

busy teacher's top

300

ICE-BREAKERS, WARMERS & FILLERS

START YOUR
LESSON
ON THE RIGHT FOOT!

300 SHORT 5-MINUTE
ACTIVITIES THAT CAN BE USED
AS WARM UPS, FILLERS, COOL
DOWNS, & ICE-BREAKERS FOR
EVERY LEVEL!



FAST & EASY TO USE - YOU'LL WONDER HOW YOU EVER GOT ALONG WITHOUT THEM!

1 . NAME AS MANY...

This 'Name As Many ... as possible' activity works very well as a warmer to start a lesson - hand out the cards to the teams or individual students and have them compete (orally if used with Intermediate or Upper Intermediate, or using a dictionary with used with lower levels).

Example cards: **Name 5 body parts above the neck that have 3 letters, Name the continents in alphabetical order, Name as many languages as you can**, etc.

2 . SHOUT OUT

Ss shout out the words they know in English. Then they use them to make the longest sentence possible. Put them into groups and tell them to make a list of all the words they know in English. Then get the groups to write the words up on the board. In theory, the board should be covered by a mass of words. This should boost the students' confidence and leave your board pens dry.

3 . LEARNING NAMES

1. Draw on the board as many objects as the letters in your name. The first letter of the name of each object must be a letter in your name. Draw the objects at random order.
2. Have your students tell you the names of each object and write them on the board.
3. Then, tell them that they have to put the first letter of the name of each object in the correct order so as to come up with your name.
4. Finally, ask your students to do the same so that the rest of the class can guess their names.

4 . SIMILARITIES

This activity requires no preparation. The students must ask each other questions until they find three things that they have in common. They must be things that are not obvious. For example, they can't say 'we both have black hair'. It is easy to model the activity interviewing a student until you find three things that they have in common with you.

5 . PAIR INTERVIEW

Ss interview their partners, then introduce their partners to the class. "This is my friend, Jim Thomson, he lives in Dundee, etc...". Simple enough, but the variations are really fun. Have the students interview each other and explain to the class the following topics: **Their day, Their favorite book and magazine and why, Their favorite food, a memorable vacation**, etc...

6 . GOODBYE

Tell them to imagine that this is the last class period, and they should stand up and pretend that they are saying farewell. If the students seem reluctant, help them with a few useful phrases such as "**I'm going to miss you!**" or "**Promise me you'll stay in touch.**" Then have them mingle and say goodbye to at least three people.

7 . IMAGINE A PHOTO

To get students to share information about themselves, ask them to imagine that they have brought 4 of their favorite photos from home which represent events, people or places that are important to them for whatever reason. Students can then decide for themselves which information they want to relay to the rest of the class. The audience then has an opportunity to practice their questioning skills to find out more. You'll find you learn a great deal about who your students are and what is important to them - in a very short time!

8 . TRUE OR FALSE

The students think of three sentences, two are facts and one is a lie. One by one, students introduce themselves and say their three sentences. The rest of the class has to guess which one is a lie. (Go first, not only to provide an example.)

9 . THE DIMINISHING SENTENCE

Have your students add one word at a time to some basic sentence you write on the board, making the sentence as long as possible. Here's an example:

The fat and ugly sisters who tried to stop beautiful young Cinderella from meeting the rich and handsome Prince Charming who lived in the great golden palace were very unhappy when she married him and they lived happily ever after.

Then you erase one word at a time (delete the words randomly, not in the order they come in the sentence), and have students read out the full sentence to you. It will first seem easy to them, but wait until there are only a couple words left on the board! This is great practice for both their memory and pronunciation. (next class you could start with the one word that remained at the end of the previous class and try to reconstruct the whole paragraph. The students will have already worked so hard on the paragraph that this should be relatively easy!)

10 . SPELLCHECK

(Focus on pronunciation & spelling.)

Eye halve a spelling checker That came with my pea sea. Plane as day it shoes four my revue Miss steaks eye kin knot sea. Eye strike a key and type a word And weight four it two say Weather eye am wrong oar write It shoes me strait a weigh. As soon a a mist ache is maid It nose bee fore two long And eye can put the error rite Its rare lee ever wrong. Eye have run this poem threw it. I am shore your pleased two no, Its letter perfect awl the weigh I did a cheque, witch tolled me sew. (Focus on pronunciation & spelling.) Eye halve a spelling checker That came with my pea sea. Plane as day it shoes four my revue Miss steaks eye kin knot sea. Eye strike a key and type a word And weight four it two say Weather eye am wrong oar write It shoes me strait a weigh. As soon a a mist ache is maid It nose bee fore two long And eye can put the error rite Its rare lee ever wrong. Eye have run this poem threw it. I am shore your pleased two no, Its letter perfect awl the weigh I did a cheque, witch tolled me sew.

11 . BRAINSTORMING WORDS

Put the topic of the unit/topic to the board (**KITCHEN OBJECTS, UNCOUNTABLE NOUNS, ADJECTIVES TO DESCRIBE A PERSON, IRREGULAR PAST TENSES**, etc) and have Ss brainstorm what they know about the topic.

12 . INDIRECT (REPORTED) SPEECH

"My name's George and I like beer." Students and teacher do this activity together. Student A announces her name and what she likes (or where she lives, what she does, where she's been...). Student B reports this to the rest of the class (**She said she was X and that she liked X.**) and B then introduces himself. Student C reports student B's information and so on.

13 . PEOPLE BINGO

First of all using the same outline as you would a normal bingo sheet, fill in each block with questions. For example, **find someone who has a brother or a sister, find someone who can play the piano, find someone who is crazy about chocolate, someone who is a fan of Brad Pitt, etc.** You can base your questions on students levels. All students receive the bingo sheet and

they must go around the class and fill in the entire sheet with different people's names. It is a great way for students to ask each other questions.

14 . VERBAL CHARADES

Write nouns on slips of paper. Put the slips of paper in a hat and each student takes one. The student then reads the word on the slip of paper and has to tell the other students what it is without saying the word or using hand motions. The other students have to guess what the word is. For example if the word is horse the student might say "**it's an animal that you ride on**". You might want to add the rule that they cannot make descriptive noises (barking like a dog for the word dog kind of defeats the purpose!) A student can learn to talk around a word they don't know instead of always looking it up.

15 . TRIVIAL PURSUIT

End of term game. Teamwork – consultation. As well as general knowledge you can ask commonsense - trick questions to allow calculated answers – gives everyone a chance. **Which country is North of Galicia? What's Mr Blair's wife's name? What day is New Year's Eve? You sail West from Barcelona – where do you arrive? Open-ended questions: What time is it? How many days has September?**

16 . YES/NO TABOO

This activity works well for intermediate to advanced students. This activity encourages students to elaborate beyond simple yes / no answers. It also encourages them to get someone so engrossed in a conversation that they are caught off guard when they forget not to say the two "taboo" words. Can be played in pairs or in teams.

17 . DESCRIBE A PLACE PAIRWORK

Imagine you're describing your home to a blind person. You have to describe in (meticulous) detail everything about your house to your partner, s/he **DRAWS IT**. (Then it is the next person's turn). (TIP: It is useful to allow the speaker to see the listeners' pictures because it jolts him/her into realising east has been confused with west, right with left, etc. The drawing element is a nice personal touch.) Spin off: they can exchange pictures and write out their descriptions.)

18 . TREASURE HUNT

Around the school building. Write a sentence of about seven words with each word on a separate piece of paper. Leave the pieces of paper pinned to the walls in different parts of the school. On each piece of paper write instructions of where to find the next piece. Like this: **Go upstairs, turn right and look beside the fourth door on the left**. The students follow the instructions, making a note of the seven words that they find. They then put the words into the correct order. Feedback on what was discovered about the school.

19 . SHORT STORIES

Give one sentence from a short story to each student but not in the correct order. Each student then reads out their sentence in turn. By listening and understanding, the students have to put the sentences into the correct order and sit/stand beside the student who has the preceding sentence. When they have done this, they read out the complete story. **Yesterday a man was walking in the park when he saw a gorilla. He asked a policeman what he should do. The policeman said: "You should take the gorilla to the zoo". The next day the policeman was in the park when he saw the man again. He was still with the gorilla. "I thought I told you to take the gorilla to the zoo", he said. "I did", said the man. "He enjoyed it so much that today we're going to the cinema".**

20 . BODY PARTS

You will need: tape, paper, scissors. Begin by introducing all the body parts: Forehead to ankles, big toes to eyelashes, chin, cheeks, freckles, belly button, waist,... Next, get some of the kids to write the parts fairly large on paper then cut them out separately. Split them into rows with a mannequin for each row at the front of the class. The object is for each team member to run up and stick it on their mannequin until all the parts have been stuck. The winner is the fastest team but also the team that puts them in the correct places.

21 . HANGMAN VARIATION

Using a full sentence. Put the empty spaces of all words in the sentence on the blackboard. Divide the class into two or more teams, and explain that they have to first guess and later on deduce the words that make up the sentence. In turns, they can say individual letters, and get as many points as there are letters of that type in the whole sentence, or they can venture a guess at one complete word. If they get it right, the total number of letters in the word (even previously entered individual letters in that word) gives them the number of points they get for that turn. This not only practises spelling, as hangman does, but also syntax, tenses etc., as students will start speculating on what type of word can go in the empty spaces once they have some information to work with.

22 . RHUBARB! (WHAT ACTORS SAY WHEN THEY HAVE NO LINES)

This can be helpful for reading, speaking and pronunciation as well as making your students feel less nervous about making mistakes. Divide the class in two. They all have the same piece of text which should be something they are familiar with. One member of team 1 starts to read. When team 2 thinks they have made a mistake or pronounced something the wrong way they shout **rhubarb!** If they are correct team 2 scores a point and they take over reading, but if the reader on team 1 was correct then their team scores the point and continues with the next person in the group reading. They all get to read something and it turns into quite a fun competition.

23 . BARTER

Input: buying, selling and bargaining vocabulary. Scene: you are in the desert and have these items – 1 slip for each person - **10 PERSIAN CARPETS, 5 LITRES OF WATER, 2 CAMELS, 8 TEAPOTS WITH PACKETS OF TEA, 20 LITRES OF OIL, 10 RIFLES WITH AMMUNITION, 4 DESERT TENTS, 12 PACKETS OF HASHISH, 2 DESERT GUIDES, 5 COPIES OF THE KORAN, 6 LAND ROVERS, 3 WATER SUBSTITUTE TABLETS, 6 PACKETS OF DRIED FOOD**
Aim: to be the richest person in the desert? (Teacher acts as a linguistic policeman: not speaking in English – sit out for 1 minute.) (Teacher decides points allotted to the different items. At the end students calculate their points to find the winner.) (Variation: play this game in another scenario: jungle, mountains, desert island...)

24 . VOCAB SHOW: UP, UP, UP!

This is a vocabulary revision activity. The teacher chooses words to be revised. The class is divided into groups of 4. Each group chooses a secretary. The teacher starts by giving definitions to the words s/he wants to be revised. ie. **This is something which is used for cutting wood.** The groups try to find the word and the secretaries write “**axe**”. When the teachers tells them **Up,up,up**, secretaries have to raise their cards. Each correct word is 10 points, spelling mistake 5 points.

