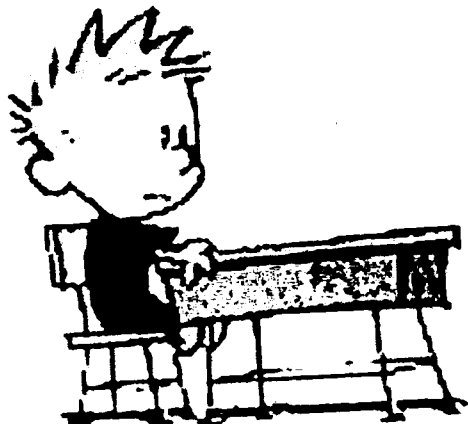


Elementary

School

Activities



Mid-year Conference 2006

Elementary School Activities

Presented by Christine Cheng and Hiromi Tokairin



Red Light! Yellow Light! Green Light!

Skills: comprehending "stop," "go," and "be careful;" associating correct actions with traffic signals; listening comprehension

Language used: go; stop; be careful.

Preparation: cut a red, yellow, and green circle out of heavy paper.

Game: choose one student to be the traffic light and another to be the traffic cop (or highway patrol). All other students are cars. The traffic light holds up a circle and calls out "Stop!", "Be careful!", or "Go!" depending on the color of the circle s/he chooses. The traffic cop must watch the light and the cars. When the light is green and the traffic light has called, "Go!" students may run around freely. On yellow, students may move but at risk of getting tagged by the cop. When the light turns red, everyone must freeze. If the cop detects any movement on red, the player is out.

After students have become familiar with the oral commands, the traffic light may discard the colored circles and simply call words. Students must then listen carefully to ensure that they are following directions.

Photographic Memory

Vocabulary Objective: to review and remember vocabulary.

Game Objective: to recall items or pictures seen.

Preparation: place a variety of small items or flashcards face down on a table. Cover these with a cloth or towel until playing begins.

Game: uncover the objects and allow the players a set amount of time (1-3 minutes, depending on students' ages) to memorize them. Players may not make any notes about the contents. At the end of the time, objects are removed or recovered. Students are divided into two teams. Teams form two separate lines. The student in the front of the first line tries to recall an item s/he saw. For recall, one point is awarded. If the student can also use the item in a sentence, a second point is awarded. The student then goes to the back of the line. The student at the front of the second line repeats the process. If a student cannot remember an item, he or she goes to the back of the line and no points are awarded.

Memory

There are 2 teams and around 16 flashcards on the floor. You call out one of the words that are on the floor. The student from one team must touch that card with their foot. You then

call out a new word to which student #2 on the same team must then touch the previous word first, then the new word with their foot. This continues until the team makes a mistake. The other team then gets a chance to beat the number of cards that Team One remembered.

Two Lines

This is a good game to use after drilling flashcards. Have the students form two lines facing the teacher. The first students in each line are the players. Show a flashcard and the first student to correctly name it is the winner. These two students then go to the back of their respective lines and you repeat the process with the next two students. If both students say the name of the card together, they continue their turn until there is a winner or they have had three turns. Then it's the next person's turn. This three turn limit saves the other students from getting bored while waiting for their turn.

It's good to have lines of unequal number so that on progressive rounds, the students are playing with different people. This way, you don't have to worry about pairing slower students with quicker ones.

The Letter Hunt

Objective: correctly identify initial consonant sounds.

Materials needed: collection of flashcards or small objects

Game: have students form a circle. Place flashcards or objects outside the circle. Teach the following song to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell":

We're looking for a/an [name of letter],

We're looking for a/an [name of letter],

[Sing the sound of the letter to the tune of "Heigh, ho, the Derry Oh!"]

We're looking for a/an [name of letter].

After each verse, ask a student to find an object or picture beginning with that sound and place it in the center of the circle. Continue until all objects or pictures have been used.

Note: you might also use this song to teach vowel sounds, final consonant sounds, or blends. For added variety, you might give each student a flashcard instead of placing cards or objects outside circle. When a student's sound is sung, s/he steps into the circle.

Blind Postman

Language Objective: review of geographic locations and modes of travel.

