

October Meeting Workshop:- Classroom Activities - Handout

Aims:

- 1) To give examples of common activities and warm-ups participants might find useful.
- 2) To give ideas of how participants can create and develop activities
- 3) To give an idea of how to give clear instructions.

OUTLINE

1	5-10 mins	<u>Warm-up game – 'Is it me?'</u> As participants come in they fill in self-description then hand it back. This is used for the first activity. Brief feedback from participants
1a	2 mins	<u>Different levels</u> – explanation of how warm-up game could be changed e.g. Types of statements used, precise information or vague, who reads out, vocabulary practice
2	2-5 mins	<u>Main Introduction</u> – why do warm-ups/ extra activities? Learning styles - ensure maximum number of students gain from the lesson SADS – don't re-invent things
3	5-10 mins	<u>Other possible/ popular warm up activities</u> - Short explanation of other games and try some out briefly List of all games with brief explanation, copy of Tom Nesbit's activities hand out
3a	5 mins	<u>Linking the warm-up</u> - - with the previous lesson's content – via homework, key words
4	5-10 mins	<u>Explaining activities</u> - Using understandable language. Brief feedback. Do they get it? Is it worth it if they don't? Use of Japanese in the classroom.
5	5-10 mins	<u>Activities using dialogues</u> – Adapting dialogues in the textbook Cloze exercise using difficult words. Good and bad dialogues, pronunciation, monologues, check and double check, examples – e.g. 'Ohio' dialogue
6	10 mins	<u>Presentation of ideas</u> - Group discussion, questions, general feedback
7	2 mins	<u>Conclusion</u> - Pps give back sheets to owner; individual questions, time to look at supplementary material

Total: 70 minutes

'Is It Me?'

I am from (country)

I am years old

I have brother(s) and sister(s)

My hobbies are:

.....
and

Name

'Is It Me?'

I am from (country)

I am years old

I have brother(s) and sister(s)

My hobbies are:

.....
and

Name

1) Warm up ('Stand-up, Sit-down')

Full explanation

- Students are given a brief questionnaire and asked to fill it in about themselves then hand it back. They can lie if they want but they must remember what they wrote.
- Teacher(s) then redistribute randomly and ask students to keep the sheet secret.
- All students stand up.
- Explain that in a moment, a sheet will be read out. They need to listen carefully to the description. As soon as they know it isn't them they sit down. Give one example as a demonstration (e.g. 'I live in Sendai')
- Choose 'volunteers' to read out one at a time. They need to pause between each piece of information for students to sit down.
- When one student is left standing, ask them their name. Then ask the person reading to confirm this is the name on the sheet.
- Give both students a round of applause

In the presentation this activity was explained in the way it would be explained to a class of students. It was quite simple to understand using simple gestures rather than whole long explanations as above.

How did you find the activity? Did you understand? Did you find it fun? Do you think it would be useful for your students?

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1a) Adapting The Activity

How could this warm-up game be changed for different types of class/ students?

Ideas:

- ◇ The types of statements used – how much of a writing frame you give the students. For advanced classes you could give them questions to answer in full sentences or just ask them to write basic information about themselves. This would take longer for students to prepare and so may be better given as homework. For difficult vocabulary or struggling students they can circle the chosen word (see 'Self Description' sheet)
- ◇ Precise information or vague – the more precise the information, the shorter the game may be, therefore being more precise does not necessarily make it more difficult.
- ◇ Who reads out – will the teacher(s) read out or the students? If they really struggle, it is better for the teacher to read out.
- ◇ Vocabulary practice – change the questions/ statements and use the activity to practice newly learned vocabulary, e.g. club activities, clothes, personal descriptions, family members, etc.
- ◇ Variation – using vocabulary lists. All students stand and teacher reads out new words. Students sit down if it applies to them – e.g. club activities, subjects I study, etc.

Main Introduction

A) Why add extra activities?

B) Why do warm ups?

C) How to do it.

A) Why add extra activities?