25 . PHRASAL VERB DICING

A dice and a dictionary (or list) of phrasal verbs with examples for each six students. Write

six verbs (e.g. **GO, COME, GET, TAKE, PUT, GIVE**) and six adverbial particles (e.g. **OFF, AWAY, OUT, UP, BACK, OVER**) in two separate columns on the board and number the items in each column from 1 to 6. If you use different verbs or particles, make sure that all 36 combinations give at least one meaningful phrasal verb (the students may not necessarily have met every combination before.) Each team takes it in turns to throw the dice - twice. This will produce random phrasal verbs (e.g. 2+1 in the above list gives **COME+OFF**). The team then has time to produce an unambiguous explanation of the phrasal verb (e.g. the wheel of the car came off because the nuts were loose). The other team may challenge it and provide a correct version. The teacher is the final arbiter of any disputes. (**TIP**: new examples for the same combinations are allowed. – this has students listen VERY carefully.)

26 . 3-PART SENTENCES

This game is a great way to get your students involved in practicing their grammar both out loud and on paper. You need three boxes (box tops, hats, or bins will work). The first should be labelled **Tense**, the second labelled **Pronouns** and the last labelled **Positive/Negative**. In Tense - have future, past, present on slips of paper. In Pronouns - I, you, he, she, they, we. In Positive/Negative you will have one with positive and the other with negative. Each student comes up to the front of the classroom and pulls out one slip of paper from each box. The teacher then calls out an infinitive verb and the student must say a sentence for the class using that verb with the Tense, Pronoun and Positive/Negative slips they pulled. (**TIP**: After each correct sentence is said aloud by a student – you can have all students write it down on a piece of paper to turn in at the end of class. This way, they are practising written and oral grammar.)

27 . DICTIONARY

Divide the class into 3 or 4 teams. Choose at random a page from a monolingual dictionary and tell the students the letter with which all the words begin. Start reading out the definition (or definitions) of each word. Students shout out the word they think is being defined. Examples: 1. C, a public carriage of various sizes and shapes. Original: Horse-drawn, modern: taxi (CAB) 2. P, a piece put on to mend a defect, a pad for the eye, an amendment for a faulty piece of software (PATCH) 3. E, to gain by labour, to acquire, to deserve. (EARN)

28 . THE DEFINITIONS GAME

The teacher cuts up paper, preferably waste paper, into little squares, writes an English word on the paper, folds it in half, and hands it to a student. The student must NOT say the word on the paper! That is very important! The student must communicate the definition to the class, and the class tries to guess the word. The student can use body language to try to convey the meaning, and obtain help from a friend sitting next to him/her if so desired. What are you doing? First player turns to next and mimes an action, say brushing their teeth. The person next to them asks “what are you doing” the first person says anything but brushing their teeth, say “I’m tying my shoelaces” that person now starts miming tying their shoelaces and the person next to them asks “what are you doing” they could say “I’m flying a kite” and then that person starts miming flying a kite then next person in the circle asks “what are you doing” and so on... Whispering. (V) This game is great for reviewing vocabulary. Place two sets of flashcards on the board. Draw a line on the board to separate team A from team B. Have each team form a row, straight from the board to the back of the room. (At this point you should have two rows of students facing the board.) The teacher should move to the back of the rows and whisper 3 or 4 of the flashcards into the back two students ears, at the same time. The student at the back must whisper these cards to the student in front of him/her IN THE ORDER HE/SHE HEARD THEM. That student must whisper the flashcards to the student in front him, and so on, until the words have travelled all the way to the front of the row. The student at the front must jump out of his or her seat and grab the mentioned flashcards and stick them to the whiteboard in the order heard. After that round is over, the students at the front of the class move to the seats at the back, and everyone else slides up a seat. This game is a lot of fun, but it will make your class a little hyper!

29 . WORD ASSOCIATIONS

This was a famous game show somewhere and it works with ESL students too: give 2 words, ie: “bread” and “baby”. They have to link the two words through a progression of word associations, so for example: **bread-food-drink-milk-baby** you can either determine the number of words used to link, or have a contest to see which pair can do it in the fewest steps.

30 . JUST DO IT!

This is fun way of recycling vocabulary and much more! Make a list of words, phrasal verbs, expressions, etc, that you have taught your students recently. Next to each word that you can glue to a card write **M for mime, S for speak, D for draw**. Explain the game to the class. Divide the class in two groups. One student from each group comes forward, you show the card and he/she goes quickly back to his/her group to mime, draw or speak and thus try to give the correct information so that the others can guess the word. You keep the score. Warning: students can become very competitive so don't let the activity go on too long. This is suitable for all levels and adaptable to grammar practice: prepositions (the group gets an extra point by giving the correct one in the context), word order (producing a correct sentence with the word/expression).

31 . HANGMAN

Hangman is one of the most requested games. Place on the board the number of blanks for one word (example “police officer”). Then, provide clues about the word such as appearance, duties, associated accessories, etc... This requires the students to know not only the word but also what it means. Works best with occupations, locations or animals.

32 . TO COFFEEPOT

Start explaining some verb to your students by giving examples of its use in sentences, only replacing the actual word with ‘**coffeepot**’. Variation: have your students ask you questions using ‘coffeepot’ instead of the actual verb. You can do the same with noun, replacing the words with ‘thingby’. Something you do. DO YOU COFFEEPOT IN THE MORNING? Something. IS THE THINGBY ROUND/SQUARE?

33 . WORDS FROM WORDS

How many words can you make from: INTERNATIONAL / CAMBRIDGE / WEATHER, etc. Have Ss work in pairs or in groups for this one.

34 . EVERYDAY WORDS

Words from everyday things on board. Class guesses the object they're written on. CRUSH-PROOF PACK (cigarette packet) TWIST (ON/OFF) (jam jar) BACK SPACE (computer) THANK YOU (receipt) PRESS (seat belt) SHIFT (computer) P.I.N. (cell phone) (= Personal Identity Number) etc

35 . DICTATION RACE

Small groups – choose Runner, Secretary, Correctors – 4 copies of a Dictation Text – around classroom. When you clap secretary and runners must change. Points for finishing first, points for mistakes. Least points is winner. (Also works in the computer room)

36 . NOUGHTS AND CROSSES

Draw up scheme on board to form 9 partitions, team one is O, team 2 is X. Nine categories: **ANIMALS / NEGATIVE / SPORT / FOOD / DESCRIPTION / COUNTRIES /**

JOBS / WH-QUESTIONS / CLOTHES / IRREGULAR PAST TENSE, Play out noughts and crosses using categories: TIP 1 - write correct answers (to emphasise them) TIP 2 : no repetition allowed!

37 . ACT IT OUT

Act it out. Hand out plots. Pupils write the script and act it out:

The Fire. Detective or journalist interviews witnesses (one of whom may be a suspect) about what they saw/heard/did. (The Fire can be changed to a Bizarre Noise, Disappearance, Murder, Theft etc). Lots of questions and past simple.

The Hold-up. Group of gangsters planning a hold-up. "Stop. Now it's two days after the hold-up and you're all in prison. Now discuss what actually happened, whose fault etc." Could be a Hi-jacking. Television Interview. Filmstar, politician, sportsperson etc.

The Amnesiac. Student A is in bed in hospital, having lost his memory. The other Students are medical staff, police officers, visitors (family, friends etc) who try to bring memory back. They must be careful. A shock could be fatal.

Teachers' Meeting. Teachers discuss imaginary students to decide who should continue next year. One teacher is the 'chairman' and has a list of students ("Now we'll discuss Erika...")

The Neighbour. A neighbour who needs to sleep or revise etc knocks on door and complains about the noise from a party.

The Small Ad. For sale/To rent/Friendship. Student A has seen a classified ad in the paper. Student A decides for herself the subject of the ad. She then chooses any other student (Student B, who has placed the ad) and calls her about it. "I'm calling about your ad for a live-in nanny..."

The Hypochondriac. Student A is a hypochondriac determined to have as many pills as possible. He consults Student B who is a doctor strongly averse to giving out pills willy-nilly.

The Clairvoyant. Student A consults a clairvoyant. Asks questions about lover, money, health etc. (Useful for practice of future.)

Directions. A young girl stops passers-by in the street and asks for help/directions in finding an address.

The Tourist. Student A goes to another country (or planet) and calls home to tell Student B all about it.

The Answering Machine. Student A calls B and gets answering machine (B's voice). Leaves message.

38 . THE BALLOON DEBATE

Each group/person is someone famous and has to defend his/her right not to be thrown out of the basket.

39 . CASINO

Hand out a list of sentences containing one (or two) incorrections to groups. Students group and you allot 100 points to each group. They have to bet a number of points (maximum: 10) that they can correct an error. This is added to, OR SUBTRACTED from, their score if their correction is right, or wrong. (The level of concentration even from students who usually don't worry too much about how correct their English is can be miraculous!)

40 . NOTE FOR WAITER

"I O U O 4 I 8 O." = I OWE YOU NOTHING FOR I ATE NOTHING.

41 . PUZZLE STORIES

- A man with a pack on his back went into a field and died. (PARACHUTIST)
- A man walked into a bar in Texas. He asked for a glass of water. The barman pointed his gun at him. The man said "Thank you," and walked out. (HICCUPS)

c. A couple have built a square house. In each wall there is one window. All the windows look south. (ON NORTH POLE)

42 . STORY REVISION

Cut sentences of story into words HAND OUT IN CORRECT ORDER. EACH STUDENTS READS THEIR WORD AND THE NEXT STUDENT REPEATS FROM THE BEGINNING. The process gets harder as students have to remember more and more of the sentences that have already been read out.) Variation: use the same technique when teaching days of the week to lower levels. S1 says 'Monday', S2 says 'Monday, Tuesday', S3 - 'Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday', etc. Works great when you point at Ss at random, so they can never be sure they're not next. :)

43 . REPETITIVE QUESTIONS

(Question forms + V) New answer each time: Who? Where? When? What are? What did? What will?

44 . BACK TO THE BOARD

Write a word on a post-it note and stick it to the back of one of the students, have him/her come to the board. CLASS GIVES CLUES IN ENGLISH and volunteer guesses.

45 . PAIRWORK CROSSWORD

Each has a crossword with half the answers in and half missing. Partner has missing answers and the other half missing. Give clues in English.

46 . ANAGRAMS

Vocabulary revision: anagrams of words used in the course book.

47 . ALPHABET GAME

Round class. Give a word beginning with last word mentioned. Apple - Egg - Gun - Nose - etc etc

48 . TELEPHONE CHAIN

Quick phone calls about anything. Student A calls (well, pretends to call!) any student (Student B) about anything. When the conversation is finished, Student B calls any student (Student C) about anything. Keep the chain going. Must be fast.

49 . VISUALIZATION

Writing warmer. Visualise a PLACE while you suggest its description. They use their picture to write a composition. (Useful to describe a person, too.) (- instrumental MUSIC is also effective.) (- useful in SPEAKING, too)

50 . MIME IT!

Mime what you had for breakfast / lunch / favourite food. Write the answers on the board. You (the teacher) should always be the first to mime something, don't be afraid to make a fool of yourself (well, in a funny way!) - it helps Ss to enjoy the activity!

51 . THE FOOD MARKET

I went to the supermarket to buy a kilo of apples... Each person repeats and adds more food. The chain goes round the class. Also works well with ABC revision (apples,bananas,

cherries, ...etc). Practice a/an vs. some for countable/uncountable nouns.

52 . GUESS THE PICTURE

Hidden picture (you can use one from any textbook - the only thing is that it must be relevant to the topic to be discussed). Teacher shows Ss a small part of the picture - students in groups discuss what it might be - you can put some of their ideas on the board if you wish. If you don't hear any nice ideas, you can try gradually revealing some other parts of the picture. Gives an overview of any reading text with a picture.

53 . MAKE A STORY TAPE

Grab that tape recorder and a blank cassette, find a story you enjoy, and make your own story tape! Each student can read for a while, or can take on the part of a particular character. Make the appropriate noises too! You will probably have to practice a few times to get the hang of it, and be prepared for lots and lots of giggles!