Game Objective: a blindfolded player tries to sit in an empty seat while two or more players are changing places.

Preparation: place chairs that are equal to the number of students, minus one, in a circle.

(For example, if twelve students are present, you should place eleven chairs in a circle.)

Assign each student a name. You may name students after cities, states or provinces, countries, or specific locations [bank, grocer, hospital, bookstore, etc.]. All names, however, should come from the **SAME** category.

Game: choose one student to be the postmaster. The postmaster is blindfolded, led to the middle of the circle, and spun around a couple of times so that s/he is somewhat disoriented. The postmaster then announces that a letter has been sent between two locations. For instance, "A letter is going from Japan to China." Players bearing the aforementioned names must then switch places while the postman attempts to steal one of their seats. If the students called upon reach their seats, the postman must announce another letter. If, however, the postman manages to steal a seat, the player without a seat becomes the new postman.

Variation: the postman may also say how the letter is to travel, thus indicating how students must move. (The postman must use the same mode of travel.) Suggestions include the following:

- By air--Students move quickly.
- By train--Students march at a steady pace.
- By water--Students crawl slowly.
- By foot--Students walk normally.
- By horse--Students gallop like horses.
- By bicycle--Students skip.
- By unicycle--Students hop on one foot.

Commanding Start (Sendai Education Seminar, Nov. 11, 2005)

Simply greet the class with commands. "Hello, stand up, sit down, drink, eat, jump..." Each command is followed by an action. The students repeat the word after the teacher and do the action. Vary this warm up by doing only the action or only saying the command and having the students do both. At every class, you can begin by introducing new verbs and actions,

such as, shout, clap, walk, dig, rest, etc.

Hop! Jump! Turn!

Objectives: demonstrate an understanding of action words; express meaning through mime; practice memory and aural comprehension skills.

Procedure: teach action words through pictures and mime, or Commanding Start.

Here's an example list:

- walk, sit, play
- run, read, write
- jump, point, sing
- turn, stand, look
- talk, smile, climb
- eat, drink, cry
- sleep, listen, open

After students have learned these words, compile a list of twenty to thirty action words which are relevant to the ability and ages of your students. This list might include any verb that can easily be acted out: wave, sneeze, cough, rub, sigh, wink, gulp, shout, clap, snap, hum, bend, etc.

Teach students to respond to each word on your list with a specific action. For example, when you say "Clap," have students respond by clapping. As you ask students to respond, you can individualize for each student by giving the easier words to new students.

When students can respond correctly to most of the words, play this game with them:

1. Have students sit around a table or in a semi-circle on chairs.
2. Call out a series of actions for the first student to your left, such as, "Jump, eat, snap."
3. The first student must respond without talking and complete the three actions in the correct order.
4. If the first student is unable to do this, the turn passes around the circle until a student can complete the actions correctly. The clues are not repeated, however.

5. This requires students to work on memory and aural comprehension skills. They must all listen when you are giving the clue to the first student. When a student responds correctly, you go back to the second student in the circle.

6. If you want to make it a competition, give a point to the student who responds correctly. This can become your assessment of how much your students learned.

Be a Weather Reporter!

Lesson Topic: learning weather expressions

Content Concepts and Skills:

1. Basic weather expressions: it's cloudy today; it's a rainy day; it's a windy day; it's sunny today; it's snowing; it's a snowy day; there's a thunderstorm today; there's thunder and lightning today.
2. Building sentences on the basic weather expression.
3. Relating language to pictures/symbols

Introduce students to basic weather terms by using the Weather Turtle (last page). Each student is given a copy of the turtle. The vocabulary taught can be geared to the age and language ability of your students. For example, to beginning kindergarten students, teach "It's snowing" instead of "it's a snowy day."

- Make a copy of the weather icons on the left hand side of the Weather Turtle page. Use them as flashcards or to play as a concentration game.
- Have students color the turtle. They should then cut the turtle out. Fold it lengthwise and make two slits on the white lines. Be sure that students do not cut out the entire black square.
- Have students cut out the weather icons in a strip. Thread the strip through the slits so that the black square is covered.
- Student should pull the strip through the turtle to demonstrate your sentences. If you say, "It is a windy day," students will show the wind icon. Have them ask one another what kind of day it is. You can expand on the weather expressions by having students add how that makes them feel. "I'm happy because it's a snowy day."
- Expand the language further by asking, "It's a snowy day today. What will you do? What will you wear?"