As you probably already know, not everyone has the same learning style. Some people learn from listening, others from reading, or watching, some from doing a practical activity, others from taking notes. If you teach a lesson which addresses only one or two of these styles, a large part of your class will gain nothing from the lesson. This is wasting your time and theirs. Many Oral Communication lessons focus on listening only and as a teacher you will automatically teach in your learning style. Try to develop this.

Try to include listening, speaking, doing (practice), reading and writing activities into each class or at least each topic – it's easier than you think.

e.g. – Students **listen** to a dialogue and **write** in missing words. They then **read** this dialogue out loud after the teachers. Finally they **practice** the dialogue by **saying** it with a partner.

B) Why do warm ups?

Warm ups are a quick way to:

- ✓ introduce new ideas and/or vocabulary
- ✓ check understanding and previous knowledge
- ✓ check homework answers
- ✓ wake up students and yourself
- ✓ have fun!

If done badly they can also be a great way to waste a lot of time getting nowhere so plan them well.

Make sure they are:

- × relevant
- × understandable
- × interesting
- × quick
- × planned

C) How to do it...

Don't re-invent the wheel! Someone else has already done all the hard work, so why should you do it all again to come up with the same things?

Worksheets and activities made from scratch can have 2 main drawbacks – **time** and **difficulty**. You can spend an AWFUL lot of time creating resources for students to use in class. Students think resources come from the shop. Very often they do.

Also your ideas may be too difficult for the students.

- ✗ You may assume they know things that they don't.
- ✗ Cultural differences can affect things without you knowing. You may see familiar products in the shops but it doesn't mean students are familiar with them.
- ✗ There may be a whole pile of vocabulary they never learnt.
- ✗ You may want them to use a skill they have not yet developed (e.g. free talk/ thinking for themselves).

Remember.....

** If the textbook is too difficult, at least you didn't spend all evening making it!**

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use 'SADS'

- S**.....Steal – look through textbooks, handbooks websites, ask friends
- A**.....Adapt – it is unlikely you can take something word for word for your students
- D**.....Develop – take it further, how else can you use this activity?
- S**.....Share – pass it on –
 - ☆ to the 'Senior High School Ideas Handbook'
 - ☆ to Ben Shearon's website
 - ☆ to your successor (copy every thing and file it well)
 - ☆ to the MJET mailing list
 - ☆ to the ETJ activities mailing list
 - ☆ by presenting a work-shop

3) Other Possible/ Popular Warm up Activities

Examples of warm ups I have used:

- ☞ 'Food Relay Race' – in teams students take it in turns to run to the board and write down an English food or drink item. Make teams from class columns to be fair. Go over all the words at the end quickly as a whole class to check spellings. Could be done with any specific vocabulary if there are enough words (e.g. clothes, countries)

- ☞ 'Stand-up, Sit-down' – introductory game. Give students a couple of minutes to fill in a sheet of information, collect then redistribute randomly. All should stand. 'Volunteers' will read out their sheet and if it is not you, sit down. When one is left standing, ask their name. Can be used with different information – (e.g. 'I am wearing...', 'I look like...', hobbies, sports club activities)

- ☞ 'Runaround' – ask students to go to one side of the room or the other dependent on set criteria – e.g. are you wearing trousers or skirt, are you tall or short, is your hair long or short. A variation using homework is below.

- ☞ 'Which Way?' – all students stand up and are asked to turn 'right', then 'left' then 'to the back' then 'to the front'. Use gestures to show them if they are unsure so they can copy. Then repeat with students' eyes closed, mixing up the directions – class can be split in half to do this, giving others a giggle.

- ☞ 'School Subjects Scramble' – in groups of four-six students are given cards with names of school subjects on. Teacher holds up pictures depicting a subject one at a time. Students must quickly hold up the card AND shout out the correct word at the same time. First team gets a point. Must use team work. Can get very noisy! Can be used with any key vocabulary for which pictures are possible (e.g. clothes, colours, sports)

- ☞ 'Match the Terms' – students are given two lists of words or phrases to match with things which mean the same thing. Group activity and use dictionaries if new vocabulary. Can be useful for students to distinguish between different forms of English (e.g. UK v US quiz). Needs team work. Can also be used to match opposites or questions and answers – make sure students are clear on this.