54 . TEACH US YOUR DANCE

Ask a student to demonstrate a dance, and assist the student in explaining the movements in English. Hint: for this to work well, you need to be ready to show an example - teach them some of your own dance moves! :)

55 . CLASSROOM OBJECTS NAME RACE

Ask students to name as many objects in the classroom as they can while you write them on the board. This can be made slightly more competitive by splitting Ss into teams and giving them a 5-min time limit (in which case they'll need to brainstorm those words and put them on a piece of paper, not the board).

56 . UNIQUE GESTURE

Ask students to present to the class a gesture that is unique to their own culture. Provide an example by demonstrating the famous 'OK' gesture with your thumb and index finger, or any other.

57 . SECRET QUESTION

Ask students to write one question they would feel comfortable answering (without writing their name) on an index card. Collect all of the index cards, put them in a bag, have students draw cards, and then ask another student the question on that card.

58 . HUM THAT TUNE!

Ask your students if there are any songs running through their heads today. If anyone says yes, encourage the student to sing or hum a little bit, and ask the others if they can identify it.

59 . BLACKBOARD MEMORY CHALLENGE

At the end of class, erase the board and challenge students to recall everything you wrote on the board during the class period. Write the expressions on the board once again as your students call them out.

60 . PERSONALITY STRUGGLE

Begin by telling your students about an internal struggle between two sides of your personality (bold side vs. timid side OR hardworking side vs. lazy side), providing a brief example of what each side says to you. After a few minutes of preparation in pairs, have students present their

struggles to the class.

61 . CELL PHONE GUESSING GAME

Bring a cellular phone (real or toy) to class, and pretend to receive calls throughout the class. As the students can only hear one side of the conversation, they must **guess who is calling you and why**. Make the initial conversation very brief, and gradually add clues with each conversation. The student who guesses correctly wins a prize.

62 . GUESS THE DISH

Bring a fork, knife, spoon, bowl, plate and chopsticks (if you have them) to class, and mime eating some different dishes, letting students guess what they are. Then let your students take a turn!

63 . COMBINE IT!

Choose one topic (food, sports) and elicit a list of examples (food - chicken, pudding, rice). Then have your student come up with the most unusual combinations of items from that list (chocolate-beef or wrestling-golf).

64 . CELEBRITY INTERVIEWS

Collaborate with your students on a list of famous people, including movie stars, politicians, athletes, and artists. Have every student choose a famous person, and put them in pairs to interview each other. Make it competitive by having a vote for the best-performed interview afterwards. Or use an MP3 player to record their interviews and then play them for everyone to enjoy!

65 . LEARN A PHRASE

Copy pages from various ESL textbooks (at an appropriate level for your students), put them on the walls, and have students wander around the classroom and learn a new phrase. Then have them teach each other what they learned.

66 . WRITE YOUR OWN CAPTION

Copy some interesting pictures of people from magazine ads. Give a picture to each student, have the student fold up the bottom of the picture about half an inch, and write something the person might be thinking or saying. Put all the pictures up on the board, and let everyone come up and take a look.

67 . MAP IT

Draw a map of your country or another country that your students know well. By drawing lines, show students where you went on a trip, and tell them about it. Then call on several students to do the same. The trips can be truthful or fictional.

68 . DESERT ISLAND: DRAW YOUR ITEM

Draw a pancake-shape on the board, and announce that the school will soon be moving to a desert island. Invite students one by one to go to the board and draw one thing they would like to have on the island.

69 . YOUR OWN COMICS

Copy a page from a comic book, white out the dialogue, make copies for your class, and have them supply utterances for the characters. To complicate it for your students, you can ask them to 'have' the characters discuss some specific topic (you suggest it to the Ss).

70 . GUESS WHO WROTE IT

First, instruct your students to write on a slip of paper the name of one book, CD, or movie that changed them in some way. Collect the papers, call out the titles, and ask the class if they can guess who wrote it. Finally, let the writer identify him or herself, explaining his or her choice.

71 . POP SONG LYRICS DIALOGUES

Give each student a piece of chalk/pen and tell them to fill the board with pop song lyrics. Then put them in pairs, and get them to use the words on the board to create a new dialogue.

72 . SAY A COMPLIMENT

Hand a student a ball of yellow yarn. Have him toss it to another student, while saying something positive about that student and holding onto the end of the yarn. Continue in this manner until there is a web between all the students.

73 . POSTER DILEMMA

Hang up four different posters (example - one of a world map, one of a famous singer, one of a flower, and one of Einstein) in the four corners of your room. Tell students to choose one corner to stand in, and talk about why they chose that particular poster.

74 . TOILET PAPER ICE-BREAKER

All you need is toilet paper. Firstly you tear off some squares of toilet paper by yourself. Then you offer to do the same to your students WITHOUT ANY EXPLANATIONS! When everybody has toilet paper you explain the rules. Every person must say as many sentences about himself/herself as many squares of toilet paper he/she has. You should introduce yourself firstly in order to show the example.

75 . BOARD RELAY

Split the class into two groups. Write up four columns with A, B, C, D on either side of the board. Call out a topic like Country, Food, Animal, etc. Get them to run to the board and write up a category in each column that starts with the corresponding letter i.e. A, B, C, or D. I do it like a relay only allowing one at the board from the team and making them run back to pass it to someone else. Great for teenage learners as they love being active.

76 . HOW WAS YOUR WEEKEND?

'How Was Your Weekend?' Boring when it's asked every Monday, but give SS the identity of a famous person on a slip of paper (or let them think of their own). In pairs SS ask questions and try to guess the other's identity based on what they did over the weekend. Alternatively, brainstorm what they think the King of Spain did, or Madonna, Harrison Ford, Mickey Mouse, Brad Pitt etc.

77 . HALF DICTATION

T dictates half a sentence, SS complete by themselves and read out at the end.
Some example:

As soon as she walked into the room...

I'm having a lot of trouble deciding...

One Saturday morning in late summer...

If you want to lose all of your friends...

All through history, people have...

Nobody knows who really...

If you climb to the top of a high mountain...
I believe that everybody should...
They all started laughing because...

SS check spelling with each other, then with T. You could also stick the sentence halves on SS backs, get them to mingle and copy them down. That should wake them up!

78 . THE FIRST

1. Ask a student 'What was the first thing you did this morning?'
2. When he/she has answered, you can go on asking the same question, or even better, make little variations like 'What was the first thing you saw this morning?' or 'Who was the first person you met this week?'
3. After a few answers you can prompt students to take over asking the questions. This is one of the warmers that can be used often, because it's so variable.

79 . THE LONGEST TAIL IS THE WINNER!

Divide the group in small teams, give a piece of paper to each team, the warmer is called "The longest tail is the winner". So, ask your students to cut the paper (without using scissors/ just with their hands) to get "the longest tail". Tell them that they have just three minutes to get the longest tail. So that they start and after ten seconds, play a song (retro music is better to give pressure). While they are working, remind them the phrase "The longest tail is the winner". When time is over, verify who has the longest tail and say: Here we have the longest tail. Then, you take another tail and join it with another one from other team. Here you will say: Do you remember the instruction? The instruction was: THE LONGEST TAIL IS THE WINNER, And explain that they could get a longer tail if they'd worked together... Finally, tell them that the same happens if we work helping each other to learn English... They'll get a lot of fun and you'll teach them to work in teams.

80 . CONTROLLED NARRATIVE WRITING

Students at lower levels get bogged down with narratives: they either try to be too imaginative and the grammar goes haywire, or they get all the tenses right but have added no description. Although very controlled (and teacher centred) at first this task offers students a way to produce simple, but accurate and descriptive narratives on their own.

Procedure:

Have prepared a short story in the past tense (below is a suggestion). Tell the students that you will read them a story but you will pause after a noun for them to shout out suitable adjectives. As the story goes on they will get the idea. Listen to all the suggestions and write down the one(s) you think is most suitable (without telling the students) and carry on.

For example: (T) There once was a woman. (SS) old /mad/ugly/fat/stupid/lonely (T) who lived with her dog. (SS) fat/black/useless/lazy/funny Then read it out loud again, including your chosen adjectives. This time pause after a verb and elicit adverbs. For example: (T) There once was a lonely, old woman who lived (SS) alone/happily/ (T) with her useless dog. One summer's day she walked... (SS) slowly/quickly/ (T) to the... Read it a third time with the added adjectives and the adverbs, this time eliciting any other interesting information, including past continuous tenses (E.g. The puppy was sleeping). Pause at a suitable point in the story. You may want to prompt the students with why? or how? If they say she walked with her stick, that's great! Finally read the whole story out, completed. Tell students that in pairs they are going to follow the same procedure and develop a story step by step. Hand out the story on the first worksheet and guide them through the stages, encouraging the students to use their imaginations but making sure the added words and phrases are appropriate. Pin up the finished versions and invite students to read them all and to

decide whose is best. Why is that? For homework they do all the stages themselves, but using the second worksheet to make sure they don't leap to the last stage.

A possible story:

There once was a woman who lived with her dog. One day she walked to the village and bought some fruit and vegetables. When she came back to her home she found that her dog was gone. But inside the house she saw a puppy.

Alternatively

- put the original story on an OHT so students can see how you add the extra information
- also introduce linking words, or for higher levels, relative clauses or past perfect
- elicit the first simple story so students feel more involved but make sure it's simple enough
- for a follow up lesson encourage a more interesting story line, perhaps by giving a suggested name: The Secret Door, Lost in Space, Never Again, etc.

81 . TOILET PAPER INFORMATION (ALTERNATIVE)

Time: depending on class size and amount of paper taken

Level: All (except complete beginners)

Focus: Sharing personal information.

Materials: One roll of toilet paper

Procedure:

- Meet students as they enter the classroom and ask them to take as many sheets of toilet paper from the roll as they think they'll need (do NOT explain what it 's for).
- Then when students are sitting down you take as many sheets as you wish (a minimum of three is needed to demonstrate what students have to do). Tear off one sheet and give one piece of information about yourself e.g. name, age, etc. and throw it away.
- Do this with each sheet.
- Ask the students if they have any questions to ask you.
- Once you have answered all the questions get them to tell the class one thing about themselves per sheet.
- Tell the other students to listen to each student and think of at least one question they'd like to ask the student.
- When you have finished ask the class to sit in pairs and try to remember all the details they can about the people in the class.
- As feedback get the pairs to tell the class everything they can remember about the couple to their left. The initial surprise of the students as they come into their first class to find their teacher offering them toilet paper makes for a fun and expectant atmosphere. The students are immediately interested in what's going to happen and you have a captivated audience.

82 . CREATE A SENTENCE

Prepare colored letters of the alphabet on cardboard squares and put them in a bag. Students must draw a letter from the bag, and work together to create a sentence on the board. Each student must raise his or her hand to make a contribution, but the word the student calls out must begin with the letter he or she chose. Put the expanding sentence on the board, adding words only when they the grammar is correct.

83 . DIFFERENT CONTEXTS

Print phrases such as "in the library", "at an elegant dinner with the Royal Family", "in a noisy bar", "in a dangerous neighborhood" etc on separate strips of paper, put them in envelopes, and tape them to the underside of a few students' desks/tables before they arrive. Write on the board a useful expression like "Excuse me. Could I borrow a dollar?" When students arrive, tell them to look for an envelope under the desks/tables. The ones who find envelopes must say the sentence on the board as if in the context written on the page. Other students must guess the context from the student's tone of voice and body language.