Find the Card

This is a good game to use when you have just introduced new vocabulary. At the end of a drilling session, start to casually throw the cards around on the floor. Do not allow the students to touch the cards. When all the cards are on the floor, point to a student and say the name of a card. The student then has to find the card, bring it to you, say what the card is and sit down. You throw the card back on the floor, in a different place than it originally was. Point to another student and say the name of a different card and so on. After a couple of rounds with the teacher dictating students and cards, turn it over to the students. Let them choose the next student and the card. With this game you have to set very short time limits. In the beginning, while you are controlling the game you can allow longer time limits. But when you turn the game over to the students, the time limits should be very short.

Shopping

You'll need about 10 flashcards of things that can be purchased at a department store/supermarket. Show the class the flashcards and have them pronounce the words.

Choose one person to go shopping with you. This student must say "goodbye" to the rest of the class, whereupon they ask in unison, "Where are you going?" The student replies, "I'm going shopping at _____ (the name of your local store)."

Now bring the student outside the classroom door. The student must pick one flashcard and put it behind his/her back. Upon returning, the class asks the student, "What did you buy?" and the student says, "Guess!" Students then raise their hand and the shopper student chooses one, who must use one of the vocabulary words in guessing. When a correct answer is given, that student becomes the next shopper.

The Clapping Game (Sendai Education Seminar, May 12, 2005)

Take the student (two or more if it's a team contest) and make them wait in the hall. While they are waiting in the hall, select an object or a flashcard (scatter flashcards of the vocabulary that the students have studied while hiding some), one object for each team. The student(s) then return to the room and try to find their object by listening to the claps of their team. The team claps faster the closer they get to the object. After a few minutes, when you say stop, or when the students have discovered their objects, get the student to ask, "Is it a _____?", and their team can reply with "Yes, it is" or "No, it isn't." To get more English involved, students can say "warmer" and "cooler" instead of clapping. Otherwise, this game can be used as a quick review/warm-up/cool down.

Mystery Words/Pictures/Objects (Sendai Education Seminar, Nov. 11, 2005)

Hang up 5 cards on the board face down. The students must find out what those five pictures/objects are. Give every student a card (which is a picture of one of the 5 objects on the board). They must have an exchange with another student (practice current sentences, i.e., I like ****, greetings, etc.) in order to identify an object. After the exchange, they janken and the loser must show the other person their card. They gradually find out what five cards are on the board. When they think they know all five, they approach the teacher and whisper the answers.

Duck, Duck Goose

Have students sit in a circle. After reviewing the chosen set of flashcards, place them in a pile in the center of the circle. Explain that the top card is the "magic" word. Have one student walking around the outside of the circle saying one word from the flashcards while touching each student's head. If the level is low, determine that word ahead of time. When the "magic" word is said, the student whose head is touched at that time must stand up and chase the student who touched them around the circle. The first one to sit in that spot remains seated and chooses the next "magic" word. The student standing begins again: "apple...apple..."

Easy Hard

This game is good to review vocabulary that you have just flash carded. It's especially good for emphasizing words the class is having trouble with.

You need at least 20 cards to play which you divide into 2 piles face down: an Easy and a Hard pile. Draw a race track on the board of about 30 squares in length to the end and divide the class into two teams. Pick a student and ask if they would like an easy or a hard card, also ask how many points they would like to wager on knowing the answer:

Easy 1-3 and Hard 4-6.

Once this is done, show them the card which they must say. If they are correct move their team forward the amount of points bet. If wrong, move their team back that many points.

Have the whole class repeat the cards that the students didn't know.