- ☞ 'Tongue Twisters' – teach students simple tongue twisters in English (e.g. red lorry yellow lorry). First explain the term then write one on the board. Read it to the class then read it a few times over fast. Students find it funny if you make a mistake. Then get them all to repeat once, then 3/5/10 times getting faster and faster. Target individual students or ask for volunteers. Attach it to key vocabulary (e.g. L/R distinction in pronunciation).

- ☞ 'Funny Dialogue' – let students think they are listening to a real conversation but script it first (e.g. A:'How are you?', B:'I don't feel well', A:'Why not?', etc for lesson on illness). Try to make it easy so you don't need to repeat it. Get the students to explain what you said or answer questions (e.g. 'why doesn't she feel well?')

- ☞ 'Chorus Reading' – choose 6 difficult new words and put them on the board. All students read and repeat. Check understanding. Split class into column groups and assign one word to each group. Each group has to read out their word 5/10 times quickly but clearly at the same time as other groups read their words. You should not be able to hear any word clearly. Check students understand the words used.

- ☞ 'Bingo' – give students basic grid – 4x4 or 5x5 depending on amount of vocabulary. Students should fill in the boxes with vocabulary learnt previously. Teacher will show pictures which relate to the words in the boxes. Students cross off words as they come up. Once they have a line complete they must shout 'bingo' and put their hand up. Bring winner to the front to double check they are correct. Play for two lines if time. (e.g. colours, school subjects, weather, clothing items, sports)

- ☞ 'Where is my...?' – teachers have labels of main body parts. One teacher says to the other 'Do you know where my ... is?' and holds up the label. Teacher says 'of course' and sticks label onto correct part of other teacher's body. Then 'volunteers' come one at a time to stick on other body parts, using teacher as a dummy. When all are on, teacher takes them off one at a time, says word and students repeat. Great fun! (also – clothes)

** Some of these activities require the vocabulary to be taught in the previous lesson and can be used to refresh students' memories of the new words.

See also Tom Nesbit's compilation of warm-up activities attached.

3a) Linking A Warm up With The Previous Lesson's Content

Warm ups should always be relevant, usually to this lesson or the previous one. They may refer to an older lesson to refresh students' memories before exams. Some of the above ideas are based around using previously taught vocabulary.

Set homework that you can use for the next lesson's warm up. Check the work first and only get students to read out with different answers which make sense.

Examples:

- ☺ 'Who/What is it?' – students write 3-5 sentences about something or someone. Next lesson 'volunteers' read out their work. Others listen and guess who or what they are describing (e.g. famous person, their hobby, a familiar item, a country, Japanese festival).
- ☺ 'Which one is it?' – as above only put pictures or the names of the items/people/etc around the room and students must stand next to the one they think it is.
- ☺ 'Where do you live?' – students are given a basic map and told that the teacher is coming to their house. They must choose one house from those marked on (e.g. a - h) and write directions of how to get there. In the following lesson 'volunteers' read out their directions and other students and teachers have to find their house.
- ☺ 'Complete the dialogue' – students are given a dialogue which is out of order or has words missing which are placed below. Next lesson two students 'volunteer' to role play the correct form of the dialogue
- ☺ 'Wanted' – students draw a picture of themselves wearing a disguise and write a brief description of the picture. Next lesson they read out the description. Others listen and try to draw the picture – does it look like the original?

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Tips:

- ✧ Try to use games which put no pressure on one individual so they are fun for everyone
- ✧ If students are reading out their work, check for good ones first, don't just pick randomly
- ✧ Vary the types of activities, both within and between lessons, so students use different skills and don't get bored
- ✧ Tell them if dictionaries/ text books/ etc can be used or not
- ✧ Stress team work if the students have to work in teams/ pairs.
- ✧ Have fun! Don't stress yourself if an activity doesn't work – just move on or it will cease to be fun
- ✧ Check the relevance of the activity and the vocabulary you are using.