84 . ADVERBS INTO A STORY

Produce a list of commonly used sentence-modifying adverbs on the board, such as suddenly, actually, unfortunately, and happily. Then launch into a story, which each student must contribute to, with the rule that everyone must begin the first sentence of his or her contribution with a sentence-modifying adverb.

85 . LISTEN AND ANSWER

Provide each student with a list of the current top ten popular songs. Play excerpts from some or all of the songs, and choose some questions to ask your students, such as: Did you like the song? Have you heard this song before? How did the song make you feel? What instruments did you hear?

86 . POSTCARD TO MISTER X

Purchase a postcard for each member of your class, writing his or her name in the name and address space. Turn the postcards picture side up on a table, have each student choose one (without looking at the name), then he or she will write a message to the person whose name is on the other side. If a student chooses the postcard that has his or her own name on it, the student must choose again.

87 . DESCRIBE THAT SMELL

Prepare several paper bags, each with a different scent inside (perfume, cinnamon, cheese), pass the bags around the class, and let students describe what they smell.

88 . PLAN THE TEACHER'S VACATION

Put the students in small groups, and ask each group to plan a vacation for you. They must plan where you will go, what you will do, who you will go with, and what you will buy. When they are finished, have each group present their plans.

89 . MAKE AN ERROR

Put students in pairs. Tell them to converse, but to deliberately make one grammatical error over and over, stopping only when one student can spot the other's intentional error.

90 . WHO CAN SAY IT...?

Review a phrase or sentence that you want students to remember, by holding a competition to see "Who can say it the loudest/the quietest/the quickest/the slowest/in the deepest voice/in the highest pitched voice?".

91 . SAY IT TO ...

Write down the names of about five very different people on the board (a small baby, a rude waiter in a restaurant, a fashion model, a stranger in a crowd, and a grandfather). Give students a common expression, such as "Good morning!" or "Sorry!", and ask students how they might say it differently when talking to a different person.

92 . ADJECTIVES FOR YOUR NAME

Write your name on the board vertically, and add a suitable adjective that begins with each letter of your name. The next step is to invite students to do the same.

93 . COLOR ASSOCIATIONS

Write a number of adjectives, such as mysterious, happy, peaceful, sad, angry, and frustrated on the board. Call out a color, and ask your students to tell you which adjective they associate with that color. You can also turn it into a TPR activity by assigning each of the 4 corners of the room to one reaction, and have Ss run to the corner with the adjective they agree to.

94 . ADJACENCY PAIRS

Write a common adjacency pair (Thank you./You're welcome OR I'm sorry./That's alright) on the board. Ask students if they know of any expressions that could replace one of the ones you just wrote. Write any acceptable answers on the board.

95 . TELL ME SOMETHING I DON'T KNOW

Write "Tell me something I don't know." on the board, then ask students questions about things they know about and you don't, such as their lives, cultural background, interests, and work.

96 . WHISPER IT

Write a word on a slip of paper and show it to a student. This student must whisper it to the second student. Then the second student must draw a picture of what he or she heard, and show it to the third student. The third student, then, writes the word that represents the picture and shows it to the fourth student. Then the fourth student whispers it to the fifth student.... and so on. This continues until you get to the last student, who must say the word to the class.

97 . POCKETS

Each student looks into his/her pockets and describes what they have in them and why.

98 . IDIOM GUESSES

Write an idiomatic expression (such as "It beats me." or "I'm fed up.") in big letters on the board. Call on a few students to guess what it means before you tell them.

99 . MEMORIZE IT

Pairs. SS look very carefully at the room and the people in it for 1 minute. 1 S closes his/her eyes. Other S asks questions.

100 . THE ROOM IS THE WORLD

Tell the SS that the wall with the whiteboard on it is North. Ask them what the opposite wall is. "South?", fantastic, and this wall? "East", and this? "West". Good. So if this classroom is the world, where is Spain? And France? What about Canada? Tell SS to stand up and go and stand in a country they've always wanted to visit. Without moving they ask each other where they are, and why they've always wanted to go there. They'll have to shout across the world at distant SS.

101 . CHAIN OF WORDS

T reads out a list of words, and SS can join in by supplying a word once they've spotted (or think they have) the connection. Do you know? Carpet, train, never, rubbish, heavy, yellow, weather, reason, nuisance, end, drip, pencil, letter, respect, trip, painting, gallop, print, talking, go, operation, love, England, dark, kitten, nurse, engineer... (They all begin with the last letter of the previous word)

102 . FIND THE PATTERN

The teacher's chair is the 'Hot Seat'. Send a S outside the class to think up questions for his/her classmates. Give the rest of the class a pattern. They must use this pattern to answer questions when the S outside comes back in and starts asking things while sitting in the chair. For example: Answer only using three words. Say 'yes' first, then say whatever you like. Say what you like, but you must touch your nose when you answer. Only answer using adjectives. Repeat the question, then answer it any way you like. Touch your ear. Begin with 'Erm..' Cross your legs, etc. Can the S guess the pattern? Now the T leaves the class, and the SS think up a pattern for him/her to guess.

103 . DON'T SAY YES OR NO

Put a S in the hot seat. The rest of the class (including the T) fire questions at the S to try and get him/her to say yes or no. A demonstration by the T may help for a lower level class ('I don't think so', 'that's true', 'that's not quite right', 'ah huh', 'sometimes', 'I do' etc.)

104 . THREE WISHES

SS write down three wishes. SS get up and mingle until they find someone with a matching (or similar) wish. Then they sit down in pairs and talk about it .

Variations:

- Two bad experiences.
- The last seven things you did before leaving your flat this morning.
- Places you'd visit if you won three plane tickets.

105 . BODY SPELLING

Groups of three, four or five. SS think of a word then pretend they are the letters of the word. SS stand up in front of the class and mime the word. The rest of the class has to guess which word is being spelled. Caution! Know your students.

106 . HIDDEN TOPIC

Write a list of different subjects on small cards or slips of paper (e.g. Tennis, computers, shopping for food, traffic, beer, suits and ties, cycling, babies). Show a subject card to one S and start an informal chat with the S without naming the subject on the card (circumlocution). Other SS write down the subject on paper (without the other SS seeing) when they think they know what it is. If they're correct, they can join in the chat.

107 . CLASS REACTION

A S is in the 'Hot Seat' and talking about his/her favourite subject, hobby, last weekend or what they did during the holiday. S has his/her back to the board and must not turn around. T writes a word on the board and the rest of the class reacts to it, eg. Happy, sad, bored, interested, energetic, emotional, Italian, Japanese, English etc. The speaker, of course, has to guess the word from the class reaction to it.

108 . SPELLING DICTATIONS

Dictate whole sentences letter by letter. SS divide up into words and punctuate. (Good for revising/introducing phrases and course book texts).

109 . RUNNING DICTATIONS

SS in pairs. One sitting with pen and paper, while the other runs to the opposite wall, reads a few words, and runs back to dictate (and spell) to his/her partner. Which pair can finish first

with least mistakes? (T can obstruct and hold fast SS to prolong the activity!)

110 . CROSS PURPOSE

SS in pairs. Hand out topic cards, one to each S ('fruit', 'getting up in the morning', 'discos', 'the beach', 'petrol'). SS start speaking and have to guide the conversation back to their topic. After a couple of minutes stop the activity to see if they've guessed each other's topic. Change topic cards.

111 . GETTING YOUR LINE IN

Give SS slips of paper with conversation gambits written on them. Here is an example list, but we're really looking for conversational expressions which wouldn't normally be found in course books:

Absolutely, I couldn't agree with you more.

You must be joking!

How can you say that?

To be honest, I can't see that myself.

I really think you're missing the point completely.

But then again, there's another side to it.

Of course, another way of looking at it is...

It seems to me you're rather biased in your opinions.

Bollocks!

That might be true elsewhere, but not in this country.

I really don't think you understand the complexities of the situation.

So what you're saying is...

I'd never have thought that you know.

I think that's a fair point.

Can I come in here for a second?

It's funny you should say that...

..etc.

SS speak on a given subject for a few minutes, e.g. fashion, German cars, George W. Bush, The Middle East conflict, seafood, 'House' music, smoking etc., and try to slip their line in without the other S noticing. Ask at the end what their partner's line was. The lines can and should be carefully selected for level and register, but not pre-taught. At least not in the same lesson.

112 . FIVE THINGS BEGINNING WITH 'F'

Each S writes five things beginning with 'F'. SS are put in pairs to define their words as quickly as possible. First pair to finish wins. Give them another letter.

113 . SPELLING RACE

Two teams. One S from each team stands at the board with a board pen. T holds up a piece of paper with a word on, so that the two SS at the board can't see it. The teams shout the spelling to their team mate at the board. The first S to correctly spell the word scores a point. Rotate SS.

114 . HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

SS are given a long, thin strip of paper, and write a sentence (12 to 16 words?) describing how they feel at the moment. Give out scissors so that they cut up the strips into individual words. SS shuffle the words and leave them in a pile on their chair. They change places and re-arrange someone else's sentence. Early finishers can change again or write the sentence in L1 to sensitise to word order.

115 . FAVOURITES

Divide the board into four. In one section draw a picture of your favourite food (or just write it!), in another your favourite country, in the third your favourite book, and the last your favourite person (famous or otherwise). Elicit questions from SS as to why you've drawn these on the board. When you arrive at 'favourites', maybe SS have some questions for you. SS choose their own favourites and discuss in pairs.

116 . WHAT IS MY LINE?

Give SS a profession on a slip of paper (or get them to think of one). Either in the Hot Seat (open class), or in pairs, SS try to guess the profession without asking more than twenty questions. SS must ask yes/no questions e.g: Do you wear a uniform? Do you work at night? Do you use a gun? Do you wear a hat? Are you a soldier? Etc. SS only answer correctly formed questions. A small bell may help here for re-phrasing and soul-searching.

117 . CLASS STORY

T starts by feeding in one line, e.g. 'Mary was walking home late last night...' SS continue to add to the story one by one around the class.

118 . COMPLETE THE DIALOGUE

SS complete a dialogue in pairs using their imagination. Then they act it out in front of the class. Which dialogue was the best? (vote)

E.g. 1)

Ann: ...

Ben: My God!

Ann: ...

Ben:...

Ann: A big red one.

E.g. 2)

George:...

Sharon:...

George: In the car park, I think.

Sharon:...

George:...

Sharon: Thirty-seven pounds fifty!

119 . THE BECAUSE GAME

Use this fun warmer to review 'because' and to practice listening skills. Begin by telling the class something you did yesterday. eg: I went to the market. Choose a student and have them repeat what you said, add because, and give an explanation. eg: I went to the market because I needed cilantro. Then have that student choose a classmate, and have her repeat the process. eg: I needed cilantro because I was making tacos. (S chooses a classmate to create a sentence using because) I was making tacos because it was my turn to cook. And so on until SS are warmed up!

120 . DAD'S VISIT

Tell the SS that your Dad's come to the school, and he's going to answer questions for ten minutes. Get them to write down any questions they'd like to ask him about you. T checks question forms then tells the SS that he's/she's going outside to send Dad in. T then comes back

in as his/her Dad (a disguise would help - old jacket, pipe, hat etc.). SS ask questions about T. (They'll probably laugh at first, but it's surprising how quickly they'll imagine it's your Dad they're talking to.

121 . GUESSING FROM CONTEXT

SS guess a nonsense word by using the context of the sentence.

Examples: Can you turn the zong on, it's cold in here? This food can't be re-zonged? My wibble's not working, so I had to take the bus.

122 . THE TEACHER CANNOT READ

T reads aloud and makes mistakes. SS correct. After a while you can modify the activity slightly by inviting a student to read out some sentences with mistakes, so that the class can correct.