Peanut Relay (Sendai Education Seminar, May 12, 2005)

Each team stands at the same distance from a box that has a pile of word cards next to it. The children take turns to pick up a peanut with chopsticks, race to the box, put the peanut

in, turn over the top card from the pile and say what it is. The student then races back to their team and the next student does the same thing. *You can also use pencils, crayons, or pens instead of peanuts.*

Musical Chairs

The aim of this game is to reinforce any new words just taught: colors, etc. Put as many chairs as the number of students, and have them put pictures of the objects, or whatever you are studying on their own chair. Then put the music on. They will have to run around the chairs until you suddenly stop the music, and they have to go to their chair and take the picture referring to the item you said.

Race to the Board

On the board, put up several pictures of the vocabulary that you are teaching. The students are divided into two teams. One person from each team comes up and stands about 3 feet away from the board. Call out the word in English and the first one to the picture wins a point for his or her team.

Newspaper Twister

This is a game to review numbers and teach or review Left, Right, Hand and Foot.

Have the students make pairs. Each pair receives one sheet of newspaper and one marker. The students make their game board by drawing a grid of 8 squares on the paper and numbering the squares 1 to 8. The teacher calls out the commands at random, and the students take turns placing their hand or foot on the appropriate number.

Slap! #1

This is a game to practice vocabulary. Make cards on the vocabulary your students are studying. There needs to be 2-4 copies of each card. The teacher chooses three vocabulary words. All cards are passed out to each student. The game progresses by each student placing a card in the pile. When the student sees the word chosen (for example, coke, juice, and cocoa, are the words chosen), s/he slaps the card as fast as s/he can. The first person to slap the card gets the whole pile of cards. When one player has the most cards, the game is over.

Variation: when a student slaps the card, s/he has to make a sentence or they cannot receive the pile of cards.

Slap #2, a.k.a., Karuta: a game that probably everyone already knows!

Vocabulary building/listening exercise

Students get into small groups of 6 or less and make a circle. You'll need at least one set of cards for each group.

Lay out the cards in the middle of the groups. The teacher will then call out a card and the students will race to slap the card. The first person to slap the card gets the card and the game continues.

Teachers can call out just a vocabulary word, "a book" or they can incorporate the word into a sentence, "I went to the store and bought *a book*."

I generally try to trick them by saying something that isn't there and seeing who slaps a card anyway. People slapping a card by mistake must skip one round.

Basketball

Buy a small hoop and ball (or make a hoop out of a cardboard box and wire coat hangers).

Use this for drill and repetition type games, such as flashcard drills.

You can have the students make the flashcards.

Here's how to play: divide into two teams. Let them pick team names.

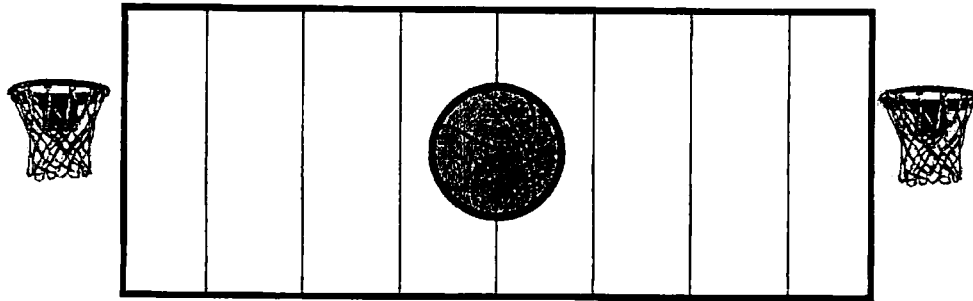
Tape three lines on the floor, each one further back -- one point line, two point line, three point line.

One student from each team stands before you. Count to three and flip the card. The first student to identify it gets a shot from their choice of lines. If both students respond at the same time, they both get a shot.

Basketball Madness (Sendai Education Seminar, May 12, 2005)

Draw a basketball court on the board, similar to the image on the next page. When a student on a team answers a question correctly, they can move the ball (paper ball with magnet) forward one line towards the other team's net. The same team continues answering questions until they make a mistake, or shoot a ball into the basket, and then it's the other team's turn. When a team reaches the final line before the basket, the student who has just

finished answering the last question must come to the front of the class and try and throw a ball into the basket (using a ball and the garbage can).



Bang! Bang!

