd).

Train Ride Game: Have Ss form a train (standing in line holding onto each other). Choo choo around the classroom and call out instructions (e.g. faster, slower, turn left/right, stop, go).

Touch: Have Ss run around the classroom touching things that T orders them to do (e.g. "Touch the table" "Touch a chair" "Touch your bag"). Colors work well for this, as Ss can touch anything of that color (e.g. "Touch something green").

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teams part drawing of a house. The first team to draw a house wins. (submitted by Sally Lloyd).

Typhoon: Have the students put chairs in a circle, with one less than the number of students. The student left standing has to ask the others a question ie Do you have glasses? If the answer is yes, then the students with glasses have to get up and switch chairs, giving the one standing a chance to sit. If the answer is no, the student remains sitting. Lots of fun, and the kids seem to love it and always ask for it. Be careful that they don't get too excited and knock over any chairs. (submitted by Kirk Davies).



"Uhm" Game: One student at a time is chosen and given a specific subject (pickle, grass, football, etc). The objective is for the student to talk about/describe the subject for as long as possible without pausing or using fillers such as "uhm". This is a great game for building speech skills and kids love it! (Submitted by Maggie)

Unscramble: Write a word on the board that has all its letters mixed up (e.g. "Irocsmaos" = "classroom"). Ss have to unscramble the word. This works well in a team game. *Variation:* use letter blocks / letter shapes instead of writing on the board.



Vanishing Objects Game: place a number of objects in front of the Ss. Give them a few moments to memorize the objects and then tell them to close their eyes. Take away one of the objects and then tell the Ss to open their eyes again. The first S to guess the missing object can win that object (for 1 point) and take away an object in the next round.

Vocabulary Tic Tac Toe: Draw a basic tic tac toe board on the white board with new vocabulary in each block. Each word is missing one, two or three letters depending on students level. One S from each team is called up and must fill in the missing letter(s) and say the word aloud. The team with three in a row wins. (submitted by Shawn).



Word Chain: have the Ss to sit with T in a circle. T says a word (or sentence) and then the next S repeats that word and adds a new word. S2 then says the 2 words and adds another. Continue going around the circle until the list gets too long to remember!

What Time Is It Mr. Wolf (variation): This variation is easier to play in a classroom setting. Have Ss stand in a circle around Mr. Wolf (either T or S), who is blind-folded and facing one direction. The Ss ask 'What time is it Mr. Wolf?'. If Mr. Wolf says 'It's 4 o'clock,' then the Ss march in a circle 4 steps. If Mr. Wolf says, 'It's dinnertime,' then he or she grabs the S who is in front of them. And that S becomes Mr. Wolf. As another variation, and to teach Ss times of meals, 6 o'clock could be breakfast, 12 o'clock could be lunch and 7 o'clock could be dinner. So when Mr. Wolf said, 'It's 12 o'clock,' Mr. Wolf would eat a S. (Submitted by Wilhelm)

Whisper Game: Sit the Ss in a circle with you. Whisper a word or sentence in the next S's ear (e.g. "I'm hungry"). S/he then whispers that in the next S's ear and so on until the last S. S/he then says the word/sentence out loud to see if it's the same as the original message.

Whiteboard Draw Relay: Make 2 teams and line them up as far away from the board as possible. Call out a word to the first members of each team, and they have to run to the board, draw the picture and run back to his/her next teammate. The process is repeated for each student and the team that finishes first is the winner. *Variation:* T whispers the words. The S can only run back to his/her team when his teammates guess what the picture is.

Window Game: You can only do this if your classroom has a window that you can stand outside of and look into the classroom (don't try this on the 10th floor!). Model first: stand the Ss in front of the window and go out of the room. Wave to them through the window and silently mouth some words (so it seems like they can't hear you through the glass). Look at a flashcard and then mouth the word a few times. Go back in and the S who first tells you the word you were saying can have a turn.