123 . GESTURES ONLY

Tell your students to practice a conversation from their coursebook that they are familiar with, but this time they can only use gestures, no words.

124 . NEWS REPORT

Tell each student to report the latest news in their country or city to the class. Leave it for them to choose the news item.

125 . CHANGE SOMETHING!

When they are practicing a dialogue, have students play around with the volume, intonation, pitch, or speed of their voices.

126 . WORDS YOU HAVE LEARNED

Just a few minutes before the bell rings, call on your students to choose the ten most useful words they came in contact with during this class period, then have them narrow it down to the three most useful words.

127 . NEW ANGLES

Invite your students to stand up and explore the classroom from new angles (look in drawers, under desks, behind posters, on top of cabinets). Then have students report their findings.

128 . MOVIE POSTERS

Have students come to the board one by one, draw a poster for an English language movie (without the title) they think the other students have seen, and let the other students guess which movie it is.

129 . ERROR YOU HAVE MADE THIS WEEK

Hand each student an index card, and tell them to write down a sentence that includes an error they have made this week, along with the correct version of the sentence. Next, tape all of the index cards on the board for students to look over.

130 . FILL THE BOARD

Fill the board with vocabulary your students have encountered in previous classes (make sure to include all parts of speech), and get them to make some sentences out of the words.

131 . PLAN AN OUTING

Supply each student with a copy of the entertainment section of the local newspaper, and tell them to choose somewhere to go next weekend.

132 . REDESIGN A COURSEBOOK PAGE

Take a particularly uninteresting page from your coursebook, and put students in groups to redesign it.

133 . THREE SOUNDS AND A STORY

Play five very different sounds from a sound effects tape or CD, and assign students in pairs to create a story based on three of the sounds.

134 . DRAW WHAT YOU HEAR

Play a recording of instrumental music and have some students draw on the board what the music makes them think of.

135 . CHOOSE AN AD AND EXPLAIN

Pass around some magazines, and have each student choose an ad that he or she likes. Give students an opportunity to explain their choices.

136 . A STORY BEHIND AN OBJECT

Instruct your students to find something in their wallets/purses/pencil boxes, and tell the story behind it.

137 . CREATE AN APPLICATION FORM

Put students into small groups to create an application form for new students to the school or for a candidate for some job.

138 . NOT A PRODUCT

In small groups, have your students design a billboard for something other than a product (wisdom, humility, friendship, etc.).

139 . ANIMAL NAMES

Explain to your students what it means to call someone a certain animal (dog, pig, fox) in English, and then ask them what these mean in their languages.

140 . UNUSUAL TALENTS

Inquire to see if your students have any unusual talents (can wiggle their ears, can bark like a dog), and encourage them to demonstrate. You will certainly need to have one yourself first, to break the ice and to help Ss share what they can without fear to be laughed at.

141 . REWARDS

Give students a reward (such as a candy or a sticker) each time they take the artificial language in your textbook and turn it into an authentic question or comment about someone in the class.

142 . DESCRIBE IT

Describe something observable in the classroom (while looking down), and tell students to look in the direction of what you described.

143 . DRAW PARTY GUESTS

Draw a party scene on the board, and invite students to come up and draw someone they would like to have at the party.

144 . YOUR FLAG

Call on a student to draw his or her country's flag on the board, then teach him or her how to describe the flag to the class (It has three stripes...).

145 . SNACKS YOU LIKE

Bring in some snacks that you think your students haven't tried before, and invite the students to sample them and give their comments.

146 . 5 MOST USEFUL ENGLISH PHRASES

Have each student make a list of the five most useful phrases for tourists visiting an English speaking country.

147 . LIGHTS OFF!

Play a listening activity from your book an additional time with the lights turned off.

148 . THE THREE ITEMS

Put students in pairs and ask them to guess three items in their partner's wallet/purse/pencil box.

149 . LETTER TO A FAMOUS PERSON

Find out what famous people your students admire, and work together with the class to write a letter to one of them.

150 . REDUCE IT!

Assign students to take a conversation from their coursebook that they are familiar with and reduce each line to only one word.

151 . WRITING DIFFERENTLY

Experiment with how you write on the board, altering your writing style, the size of the letters, the direction you write, and the color of the chalk/pens.

152 . NEW ANGLES 2

Teach on a different side of the room than you usually do. You'll be surprised to see how this will change everything in your class!

153 . STORY TIME

- To revise the past simple tense.
- Ask pupils to choose their favourite part of the story they have read recently, and a part they didn't like. Write on the board: I liked it when... I didn't like it when...
- Pupils complete these sentences for themselves.
- When they have finished, they move around the class exchanging their opinions. They make a note of anyone who had the same likes or dislikes.
- Compare the results with the class.

154 . LISTEN AND DRAW

To revise prepositions and there is/are.

Draw two empty rooms, with a table in the middle of each. Label these pictures 'A' and 'B'. Make a photocopy for each pupil. In pairs, each completes one drawing of the room with named items (other furniture and animals, or any other vocabulary group you want to revise). Pupil A draws on Picture A, and Pupil B draws on Picture B. Pupil A dictates where things are in Picture A. Pupil B listens and draws the items. Then they change roles for Picture B. Pupils compare their pictures.

155 . NOUGHTS AND CROSSES 2

To revise the past simple. Draw a noughts and crosses grid on the board. Write the present tense of a verb in each grid space, for example see, go, meet, have, play, visit, eat, read and do. Divide the class into two teams: the 'Noughts' and the 'Crosses'. Teams take it in turns to choose a verb from the grid and tell you the past tense form. If they guess correctly they score a point (a nought or a cross for their team on the grid). If they guess incorrectly, the other team scores a point. The winning team is the first one to score a line of three noughts or crosses.

156 . STORY SEQUENCING

To revise story language and vocabulary from the coursebook. Divide the class into groups of two or three. Assign each group a unit from the textbook. Pupils copy the story from that unit onto strips of card. They create one card for each speech bubble or caption. Pupils then shuffle the cards and put them in an envelope. They exchange their envelope with that of another group. Each group puts the cards they have received in order. When they have finished, they check the order with the story in the textbook.

157 . YOU ARE WHAT YOU WILL

Tell the class that they are to imagine another life. In this new life they can take the form of an animal, a plant, or an object. The one form they cannot take is that of a human being. Give them a few minutes to think about what they would like to be. Then ask the students, one at a time, to tell what they are and to describe themselves. Encourage the other students to ask anything they like about the new personality, its function, background, feelings, and so on. After the students have revealed and described their new identities, conduct a general feedback discussion. Help the students to analyze what they have learned about themselves and one another and about human aspirations in general. You may also want to elicit discussion of possible contrasts between the students' "new life" and "real life" identities in terms of such criteria as age, sex, nationality, or any others that may show up in the course of the lesson.

158 . NEIGHBORS

Give each student a piece of paper. Tell the students that each one is to draw a house on his or her paper. They are to work alone. When the houses are drawn, they are to fold the papers in two so that the houses cannot be seen. The papers are collected, placed in the center of the table, and shuffled. Each student then picks one and unfolds it. Now ask the students,

one at a time, to describe in detail the house on the paper each has chosen. Ask them to describe the occupants of the house, the furniture in the house, the colors used in the different rooms, the location of the house, and any other details they can think of. Next, arrange all the drawings face up on the table. Ask each student to choose one that he or she likes and write his or her name on the back of it. There should be only one name on each drawing. Then have the class, working together, arrange the houses in groups of three. (If the number of drawings is not divisible by three, one or two groups may have four houses.) Let the students develop their own criteria for grouping the houses. Provide no more guidance than “houses that you think go together well.” When the sets of houses are formed, ask those whose names appear on the drawings to sit together and create a three-minute skit that illustrates or depicts the relationships among the “neighbors” who live in the three (or four) houses. Have each group present its skit to the group.

159 . LYING

Have the students form pairs. (If this activity is done at the beginning of the course as suggested, you may wish to assign the pairs yourself, since the students may not know one another and may feel bashful about pairing off.) Tell the students they are to talk to their partners about themselves. One partner will talk while the other takes notes. Then they reverse roles. Tell them that they can reveal as much or as little about themselves as they like, but that about three-quarters of what they say should be lies. Have the students repeat this process two or three times with different partners. Each time they meet a new partner, they give different information. However, the information should be about the same areas. In other words, they talk about the same subjects with each partner but tell different lies about these subjects to each partner. Now have the students report back to the whole group about what they heard from each of their partners, using the notes they took in each interview as a guide. As each student reports, all those who met the same person listen carefully and then point out the discrepancies between the stories that person told. The fun comes in trying to decide what the truth really is, with everyone speculating about everyone else. Each person finally tells the truth, leaving everybody knowing something about him or her.

160 . AM I LYING?

Method One. Tell a short anecdote which may either be true or be a complete fabrication. Have the group ask you questions about it. Give additional information as necessary to generate more questions. Then ask the students to decide whether you were telling the truth or making the whole thing up—lying, that is. Put it to a vote.

Method Two. A variation is to bring in a picture (which the students cannot see) and describe it to the class. Again, the description may be true or it may be completely false. Let the group quiz you about the details. As with Method One, the students must decide whether you are telling the truth or lying. To follow up, ask a student to tell a story or describe a picture in the same way. Again, the remainder of the class must decide whether the student is telling the truth or lying. As an optional extra with either method, you may wish to ask students to explain why they voted as they did. This can be done individually, student by student, or by a panel of three or four students. Encourage the students to give contextual reasons for their verdicts rather than make comments such as “(S)he always lies / exaggerates.”

161 . INFORMATION EXTRACTION

Divide the class into groups of three. One of the persons in each group is the questioner, another is the answerer, and the third is the umpire or referee. Tell the questioner to write on a slip of paper something he or she wants to know about the answerer, and to give the slip to the umpire. Now tell the questioner that his or her job is to extract the information on the slip from the answerer without directly asking the question he or she has written down. The umpire’s job is to make sure that the questioner follows this rule and does not ask the question directly or change a question in midstream. To do this, the umpire can stop the questioner at any time. You may wish to give each questioner a time limit to expedite the exercise, or you may leave it to the group to impose, or not impose, a time limit. When the questioner has extracted the information, or the time

limit has been passed, the members swap roles or start again.

162 . FEELINGS AND PICTURES

Discuss with the class how words can express or describe emotions. Brainstorm vocabulary of emotions and feelings, and ask each student to write down words or expressions that he or she feels confident to use or would like to experiment in using. Tell the class that you are going to give them the opportunity to use some of these words. Display reproductions of several paintings. Use color slides if possible, otherwise use prints or, as a last resort, postcards. The paintings should preferably be lesser known works and/or works with ambiguous subject matter. Ask the students to write down their feelings or impressions as they see each painting. Be sure to allow adequate time for each picture. Divide the class into small groups, and ask them to discuss their impressions and the vocabulary they have used to describe their feelings. Then ask each group to choose a picture and make up a title that sums up the group's feelings about it. As a variation, you may wish to ask students to mime the feelings they had collectively for a picture. Each group is to guess, from the mimes, the identity of the other groups' pictures.

163 . BINGO WORDS WARMER

Purchase a magic wand and bingo chips and store them in a 3-hole pencil case with a sign-out library card inside. Divide a lightweight piece of cardboard into squares and print a word in each square. Read a word. When the student finds it, she covers it over with a bingo chip. Go for a blackout each time and once they have it, have the student read each word back to you. It is much more difficult for a student to read the word back than for her to find the word as she hears you read it.

164 . ADD A WORD

This is a variation of Scrabble and can be played without a board. The first player writes down a word. The longer the word, the easier it is for other player(s). The next player writes a word using one of the letters in the first word.