Divide the group into two teams. Explain that they are cowboys and they are involved in a duel. One student from each team comes to the front. Get them to pretend to draw their pistols. Say "how do you say..." and a word in their mother tongue. The first student to give the answer and then "Bang! Bang!" pretending to shoot his opponent, is the winner. He remains standing and the other one sits down. You may give 1 point for the right answer and 5 extra points if they manage to "kill" 4 opponents in a row.

Note: Instead of saying the word in the students' mother tongue, you could use a picture instead.

Gunslingers (Sendai Education Seminar, May 12, 2005)

The students stand in a big circle, holding their flashcards in front of them. The teacher says a word and the student who has that card crouches down. The students to either side of the crouching student must face each other and say the word that the other person has. The student who says the other student's flashcard word first wins. The loser could then sit out if this were a contest.

I recommend making copies of a picture (zombies?) to hand out to the losers so that they can amuse themselves with coloring while the other students are still playing.

Battle Ships - A Vocabulary Game

Preparation: divide the students into groups of four or five. Then ask the students to make a name for their ships.

Ask them to choose the Captain and the Shooter. The captain's duty is to memorize her ship's name, so that she can reply if somebody calls her ship's name. The shooter's duty is to memorize the names of the ships of 'their enemies', so that he can shoot them by calling their ship's name.

Game: arrange all the captains in a circle. The ships' crews must line up behind their captains. The shooter is the last crew member in line.

The teacher must then decide the category. The words in the category will be used to defend their ships from attacks. Every student (except the shooters) must find their own words. The category can be, for example, "Animals." Give the students 1-2 minutes to think of as many possible words as they can.

Start the game by calling a ship's name. For example, the ship's name is "THE ONIGIRI." The captain of THE ONIGIRI must reply with a word from the Animals category. For example, she says "TIGER" followed by her crew behind her one by one, "COW;" "SHEEP" until it is the shooter's turn and he calls out the name of another ship and the captain of the ship called must reply and her crew must do the same thing. No word can be repeated during a single round.

If the captain is late to reply (more than 2 seconds) or her crew cannot say the words or a word is repeated or the shooter shoots the wrong ship (his own ship or the ship that has already been sunk); the ship is sunk and the crew members can join the crew of another ship.

The teacher can change the category for the next round.

In the last round, there will be two big groups battling to be the winner.

What's Your Name?

One student sits in the front of the classroom with his back to the other students. The teacher then points to students in the class and asks, "What's your name?" The student indicated must respond, "My name is _____" with either her own name or the name of someone else in the class. The student in the front cannot see who is speaking. The teacher says to him, "Is it _____?" and he must say "Yes, it is" or "No, it isn't". If the student in front is correct, he gets to stay there, but if he's mistaken, he changes place with the student who fooled him.

To make the game more interesting, the students are encouraged to disguise their voices.

You can do this with beginners at the beginning of the year and at the end of the class, and for not more than 5 to 10 minutes.

Blind Date (Sendai Education Seminar, May 12, 2005)

Choose a student/students to be blindfolded. Next, choose a student/students to be the dates. The blindfolded students must ask their dates questions (sentences learned in class). After a short period, they are allowed to guess who their blind date is.

Good Morning Balls

1. You have three different colored balls (they should be very lightweight, small balls).
2. Get the class to make a circle.
3. Then give three people a ball.
 - Red Ball - Good Morning
 - Green Ball- How are you?
 - Blue Ball - Fine thank you and you?
4. The class members pass or gently throw the balls and the person who receives them says the meaning of the balls.

Variation (Sendai Education Seminar, Nov. 11, 2005): **Greeting Ball** warm-up

The students sit in a circle. They have a ball (or soft toy) which they throw to someone else while having a conversation with that person. Slowly add more and more balls.

A: Hello (name) B: Hello (name)

A: How are you? B: I'm sleepy

A: Here you are (*passes ball*) B: Thank you

Whispering Game

Divide the class into two teams. Line up the players. If there are an odd number of players, then one can be the teacher's "helper." The teacher or her helper whispers a message to the first person of both group A and group B. The game only starts when both players know the message. Then each player whispers the message to the next player in his group successively until the last player gets the message. The team which can correctly repeat the message first receives a point. Start the game over with the second student of each group becoming the first ones in line.