Word Recognition Game: Write some words the Ss have learned in previous lessons on some cards (postcards are ideal). Have all the Ss stand at one end of the room and the T in the middle. Hold up one card and Ss come forward and whisper the word in the T's ear. If correct they can go over to the other side of the room. Ss can have as many guesses as possible.



Yoghurt Pots and Vocabulary: This is definitely only for primary school children just learning to speak English.

You need a number of empty, clean and preferably identical small yoghurt containers for this game. Not more than 32 pots.

On the outside of each pot write as many different English words as you can using a black permanent marker felt-pen. Write the words legibly but haphazardly - some the right way up and others sideways or upside-down. Try and write between 10 and 20 words on each pot. Then inside the pot on the bottom of it write a unique serial number starting with 1. Be very sure you also make it clear which way up the number should be read - for example it is easy to confuse 6 and 9 unless you put a line under them.

Be sure to make a master reference list of which words you write on which pot numbers, otherwise you will not be able to manage this game very well at all.

When you play the game, each child will need a single, clean sheet of A4 paper. Get the children to fold and tightly crease their paper in half across its width, then fold it in half again and then again a third time. When the paper is opened out flat it will be divided into eight sections from top to bottom. Then have them fold it in half and crease it lengthways. This divides the paper into 16 sections.

Have them turn the paper around so that it is on the desk in front of them in 'landscape' mode. At the top of each of the 16 sections depicted by the paper folds, have them write the numbers 1 to 16. Make sure they are written quite small. Then have them turn over the sheet and write more numbers on the reverse side from 17 up to 32 (or to the highest numbered pot you have put into the game).

Your pots MUST be in strict, unbroken numerical order so the your students are not confused.

Then you distribute the pots at the rate of one per child - or if you have a larger class, make it one pot between two children and let each pair of children have only one sheet of paper. This way they work as a team. If you want to introduce more pots than there are children (or teams) then keep the balance quantity on your own desk in their full view.

Their job is to write down all the words off EACH pot into the correspondingly numbered sections of their paper. The words from Pot No.3 are to be written only in Space No.3 on their paper and so on. Insist that they write legibly and neatly - if you wish, during the folding of their papers, you might have them rule some lines along its length.

Once the children grasp this game - they will be off and away! Make their goal the first child (or team) to complete ALL of the pots in the game. Perhaps a small prize each for the first three?

Please note though that you MUST insist that they can have only ONE pot on their desk at any time AND that when they finish a pot and want another, they must return the finished pot to you and get another one from you - no direct swapping within the class or there will be fights.

Primary school children love this game. Because they all read and write at different speeds, and if you make a few of the pots very simple and a few of them very difficult - some of the pots will then become "collector's items" Your desk will quickly become the centre of the universe in your classroom.

Most children will not cheat in this game but make a point of at least appearing to check the words the top three children or teams have written, against the master lists that you should have made. Be sure they see you doing this.

I was very pleasantly surprised at how successful this game became with my primary school pupils. It completely turned them around and even the laziest and most troublesome among them were transformed.

If this becomes successful in your classroom then you could use this game to 'categorize' their vocabulary training by having different 'sets' of pots with different word lengths or subjects or words beginning with certain letters or containing certain letters. Names of towns, countries, rivers, animals, etc.

It's simple, cheap and extremely fast-paced. Most importantly young children love it! Be prepared for a VERY noisy and active classroom and for children trying to climb all over you to get at pots they need to complete their papers. (Submitted by Dave Brown)

Zoo Game: This is a fun activity for young learners on the topic of animal noises. After teaching the animals and their noises sit each S in a different part of the classroom and assign them as different animals (to make it clearer you can give each S a flashcard of the animal they are representing). Walk around the room and talk to each S, who can only reply as an animal. E.g. T: "Hello Luli", S1: "Moo!" (cow). T: "What's your name?" S2: "Roar!" (lion). T: "How are you, Gonza?" S3: "Bow-wow!" (dog).



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