165 . WORD CARDS

Word cards, or flash cards, help develop sight vocabulary. Flash cards are available commercially, but you and your student can make your own too. If you do, be sure to put a picture of the word on the back of the card. The new words are printed or written onto the cards which are then displayed one at a time. Your student may look at the word and say it three times, trying to imprint the image on her mind. Words learned in this manner are "sight words." When a word is successfully recognized in three consecutive presentations, it may be added to a separate stack of known sight words. Not more than five new words should be introduced at one lesson.

Variations:

1. Ask your student to match a word card with the original in an experience story.
2. Make a duplicate deck of word cards. You and your student can play "Fish" with the duplicate cards by shuffling both together, dealing a hand of seven cards to each player, and taking turns drawing a card from the deck. Pairs of identical words can be laid on the table face-up.
3. Play word card poker. Group cards in piles of nouns, verbs, adjectives, articles, and prepositions. Deal your student five to ten random words, and pretend he wins \$10 for each of the words he can include in a good, single sentence. Tell him he can buy words from the various category piles for \$10 each. He loses \$10 for each of the random words that are not used or misused. Keep a running tally sheet as you play this game over a number of weeks.
4. Play Concentration. Make duplicates of the cards. Turn the cards face down on a table. Flip one card and lay it on the table, then flip another. If they match remove them from play. If they do not match turn them over again, and the next person flips two cards until all are matched. Don't forget to read each card as it is turned over.

166 . NAME GAME

Think of some personality characteristics of a friend, husband, tutor, or neighbor and use the friend's name as the root for a new word describing that quality. Add prefixes and suffixes and think of different contexts, e.g., "The weather has turned Fredish." "Let's reFred the chicken dinner."

167 . LIST MAKING

If your student is a beginning writer, it might be appropriate to begin by making lists of many kinds - days of the week, months, groceries, family names, likes and dislikes — the possibilities for list making are many. For more advanced students, lists of questions might be a useful activity. Prepare a list of 25 questions including who, what, when, where, and why questions. Expect expanded answers, not two or three words, but at least one sentence, preferably two. For example, "Where are your shoes?" The answer may be, "They are on my feet. I put them on this morning." Then have the student prepare 25 questions to ask you. This exercise can help vocabulary, writing, grammar, etc.

168 . PHOTO STORIES

Make photo stories using a Polaroid camera. The tutor and student develop a story idea then take a sequence of photos dramatizing the events. Back at home they paste one picture per blank page. The caption or sentence that goes with that picture is printed below the picture. As the pictures and dialogue or narrative grow, they are assembled into booklet format. A cover design could comprise another lesson. Writing and then reading practice has been accomplished.

169 . JOURNAL WRITING

You and your students may choose to keep a journal that focuses on the students' ideas about various topics of interest. At the beginning, the teacher may have to do the writing while the student tells the story. Make this a component of each lesson. Journal entries can be shared as agreed to by the students and teacher. Reciprocal journal writing is also a good teaching/learning activity. In this case, the students write a journal entry to which the teacher responds in writing, perhaps asking questions about what has been expressed.

170 . LESSON LOG OR DAILY LOG

At each lesson, have the student fill in the log, looking up the date, noting the time and the work accomplished, and sometimes choosing the work for the next lesson. Alternatively, have the student keep a daily log, if even just writing one sentence about that day. This can be used as reading material for the lessons.

171 . LETTER AND EMAIL WRITING

Ask the student to write you a letter or an email. Provide him/her with a subject for the letter or email. For example, ask him/her to tell you about their family, job, children or an event that has recently occurred.

172 . DANGEROUS RESULTS

Give one student a warning about some small, insignificant action, e.g. 'If you drop your pen it'll break'. Invite learners to continue by taking the second half of your warning and creating a new warning, e.g. 'If your pen breaks you won't be able to do your exam'. Once this sentence is established, elicit the next warning - becoming bigger and stranger as they go on: e.g. 'If you can't do your exam you'll have to leave school' etc. At the end, see if learners working in pairs can recall the whole chain of warnings - starting from that one small initial action. Pairs should then create their own chain starting from a new warning.

173 . STAR WARNINGS

Ask the class to work in groups. Each group thinks of a famous story they all know - e.g. a fairy story such as Red Riding Hood or a film such as Star Wars. Ask each group to think through the story and imagine what warnings they could give the characters at various points in the story: e.g. 'If you meet a wolf - run!', or 'If you can't see your granny - phone the police!'. When ready, pairs of groups meet and say only their warnings, the other group must guess what the original story was. When both groups have heard all the warnings they should invent a completely new story for which ALL the warnings apply!

174 . PROMISES, PROMISES

Say that you have a million pounds to give someone (You can show them a few 'pretend' banknotes) and you will give it to the person who persuades you the best. Teach them the sentence structure: 'If you give me a million pounds, I'll ...' and then let the learners take it in turns to try and persuade you. Award the 'cash' to the best or funniest promise.

175 . RECOGNIZING THE FUNCTION

Write 'warnings, threats, promises' on the board. Check that students know what each heading means. Say some IF sentences aloud with appropriate (slightly exaggerated) intonation. Learners must decide which are threats, promises or warnings.

176 . WARNING NOISES

Select five or six 'Be careful ...' warning sentences, e.g. 'If you eat that, it'll poison you'. Ask students to decide where the main stresses are in each sentence. Then offer a strong model of intonation for giving warnings. Get students to experiment saying these in pairs, then stand up and mingle (walk around meeting others). Every time they meet another learner, they give a warning. (If it works, it'll be noisy!) When they've had enough, ask learners to write new warnings they could give people. When ready, repeat the mingling activity.

177 . NUMBER 7 WARMER

It can work as an icebreaker, it's called "number 7". Students stand forming a circle, they have to say a number 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 ... (clap) - tell them that they must clap not saying numbers 7, 14, 21, 28, etc, neither 7, 17, 27. Any number that either HAS 7 or can be DIVIDE BY 7 - they should not say the number, but clap. If they make a mistake or hesitate too long, they sit. The last student standing is the winner!

178 . HAVE YOU EVER...?

It's the same as the game most of you used to play in childhood. First pre-teach the question "Have you ever...?" and explain, that with this question we ask about other people's life experiences. Then give your students small pieces of paper and ask them to write a question with "Have you ever...?". Ask them to make their question interesting, but comfortable to answer (e.g. "Have you ever had lunch with the Queen of England?"). Then each student should fold the piece of paper so that the question can not be seen, and pass it to the neighbour on the left. And again pass it to the neighbour on the left. Then, without unfolding it, each student writes "Yes" or "No" on the paper which turned out in his\her hands. The questions and answers then are read aloud. It's usually a great fun and practice at the same time. The same game can be used for the pattern "Do you like...?"

179 . SECRET WORDS

Ask students to write down 3 words secretly (any words, or the words from the last lesson). Then they have to tell the story with the use of these words, so that others would not guess which words were the secret ones. It's a great fun, as ""storytellers"" try really hard to "hide the words" in their stories, and others are motivated to listen and guess.

180 . GRAB THEIR ATTENTION!

When you enter a class, the first thing you do is writing what you are going to do during the session on the whiteboard. Then, start asking typical questions such as "how are you?", "what's your name?", "What's your mother's name?", "what's your favourite subject?" and so on (the complexity of the questions / answer required depends on the level you're teaching). If a student cannot answer, ask the same question to a neighbouring student and then go back with the same question to the student who couldn't answer. This makes students leave what they were doing and start paying attention. After 15 questions or so, tell them what you're are going to do (which they can read on the WB). The actual class may start, then.

181 . WHAT'S IN MY BAG TODAY?

The "What's in my bag today?" warmer is started with the teacher's question asking pupils to guess what could be inside the bag. Pupils are formulating their questions: yes/no or special ones - it's up to the teacher. If needed, the teacher can help with prompts (size, colour, function, price, etc).

182 . PAUL'S BIRTHDAY PARTY: MEMORY WARMER

If you're teaching 'going to', play the following game: Start by saying that all of you (the class) are friends with Paul (or any name you like), and that you are all going to bring him a gift/present. Explain that it's a memory game and you have to remember what everyone is going to bring and continue until someone makes a mistake. Example: (First person) I'm going to Paul's party and I'm going to give him a t-shirt... (second person) I'm going to Paul's party and I'm going to give him a t-shirt and a book... So on and so on. This can work for any level but especially basic. To make it harder you can use adjectives and add rules such as all the nouns can only start with 's'.

183 . WORDS

Write up the alphabet. The first team can write any word they feel they know how to spell correctly. The longer, the better, because it's two points per letter if they spell it right. If it is misspelled, the team gets only one point per letter - for the correct number of letters of course. Erase one letter of the alphabet the team just used. The next player has one less letter to choose from. If you play this game a few times in a row, the kids will, on their own initiative, learn how to spell many huge words in no time at all.

184 . REMEMBERING THE NAMES

When you're starting the term with a new ESL class, get everyone to think of an adjective that starts with the same letter of their first name. Always give them an example: "I would be Dangerous David". They get the idea pretty quickly. Once everyone has found one (sometimes takes a few minutes and a bit of help if the students aren't very high level), you play a memory game with all the names. Going round the class, each student has to say all the adjectives+names that came before theirs, and then add their own at the end. It's good because it's fun: it teaches some pretty cool adjectives and of course you learn your students' names very quickly!

185 . MAGIC WAND WARMER

"You have just found a magic wand that allows you to change three work-related activities. You can change anything you want. How would you change yourself, your job, your boss, co-workers, an important project, etc.?" Have them discuss why it is important to make the change. Another variation is to have them discuss what they would change if they become the boss for a month. This activity helps them to learn about others' desires and frustrations.

186 . IDIOMS WARMER

On the board, write 3 idioms which are united by one key-word. For instance (like banging a head against a brick wall, head in the clouds and old head on his young shoulders) - all with 'head'. Then discuss the idioms and their meanings with the students and give them some time to compose their own stories and situations with one of the idioms.

187 . ESL SKIING

This is like skiing. Divide students into two teams and give each team two blank A4 sheets of paper. It's a race. Students using sheets of paper have to ski same distance and back. In one end of the distance you can set a task according the things you have taught, e.g., write three forms of irregular verbs or finish the sentence. The first team to finish the task are the winners.

188 . WHO CAN DO EVERYTHING?

All the students are standing. The teacher asks questions: Can you swim? Can you play chess? Can you... ? Those students whose answers are positive (Yes, I can) - are still standing. Those who answer No, I can't - sit down. After 7-10 questions the teacher lets everybody sit down, cheering up (clapping) those who are still standing. (You may use any tense form for this warmer: Do/does, did, have, ...).

189 . DAYS OF THE WEEK

Make sure your students learn the days of the week in English with this simple game. Have Ss sit in a circle around you. First say the days of the week yourself, maybe couple of times. Do not write them down on the board though - wait until after the activity. Now, say 'Monday' and point at one of the students. That student has to name the day after Monday. Then point at another student who has to name the following day, and so on. The element of surprise is what students love, that is why this activity always works amazingly well. Of course, once Ss are familiar with the days, all you do is increase the pace and start moving your finger faster :) The faster the funnier! Then you can do it backwards. Then you can do a variation of this activity when you can say a random day of the week and point at a random student who has to give the name of the following day - or the day before that.

PS: this can also be done with months, seasons, numbers (for lower levels). Remember - to keep it fun you have to make sure the Ss are already familiar with what you're asking them. Enjoy!

190 . A TO Z WARMER

This can be as simple or complicated as you wish depending on your class level. It may require some preparation on your part as you want to show your students that the exercises can be completed successfully.