4) Explaining Activities

Students often have Japanese or bilingual explanations in their text books. When they don't have these, they may struggle. Don't jump straight to Japanese! Follow the flow diagram.

1 st	Teacher explains the activity in English in full. Use gestures, talk slowly and clearly. Show any objects (including worksheets) which will be used.
2 nd	Other teacher repeats but paraphrases slightly, focusing mainly on key phrases, again using gesture and pointing.
3 rd	First teacher repeats again, cutting even shorter to the bare bones of explanation, focusing on key words or focusing on the main part students don't understand.
4 th	Teachers demonstrate by role play if appropriate to the activity.
5 th	Teacher to translate a few key words into Japanese.
6 th	Ask a student who clearly does understand to explain to the others in English or Japanese.
7 th	If the majority understand, begin the activity and explain to students individually who still struggle. Usually most will understand after the activity begins.
8 th	Teacher explains whole activity in Japanese.

Tips:

- After each explanation ask '*Do you understand?*' or '*OK?*' and encourage students to answer honestly.
- Say '*I don't understand*' and put your hand up to encourage them to do the same. If one student does this react positively as students will feel encouraged to say when they don't understand.
- If you have reached point 8, ask yourself if the activity is worth it. Will you be doing something similar again in a future class? If not, re-think.
- Much of the English students will learn in class will be the 'incidental' language. When walking around the class, giving advice, always use English, even when students speak to you in Japanese, and encourage them to do the same.
- Ask them '*How many?*' before giving them worksheets to pass back for the whole row. Encourage them to answer in English (they are only saying a number!)
- Don't accept '*wakarimasen*' as an answer – this will let students get lazy. The '**wakarimasen disease**' is highly contagious! Encourage them to say '*I don't know*' or '*I don't understand*'. They are speaking English.

6) Using And Adapting Dialogues/ Monologues

**I will use the term 'dialogues' to refer also to monologues, etc.

Dialogues can be useful for practicing many skills. Two main contrasting ways of using dialogues are '**reading for meaning**' (students should understand what the dialogue was about) and '**reading for translation**' (students should know what each word OR the key words mean). Try to use both skills if possible in the same dialogue.

Dialogues can be culturally specific (usually to Japan or America). They can be too difficult or too easy. Sometimes they can be just down right daft! (e.g. 'Ohio' dialogue attached)

Write your own, but be careful! They can still be too easy or hard or irrelevant. Work with the JTE. It may be easier to include the key vocabulary and let students add less relevant words, especially with new vocabulary.

Pronunciations differ. Dialogues allow students to hear words in a natural flow of conversation with more natural pronunciation. (See attached *Guardian Weekly* newspaper article)

Listening for meaning is important but students also need to know what words they are hearing as sometimes this can be confusing.

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Test

Listen and fill in the blanks with what you hear. What is the correct word(s)?

- Not _____
- Is _____ wrong with you?
- Don't _____?
- _____ a good idea.
- Have you read this _____?
- How _____ you?
- _____ would you like?

Tips:

- 📖 Read dialogues once clearly and at a reasonable speed (slightly slower than normal).
- 📖 Check students' written work and ask '*Who wants to hear one more time?*' and gesture putting your hand up. If at least one student puts their hand up or says 'yes', read it again.
- 📖 Give them confidence to admit difficulties.
- 📖 Second reading should be a little quicker unless students are struggling, then key words should be emphasised.
- 📖 Give students a written copy of dialogues with key or useful vocabulary.

Students will struggle with words and phrases such as these. This is how it sounds in my pronunciation. In yours it could be different.

Phrase:

- Not at all
- Is anything wrong with you?
- Don't you?
- That's a good idea.
- Have you read this book?
- How are you?
- What would you like?

Sounds like:

- (no ta tall)
- (I zanythin ron wi thyu)
- (don chew)
- (tha sa goo didea)
- (ha vyu re thi spuk)
- (howr you)
- (wha wu chew like)

** Additional question 'Chicago is in the state of -

a) Kentucky b) Ohio c) somewhere else d) I don't know/ care – how is this dialogue useful?')