The Line Jumping Game

Objective: to practice word differentiation or review vocabulary

Students line up in a single file line.

The teacher defines the teacher's right side as "animals" and the left side as "numbers."

The teacher calls out "penguin," and the students all jump to the teacher's right and then jump back into line.

The teacher calls out "53," and the students all jump to the left side and then jump back into line.

The teacher should do the exercise with the students and list various items within the category as a warm-up. You can then try to trick the students by jumping to the wrong side yourself. This will get the students listening and thinking instead of just following you. Once they have gotten a little better, start the game.

You can try having 2 or 3 rounds where you try to trick the students once each round. If they aren't fooled by you jumping to the wrong side, they win.

The word groups can be changed to more complicated language later on, nouns-adjectives, nouns-verbs, things you do inside-things you do outside...

Ognib

This is Bingo in reverse. Students choose five pictures on the Bingo sheet (they could either have the same sheet or start with a blank Bingo sheet and draw in their own pictures) and circle/place chips on them. If one of the students' choices comes up, they can erase their mark or remove their marker. When all have been removed, the student wins and shouts, "OGNIB!"

For One-on-One or Pair Work:

One Student (A) hides her bingo card from her partner's (B) sight. 'A' can call out one item and 'B' gets to mark his card. Then 'B' calls out any item and 'A' gets to mark her card. Continue this until one person gets bingo. The first person to get bingo wins.

This can be done as a class activity and see how many wins each student can get during the allotted game time.

The Exercise Game: a TPR (Total Physical Response) activity

Start off stretching. Give commands like: put your feet together, apart, together, apart, together, and touch your toes, stretch and reach for the ceiling, put you hands on your hips and look up, look down, look right, look left...

After 2 minutes of stretching have been done, we're ready for some practice. Start calling out actions and do them along with the students: clap, jump, turn around, sit down, stand up,

run... Once they've got the hang of it and have finished the practice, we start the game. You can try to trick them by saying one thing and doing another. Those that aren't fooled, win.

Creating long lists of actions for them to listen to and then do, gets them speaking. Listen: stand up, sit down, clap 3 times, jump 2 times, turn around, fall down. GO! Move: the students will say the words as they do the actions. Then add two more to the list until they can just barely remember and then make that the final round.

More language: squat, become small, become bigger, bigger, bigger, bigger, smaller, smaller... You can also tell stories and have the students act out the scenario with you.

Timed Races

Vocabulary review, question and answer practice, fluency exercises

Use small cards for relay races. Most ESL teachers are familiar with these races, where students pass something asking questions and answering and trying to get the ball or whatever around and be the first to finish.

Time them. Set a minimum time goal for the first round (practice). If teams can complete the circuit in that time, they win round one. Each team completes the circuit and they have a record for how fast they did it. OK! Now let's try to improve on that time (fluency). Each time they do it, they will get better and they don't have to worry about Yuki's team that always finishes first. They only have to beat their own time to win.

It can be as simple as "what's this?" "It's a fox." / "What's he doing?" "He's watching TV." "What's that?" "It's a carrot." "Do you like carrots?" "No, I don't." "What's your favorite vegetable?" "I like tomatoes."

For kindergarten or lower, you can use not only simpler words, but also use an egg-timer and tell them to see how many rounds they can do in 1 minute.

Time Bomb (Sendai Education Seminar, May 12, 2005)

Prepare a time bomb by putting a timer into a box. The students pass around the box while practicing dialogue. The dialogue moves around the circle or classroom desks (lower levels could pass the object saying, "Here you are," "Thank you very much," while higher levels could do longer greetings) until the timer (bomb) goes off and the student holding the box must then perform a task (have a dialogue with you or draw from a stack of flashcards to identify an object).

Try Remembering This

Learning vocabulary or short phrases, a drilling game

This is a game to play to help students learn vocabulary. Run through the vocabulary as usual with flash cards and drills. Then, show them 6-7 cards consecutively, laying them face down on the table as you all say them. Then pick up the stack and ask the students, "OK. What was the first card?" The first person/team who can tell you the vocabulary word/phrase/sentence wins the card, and then ask them for the next card. Random guessing is good but stop them at 3 or 4 and then repeat using the same cards they couldn't remember plus however many more to get you back up to the same number as before.