Topics:

Countries and Cities. The Z's are relatively easy with Zaire, Zanzibar etc, but other than the imaginary Xanadu you will need to be able to spell Chinese cities.

Family and First names. This is good for multilingual classes e.g Xavier (Portuguese).

Food and Drinks - if in doubt XXXX lager (Aussie beer).

Brand names - limitless!

Musical instruments - you will have to get your 'thinking cap' on - French, Japanese etc.

Jobs - Xylophonist, Zookeeper, Yachtsman.

Verbs - X-ray, Xerox, Zip, Zoom

It is not only entertaining but informative for all concerned, creating further cultural awareness. It can be enhanced with realia i.e. maps, flash-cards etc and can be an individual, pair, team or class activity. It can be used to reinforce material studied, or as a stand alone filler.

191 . ROAD TRIP: VOCAB GAME

Write the alphabet on the board and then say you are going on a road trip (It's actually a classic game to play with any grade). Say "I'm going on a road trip and I'm taking along my..." (something that starts with A) the next person repeats what the first person said then adds on something that begins with B. And so on. If this takes up too much time then just write on the board only VOWELS or somebody's full name. It is a good vocab builder and memory game! You can also choose a specific theme like only animals, famous people (First or last names, it doesn't matter) or things that are green.

192 . FANTA, COKE, PEPSI, SPRITE

All players make pairs, then they stand face to face in two lines. One line is Pepsi, another is Coke. When teacher says ""Coke"" they run and sit on the knee of Pepsis. When teacher says "Pepsi" they run and sit on the knee of Cokes. If teacher says "fanta" they run to each other, stay back in back and squeeze their hands. If teacher says "Sprite" they do nothing. Only one pair has to leave. It is a very funny and energetic game. Good luck!

193 . THE SENTENCE GAME

The game starts with a student saying a word. The following student should repeat that word and add another one keeping the idea of a sentence in mind. The following student should repeat the first two words and add another one. The game continues until someone either makes a mistake or forgets a word. The teacher may ask students to include a pattern or certain vocabulary in the sentence. The game may be restarted as many times as the teacher wants to.

194 . ABC CHAIN

Pupils make a circle or a chain. They should name the letters one by one very quickly. The person who doesn't name the right letter must go back to his (her) place. The last pupil is the winner.

195 . WHAT DO OUR NAMES MEAN?

A good first-day activity is to, when introducing ourselves, give the meaning of our names (as well as the spelling and pronunciation as necessary). Many students will know their names' meanings, and most people enjoy discussing their names. Those students who don't know their names' meaning may be inspired to find out by the next class. This is a valuable activity because it provides speaking and listening practice as students discuss their names. In addition, it provides extra processing time of each name, increasing the likelihood it will be remembered.

196 . WISHES BALL

This is a warm-up activity to revise wishes and regrets. Teacher writes the beginning of the sentence "I wish..." and passes a ball or another object (you can make the ball from a sheet of paper - it only takes a moment) to a student who has to finish the sentence so that it can be true for him. When you practice the forms for the present you can say that now they have to think about the past (so they can use Past Perfect Tense), Also, you can write "It's time / or I'd sooner / I'd rather " in the beginning instead of "I wish".

197 . CATCH THE BALL

Just take a small ball and throw it to a pupil. Ask him or her to catch it saying “catch the ball”. Then once he or she has it they can start talking about themselves - if it's for very beginning level - if not it depends on the targeted language.

198 . ALPHABET ACTIVITY

Create a number of instruction cards along the following lines: the word must be a past tense form, the word mustn't have more than one syllable, it must be something you can find in a supermarket, the word must be an adjective etc. One student takes a card and reads the instructions. He/she then starts off by saying a word beginning with 'a', the next student thinks of one beginning with 'b', the next with 'c' and so on. Give all students at least one 'life' or a word pass to use if they get stuck. After they've used up their 'lives', start eliminating and stepping up the time allowed to think of a word. A fun and snappy way to end a lesson!

199 . WEB SHAPE FIRST LESSON WARMER

This ice-breaker is suggested for the first class of the course. You need a yarn of thread. All students have to stand up and make a circle. The instructions are to hold the thread of the yarn and pass it to every student in the class. The yarn has to be passed to Ss in different order, in order to form a "web" with the thread. All of them have to keep holding a part of the thread as they pass the yarn to the rest of the class. Once all Ss are holding the thread, the teacher asks them to find out the shape the thread has formed. They will have many answers. However, at the end of the activity, the teacher explains that it actually represents all of them, working as a whole.

200 . FORTUNATELY / UNFORTUNATELY WARMER

Start the class off with a sentence, for example - 'I lost my wallet at the shops but fortunately ...'. Then point to a student to finish the sentence. Then continue: 'But unfortunately ...' (get the next student to finish that sentence). Continue on around the classroom. Very funny responses - your students will be talking about it for a long time after!

201 . TOUCH IT FIRST!

Distribute some flashcards facing up. Call out the name of any of the flashcards. The student who touches the card first gets a point. Please be careful: this can get very competitive! Great for review lessons.

202 . THE TALENT SHOW

Everyone selects one talent or special gift that they possess and can demonstrate for the group. They introduce themselves, explain what their special talent is, and then perform their special talent for the group.

203 . BLIND ANSWERS

Students make a circle. Each one has a small sheet of paper and a pen. Each student has to write one question on the sheet of paper. Questions can be various, on whatever topics they want. Then students give their sheet of paper to the person on their left side. Then this person turns the sheet of paper and writes the answer of his question without looking at the real question written there. The funny thing is that a question written from the person next to you can have a really hilarious answer without any relation to it!

204 . WRITING TO MUSIC

Tell your students that they are going to listen to music (choose an instrumental piece without any words) for 2 or 3 minutes and ask them to write anything they want during listening. Younger students may want to simply write some keywords, more advanced ones could write full sentences. Then tell them to stop and ask them to share their ideas. If the students are too shy or if the topic of your lesson is, for example, adjectives, you may ask them to say only those words aloud and so on. For elementary students we suggest you find music which resembles the sounds of nature, for others - even pieces of classical music. This helps them to build up confidence to express their feelings, emotions and ideas.

205 . DISCUSS AND GRAB! FUN SPEAKING WARMER

A fun speaking warmer courtesy of Nick Bilborough. You need one board pen per pair of students (no writing involved). Put your students in pairs - standing opposite each other, one student holds the pen in an open flat palm. The other student will try to grab the pen while they both discuss a topic of the teacher's choice, you can use it as topic warmer/ revision/ discussion practice and it can be used at any level. It always gets a lot of laughs and really helps relax students.

206 . QUESTIONS WARMER

It is a filler your students are going to like a lot. Take a deck of small cards and write questions on them (different types and topics depending on the students' level). Then ask the student(s) to take some of them without looking at questions. They should try to answer their questions in turns. It can be a nice ice-breaker as well as it helps to know each other better.

207 . VOCABULARY ENVELOPE

Prepare a 'vocabulary' envelope. Each important vocabulary word that you teach goes into the envelope and when you need a warmer or a filler, have the students pick a word out. They then have to make a meaningful sentence showing they understand the word. Lots of groans and head clutching here - they know they know the word but..! :)

208 . PRESENT CONTINUOUS NOISES

Students work in pairs or small groups, making different noises with their mouth - the partner or the rest of the group should guess what this person is doing. 'You are yawning!' 'You are kissing your Mom good-bye!', 'You're snoring!', etc. The teacher should first demonstrate the activity to make sure the students have had a good laugh at you and are not too shy to make funny noises themselves!

209 . WHO WOULD I HIRE?

At the beginning of a unit about jobs and job skills, hand out pictures of people cut from magazines with short descriptions: for example, "Max is 28 and has a degree in business but no experience. He is hard working and organized." Have students get in groups and create a business that they "run." They can then look over their pictures of the job candidates and discuss who they would hire for their business and why. This exercise provides not only valuable group discussion skills and practice with target vocabulary but also provides critical thinking skills as students make a judgment on the best job candidates.

210 . TRUE/FALSE CARDS

When introducing a new topic to class, distribute index cards to every student. On each of the cards a statement on the topic should be written: some true, some false. Students then must decide which statements are true and which are false, using whatever means they desire: their text, each other's knowledge base, the Internet, etc. With this method, students get introduced to the topic and clarify any preconceived notions, correct or incorrect, they have on it while interacting with their peers and even doing a little research.

211 . PRESENT CONTINUOUS WARM UP

Ask students to close their eyes and think about a person that is important for them (like their mom, dad, husband, wife, dog, etc), tell them to think about what are they doing right now (for example 'She is preparing lunch', 'he is working', 'he is running', etc). Make sure the students are using the correct form of Present Continuous, be at hand to correct mistakes or provide help with some vocabulary students may need to make their sentences.

212 . CHAT SHOW WARMER

Great for groups of strangers, and avoids the dreaded pain of introducing yourself. Get the group to pair off and take turns in being a chat show host and guest. The chat show host has to find out 3 interesting facts about their guest. Switch the roles and repeat. Bring everyone back to the big group and ask them to present briefly the 3 facts about their guest to the group. Maybe go round the group randomly so people are less aware of their turn coming up next and panicking about it. Watch timing on this one as it has a tendency to go on too long if your group likes to chat too much.

213 . PRESENT CONTINUOUS BRAINSTORMING

Have a little Present Continuous competition where your students will compete to write or say as many things as possible in this tense. Each sentence must describe something that is currently happening in the classroom. You can set a time limit of, say, 2 minutes, and see how many sentences each of them can come up with. A variation of this activity can be describing an image (make sure you choose one with a lot of action happening), or describing something they can see out of the window.

214 . PRESENT CONTINUOUS COUNTRIES WARMER

First demonstrate it yourself: secretly choose a country (for example, France) and describe what (most/some/a few) people in that country are probably doing right now: 'Some people are drinking wine with cheese' etc. Provide additional sentences until someone guesses where it is. Then have students work in pairs and have them guess each other's secret country. You may also want to provide a map with time zones for this activity, or draw one on the board.

215 . SPEED-DATE YOUR CLASSMATES

Students come in having read something for that class period. Tell them they will spend two minutes "speed dating" five of their peers. During the two-minute "date," the students each share their opinions of the reading and then move on to their next "date". This is adapted from a concept of "speed dating", in which a large group of singles spend a few minutes talking to each other before moving on to the next "date". The purpose is to introduce oneself to a large number of people in a short period of time before choosing someone for a possible future, more serious date. Likewise, in the classroom, "speed dating" gives students the chance to get familiar with each other's ideas on a text in a short time period and warms them up for more in-depth analysis of the same text later in the class.

216 . A FICTIONAL CHARACTER: BIOGRAPHY

In the first days of a grammar class, pass out around a folder of pictures clipped from magazines of a variety of people: different ages, genders, ethnicities, etc. Students may choose their own character. Tell the students they will be spending some time with this character. They must name their character and give him or her an identity. The first assignment is to write a brief background of this character: name, age, nationality, occupation, hobbies, etc. The level of class will determine the length of the assignment and the amount of information given. The assignments change and grow more complex as the semester progresses: students may be required to write all about the character's past after studying past tense verbs, for example. Higher-level classes may be required to write about the character's future and future plans after studying future tense verbs, modals, and conditionals. This activity works well because it introduces an element of creativity into a subject that isn't necessarily always creative. It also gets students using different language and vocabulary than they might normally: if they are required to write about a fictional character who is a marine biologist, for example, that will require different language than when writing about themselves if their major is music.