Different Activities Using Dialogues:

- ☎ Cloze activity - 'fill in the blanks'. Students listen to a dialogue and fill in the missing words
- ☎ Advanced cloze activity – students have statements about the dialogues with words missing and they must fill in the blanks. The wording in these statements is slightly different to the dialogue
- ☎ 'Volunteers' read the dialogue with one teacher – choose those with a clear voice
- ☎ True or false statements on the dialogue – answers can be explicit or implied by the text. (Around 5 statements)
- ☎ Reverse the above. Students have statements written down and teachers read a dialogue. Students write T or F next to the statements
- ☎ Questions on the dialogue – answers can be explicit or implicit. (Around 5 questions)
- ☎ Students have a list of key words or phrases and listen to a dialogue containing some of them. They must circle only the words/ phrases they hear.
- ☎ Students have a dialogue. Teachers read out key words/ phrases, students need to state in which line it appears (put line numbers down the side if using home-made dialogue – 1, 5, 10, 15...). All students should then highlight this phrase and teacher should check understanding if needed
- ☎ Whole class role play – read with the teachers / after the teachers / half and half / boys v girls / switch roles – who is the best?
- ☎ Pair-work role play – students practice reading the text with a partner, switching so they each play both roles
- ☎ Students change key words / phrases in the dialogue to their own choices (from a word bank if necessary), or just generally adapt the dialogue to make it longer / more interesting/ funny
- ☎ Students practice the dialogue pretending to be a different person. Put pictures of famous people around the classroom (who students will know!) with their name attached. If possible, students should act in character with their new identity
- ☎ 3-5 'volunteer' pairs read out their adapted dialogue to the whole class – standing at the front is best, and if you can get them to act...!
- ☎ Other students can be given a table. They should listen to the changes other students have made to a dialogue and complete it. (e.g. ordering food, shopping, self introduction, speaking to someone on the telephone)

General Warmups Ups:

Activity	Why?	Skills used
'Food Relay Race'	For you and the students to get an idea of the amount of vocabulary they already know on a given subject	Reading, writing, listening, doing
'Stand-up, Sit-down'	To check their listening skills	Writing, reading, listening, doing, speaking (some)
'Runaround'	To check their listening skills and basic vocabulary	Listening, observation, doing, comprehension
'Which Way?'	To get an idea of the amount of directional vocabulary they know	Listening, comprehension, doing
'School Subjects Scramble'	Practicing and reviewing vocabulary already taught	Doing, reading, speaking, team work, observation, comprehension
'Match the Terms'	To check vocabulary knowledge and/or to review vocabulary already taught	Doing, reading, team work, comprehension
'Tongue Twisters'	To practice pronunciation of difficult words/sounds, including intonation	Doing, reading, listening, speaking
'Funny Dialogue'	To introduce new vocabulary/ a new topic	Listening, comprehension
'Chorus Reading'	To practice pronunciation of difficult and/or new words, including intonation	Listening, doing, reading, team work
'Bingo'	To review vocabulary already taught. To associate vocabulary with concepts/images rather than translating	Writing, observation, comprehension
'Where is my...?'	To check the amount of vocabulary already known. To introduce extra vocabulary	Reading, listening, doing, observation

Using Last Lesson's Work:

Activity	Why?	Skills used
'Who/What is it?'	To test students' listening skills. To check they have learnt key vocabulary used in previous lesson To get an idea of their writing levels	Writing, speaking (some), listening, comprehension
'Which one is it?'	As above	Writing, speaking (some), listening, observation, comprehension
'Where do you live?'	To get an idea of students' writing levels To check they have learnt vocabulary previously taught To review vocabulary previously taught	Writing, observation, doing, speaking (some), comprehension
'Complete the dialogue'	To check understanding of basic vocabulary	Reading, writing, listening (to check answers), speaking (some), comprehension
'Wanted'	To check they have learnt vocabulary previously taught To review vocabulary previously taught	Writing, artistic, speaking (some), comprehension