Slam (also known as River Crossing)

Vocabulary review, sentence practice or fluency exercises

Prepare flashcards of the vocabulary. Lay the cards out (either on the floor or on tables) in a single line or semicircle. Have students line up in 2 teams at either end of the line or semicircle. One person from each team begins by saying the vocabulary or phrase associated with the first flash card and then the next and so on until the two teams meet somewhere in the middle.

Then the 2 players janken and the winner advances while the loser returns to the back of his line. Once the loser has returned, the next person from the losing team starts with the first card. When the 2 players meet, they, again, janken and the game continues like so.

The goal of the game is to reach the end of the line and get one point for your team. At the end of the game, the team with the most points wins.

You can play this game at least once every 4 classes and the students are always excited. This is good for practicing new vocabulary and short sentences (i.e. He has a ball.)

Mingle

By playing this game, the students get to practice any conversation that you happen to be studying, for example, "How are you?", "How old are you?", "What are you doing?" etc.

1. Get rid of any tables and chairs and get the students together in one big group.
2. While repeating, "Mingle, mingle, mingle," the students move around, mingling with each other.

3. When the teacher says "Stop!" the students make pairs with the person nearest to them and they practice today's conversation. e.g. "What's your name?" "My name's Atsuki. What's your name?" "My name's Yasu. Nice to meet you!"

4. Repeat from 2.

Instead of just today's conversation, after saying "Stop!" you can shout out any phrase you'd like to practice.

You can also make groups with this game. You do the mingle chant, then shout out a number and the students have to get into groups of this number. E.g. you say "4" and the students get into groups of 4 and sit down. You can also have them ask you a question, such as "How old are you?" or "What time is it?", you answer "I'm 6 years old" or "It's 9 o'clock" and the students get into groups of the stated number.

Personal Fruit Basket (Sendai Education Seminar, Nov. 11, 2005)

It's the Fruit basket game but with the students using personal information. The student in the middle will say something about themselves, for example, "I like green peppers." All the students who like green peppers must change seats. If no one moves, then the student changes their sentence to "I don't like green peppers" to get students moving.

I Like Everything!

Target English: "I like...+ nouns" or any conversation.

The easiest way to do it is to practice some vocabulary and a question. Let's try "Do you like...?"

1. Teach "Do you like...?" and four bits of vocabulary (e.g. ice cream, chocolate, pizza, french fries or eating, singing, dancing, swimming)

2. Tell the students to stand up



3. Get out a stop watch and as you say "Go!" start the watch.

4. The students pair up. They say the following conversation

A: "Hello"

B: "Hello"

A: "Do you like ice cream?"
B: "Yes, I do! Do you like pizza?"
A: "No, I don't!"
B: "Thank you"
A: "Goodbye"

5. They change partners and repeat the conversation. BUT this time they ask about a different food.
6. They find another partner. And again, ask with a different food.
7. Repeat again and again until they have used all 4 questions.
8. They sit down
9. When the last student sits down, the teacher stops the stopwatch.

You can teach 4 or 5 words of vocabulary, do the game, teach another 4 or 5 words and do the game again. The students see if they can beat their best time (it doesn't work without the stop watch).

You can also use it for conversation, such as "How are you?" or "Where's the...?" Teach them four replies to the question e.g. I'm hungry, I'm OK, I'm happy, I'm tired. When they play the game, the first time they reply "I'm OK", the second time "I'm happy" etc. etc.

The Lines Quiz

1. Split the class into two groups. One lines up on the left side, one on the right.
2. You ask the front student in each group a question.
3. The first one to answer correctly gets to sit down. The other goes to the back of his/her team.
4. The winning team is the first team to sit down.

Make sure the questions come fast. Examples include "What's your name?" "How old are you" "What's this?" "What color is this?" etc.

This game gets the students used to hearing questions and responding straight away, without all the customary "errr, eh" type pauses. It also helps the students distinguish between "How are you?" and "How old are you?" and is a great way to pick up which themes need reviewing and which ones are OK.

If you find out some students can't take the pressure of being the only student standing, you can time each round (say for 2 minutes) and count how many students are sitting down.

Island Hopping

This is a review game that can either be played on the floor with big A4 cards or across the desk with smaller cards.

The game can be played with any number of players, from 2 to 200 - if you have enough cards.

1. Give each player a pile of picture cards. They can be different cards, but the amount of cards should be the same for each person.
2. The teacher says "go!"
3. The students pick up the top card of their pile of cards.
4. They shout out the word on the card. Or for a more challenging version, they say or make up a sentence that features that word.
5. They put the card on the floor and walk onto it.
6. Repeat from 3.
7. Each card has to touch the edge of the previous card.
8. The first student to reach the other side of the classroom wins.

For this version, you need to prepare lots of A4 cards.

For the desktop version, you can print out smaller cards and they have to race each other to the edge of the desk.

Variation (Sendai Education Seminar, Nov. 11, 2005): there are 3 students per team. Each student starts with 3 flashcards. The first student puts a card down, and as they do, they'll say the word or use it in a sentence, ex. "I like ****." They then stand on it. Then, they place the next card down, stand on it, and say that card's word or sentence (they must also pick up the old card). Gradually, they are moving forward to the next student. Once they get to that student, they hand that student their 3 cards and that student combines it with their own 3 cards. That student does the same advancing towards the third (and last) student who also holds 3 cards. The second student will hand the third student their 6 cards, combining for a total of 9 cards. That student must advance quickly, placing, standing, saying, and picking up, all the while moving towards the object of all the teams' desires (a finish line?).

Clap Your Hands

Counting Practice -

Students make groups (over 5 members in each group)

The student who goes first starts to count from 1

The students who are supposed to say 3 or 7 have to clap their hands. If s/he makes a mistake (hesitates or forgets), s/he is out.

Guess the Words

Making use of the vocabulary that the students have accumulated -

One student from the class volunteers to see the teacher

The teacher then shows the volunteer a card with a picture

Do not reveal the card to anyone else but the volunteer!

The volunteer gives the class hints about the picture.

For example - Card: apple

Hints: red, Aomori, fruit

Categories

Vocabulary practice -

All the students make a circle. The student to go first calls out a category. The next student (2) calls out a word that belongs under that category. Then, student 3 repeats what student 2 said, then calls out their own word, relevant to the category. This continues around the circle until someone gets stuck (i.e. is at a loss for words), a word is repeated, or makes a mistake.

Some examples of categories include Vegetables, Fruit, Colors, Food, Animals, Sweets, Insects, Occupations, Stationary, or Things found in the Living Room.

Word Sumo (Sendai Education Seminar, Nov. 11, 2005)

Students make a big circle (the ring) with two students in the middle. The two students in the middle are the sumo wrestlers. The wrestlers each get a flashcard taped to their back. Then, they face each other and the game begins. The objective is for a wrestler to say what flashcard the other player has on their back first.



Final words:

"It's important that the students are not just learning vocabulary, but are learning the questions and answers together." Genki English

Also, try to do elementary school activities that shift the focus from the teacher to the students.

Numbers flashcards: www.englishraven.com/flashcardsnumbers.html

Numbers flashcards: www.abcteach.com/directory/basics/flashcards/number_flashcards/

Free clipart: tell.fll.purdue.edu/JapanProj//FLClipart/

Action flashcards (using the free clipart): www.englishraven.com/flashcardsactions.html

An all-around awesome (flashcards, phonics, games) website: www.mes-english.com/

This Genki English website is great for finding more elementary school activities:

(Be sure to take a look at the Harry Potter and Gokiburi games!)

> www.genkienglish.net/games.htm

An example of an elementary school English curriculum:

> www.genkienglish.net/curriculum.htm

Here are other websites where I found some activities

> www.everythingsl.net/lessons/

> www.proteacher.com/070063.shtml

20 Lastly, check with either the Sendai City Board of Education or Ben Shearon for a sample curriculum for elementary school team teaching. It's called "English for Everyone!" This booklet contains many ideas for activities

What's the weather ?