217 . 1 FUN FACT ABOUT ME

On the first day of class, have students fill out a profile on a 3"x5" card. Along with name and contact information, have them list one interesting fact about themselves: e.g., "I play the violin." The teacher may then go around the room and have the students share their interesting facts with each other. Students may follow up with questions of their classmates about their interesting facts. They may then ask the teacher to share an interesting fact about himself or herself. This serves as a good way for the class to get to know each other: it's easier to remember someone when connecting something unusual to him or her.

218 . FAMOUS QUOTES AND PARAPHRASES

Begin a lesson on quoting and paraphrasing by writing the beginning of a famous movie quote on the board: "Frankly, my dear, I don't give a—" At least one student will usually be able to finish the quote correctly: "damn." The usually generates laughter and then discussion of the context of the quote: character Rhett Butler is saying good-bye to his long-time unrequited love Scarlett O'Hara in the movie "Gone with the Wind," which is set during the American Civil War. This also serves as a very brief U.S. history/movie history lesson. Students then can discuss an appropriate paraphrase of the quote: e.g., Rhett told Scarlett that he didn't care about her. The teacher can then point out the differences between the quote and paraphrase: use of quotation marks, change in vocabulary and grammatical structure, and so forth. It should be pointed out that in either case the original source must be cited. This may then be followed up with handing out strips of paper with either a famous quote or a paraphrase to each student and the students must go around the class and find their matching quote/paraphrase. In academic writing, students are required to support their positions by citing expert sources. Often they lack the technical skill, however, in quoting and/or paraphrasing a source, so it becomes necessary to devote at least some time to teaching that skill. This method teaches them the ways to the difference between paraphrasing and quoting and how to change a direct quote into a paraphrase.

219 . QUESTIONNAIRE ADDRESSING MISCONCEPTIONS

As a pre-reading activity, give students a short questionnaire based on the content of the reading and addressing common misconceptions in that reading. For example, if the topic of the reading is language acquisition, the questionnaire should have common misconceptions about language learning in it: e.g., Children are always the best language learners--true or false. After students take the survey, they may share their opinions with each other. The teacher should then debrief them on the survey results and then directs them to their reading for further study of the issue. This helps in getting students involved in the considering a topic more analytically than they have before and questioning long-term assumptions they might have on that topic, why they hold

those assumptions, and if they are in fact valid. They are then more prepared for reading material that may challenge those beliefs.

220 . JIGSAW THE COURSE SYLLABUS/OUTLINE

On the first day of class, get students in small groups and hand out the course syllabus/outline along with about ten questions on critical points of the syllabus. Have students within their groups divide up the questions. They are then required to find the answers to those questions in their syllabus and then share the answers with their group members so that by the end of the activity each group member has answered all of the questions. This is a modified “jigsaw”: that is, each partner holds a different piece of information which they must share to complete the “puzzle.” The teacher may then go over the answers on the board and make any clarifications necessary. This activity accomplishes several goals. First, it gets students to actually read the syllabus, which many don’t necessarily do, so that they are aware of course expectations and there aren’t any surprises. It also sets up the expectations of the class early in other ways: students not only must read in this course, but they must also work together and talk to each other.

221 . SUMMARY AND CRITIQUE

After watching a movie, take time the day after to introduce the concept of summarizing, which is actually a fairly complex skill. After the movie has been viewed, the teacher can ask, “How long is Erin Brockovich?” Students will answer about ninety minutes. “If your friend asked you to tell him about the movie, would you take ninety minutes to do it?” After getting a negative response, the teacher can go over the essentials of a summary: the main ideas, without the details, in correct order with transitions, told in the student’s own words. The class may begin the summary together on the board and finish it as homework. Also for homework, students should write a critical review of the movie, rating it in number of stars from one for poor to four for excellent. They need to provide a rationale for their rating, and the teacher can go over some of the basis for rating a movie: the acting, the script, the sets, etc. This is an enjoyable way to get students to both abstract and evaluate material.

222 . PEER REVIEW WARM-UP

On days when students have writing due, such as a paragraph or an essay, have them exchange work with a peer. They are then asked to read and respond to their peers’ writing. The distinction between responding and editing is important: students should not be required to correct a peer’s work, which they rightly don’t feel comfortable doing. However, they can respond as readers: ask them to first read and then talk to their partner about how clear and organized the writing seemed to them, as a reader, as well as discuss with their peers one thing they really liked about their writing and one area where improvement seems needed. This activity works because it gets students used to writing for an audience who reads for meaning, not necessarily correctness, and gets them used to being clear for that audience. It also helps students in reading analytically and thinking about what works and doesn’t work in their essays.

223 . PEER REVIEW COOL DOWN

This activity occurs after students have read and given feedback on a peer’s essay. After the students have read and discussed what they liked and what they thought needed work on each other’s essays, go over with the class as a whole some of the common strengths they saw in their peers’ papers as well as some of the areas for improvement, and write them on the board. These are identified as strengths and weaknesses of the class’s papers, collectively. Individual papers are not identified or discussed in terms of strengths and weaknesses. It may be done in two columns with subtraction (negative attributes) and addition (positive attributes) signs. This cool-down works really well in opening a dialogue that will last the semester about what does and does not make good writing.

224 . CLOSER: ADVICE LETTER TO FUTURE STUDENTS

At the end of a course, have students write a letter to future students with advice for succeeding in the class. Go over language for advice as necessary: “You should—,” “It’s a good idea to—,” and “If I were you, I’d—” Tell them to develop their ideas and give reasons for the advice. They need only write two to three paragraphs. As time allows, students can share their advice letters with their classmates for feedback. This is a valuable ending exercise in getting students to think about what was learned over the term, how to function well in a U.S. learning environment, and practice the language for advice. Finally, it gives the teacher some valuable feedback about what seemed to work well with students and what did not.

225 . ANIMAL FABLE

After a class discussion and reading on a topic like public education in the U.S., have students write an animal fable that ends in a moral related to the topic. Show a model of an animal fable as necessary, such as the tortoise and the hare, which is relatively easy to understand with a simple moral on the importance of being patient and not quitting. Students can then work in groups creating their fables which they can share with the class as time allows. This is effective in that it gets students thinking more deeply on a topic and what morals can be drawn from it. They also have to work together and be creative in coming up with the fable.

226 . CREATE A METAPHOR

After reading on an academic topic, such as the history and spread of the AIDS pandemic, have students create a metaphor on the topic. Model this for them, perhaps drawing from the reading, and give a reason for the choice of metaphor: “AIDS is a black box” (because it’s a record of what happened and where we’ve been) and “AIDS is a black hole” (it sucks in and destroys what it comes contact with). Students can get quite creative: “AIDS is a swamp” and “AIDS is an hour glass.” This is effective because it gets students really thinking about the nature of the concept to create the metaphor. It also leads to acquisition of more specific vocabulary: learning, for example, that “swamp” is more descriptive for AIDS and the notion of being caught and sucked down than “marsh.”

227 . IF I WERE A RICH MAN: UNREAL (SECOND) CONDITIONAL WARMER

To introduce the unreal or second conditional, the “If I were rich, I would buy a big house” construction, pass out the lyrics to “If I Were a Rich Man” from the musical “Fiddler on the Roof.” Also play a clip of the song from the musical. Then lead a discussion of the things that the character Tevye wants but doesn’t have. Students can then create their own lists of what they would do if they were rich or interview each other. This often goes beyond introducing a grammar point as students become interested in seeing the rest of the movie, which can lead into discussion of themes of the conflicts between generations and oppression and the tension between tradition and change.

228 . HAIKU CLOSER

After studying a topic, like the cultural foundations of family, work with students to compose a haiku on the board. **Give the rules of haiku:** a poem of seventeen syllables and three lines (five syllables-seven-five), and a single vivid image. Work together to create a haiku on the board or show an example:

*Tangled together
In the bed early morning
My young family*

Students can then work together or individually creating their own haikus. This is valuable because

it gets students to connect an image to the topic as well as focus on number of syllables and form.

229 . IMPROMPTU SPEECHES

At the beginning of class, have students brainstorm and put on index cards key words related to their reading. If the topic is family structure, for example, key terms might be “nuclear family” and “extended family.” Each student then selects a card from the box and must give an impromptu two-minute speech on the key word chosen. This works well because students have to work with the reading to come up with the key terms. They must then practice their speaking skills in delivering the speech.

230 . MAKE BORING GRAMMAR REVIEW PERSONAL

Make a boring grammar review of verb tenses, for example, more interesting by personalizing it. After reviewing major verb tenses, such as simple present and present continuous, personalize it by asking students, “Do you drive to school every day?” and “What are you thinking about now?” Also have them discuss with each other, reviewing the tenses by interviewing a different classmate for each tense. This personalizes the lesson and makes the study of grammar more interesting and connected to students’ lives as well as interactive.

231 . PASSIVE VOICE THROUGH TPR (TOTAL PHYSICAL RESPONSE)

Learning passive voice is necessary because so much of academic writing is composed in the passive form (note the prior clause, for example). However, students often don’t understand the passive or why sentences should be written “backwards” or in a way they would never say them. To make the function of passive voice apparent in a very physical way, start by dropping a book on the floor. Ask the students “Tell me about the teacher.” They’ll respond “The teacher dropped a book.” Write the active voice sentence on the board then drop the book again. Ask, “Now tell me about the book.” Students will respond “The book was dropped by the teacher”. Students may need some help in generating the correct passive form. The teacher should write the passive voice sentence on the board. The active and passive voice should be compared and discussed in terms of form and meaning. If appropriate, continue the discussion of the passive in different verb tenses. Students can then work in pairs and perform various actions like dropping books, taking out paper, opening pens, and so on, and composing sentences in passive and active. This is effective because it makes apparent in a very physical and graphic way the meaning and use of the passive voice.

232 . QUICK WRITE ON THE TOPIC

After students have come in having read on a topic such as about the role of fathers in contemporary society, for example, have them spend a few minutes writing their ideas on the topic. It can be from a simple prompt on the board: “What do you think of fathers today?” Or they can simply be directed to write, without a prompt, their ideas about the reading. Have them share their writing with a peer when they are finished. This activity gets students reviewing the topic and primed to talk about it before class begins. It also gives the teacher some idea of the understanding students were able to glean from the reading, how prepared they are for class, and any misconceptions they might have on the topic.

233 . Pictionary

After class discussion, have students draw a picture relating to one abstract concept from the reading. Some discussion might be necessary on the difference between “abstract” and “concrete” and how an abstract term might be portrayed. Encourage creativity and give an example as necessary: for example, portray “global warming” as a sphere radiating “heat” lines. Students

will then do their own drawings, and their classmates will try to guess them. This works because it gets students really thinking about the vocabulary related to a topic, its meaning, and how it might be communicated.

234 . WORD OF THE DAY WARMER

At the beginning of the class, write a target word from the reading on the board: it should be a key word, one important to the reading: for example, if the topic is the AIDS pandemic, a key word could be “virus” or “immune.” Discuss the word then work it into the discussion as much as possible, perhaps giving students points every time they use it in either discussion or a follow up journal. It takes repeated exposures to a word to truly acquire it, and activities like these, in which students must use the word, increase those exposures and the chance they will acquire the word.

235 . WHAT MAKES GOOD WRITING?

Before giving out the first writing assignment in a composition class, brainstorm with students on the board the elements of “good writing,” what makes something well-written. Students are likely to come up with ideas like “clear,” “stays on topic,” “gives enough examples,” “good spelling,” and so forth. After the topic has been discussed, the teacher can then hand out the rubric or grading standards for the class writing assignments as well as the first writing assignment. It is likely that many of the elements students identified as “good writing” will appear on the rubric. This is an effective activity because it helps students not only understand the rubric but also in some ways internalize it. They are more prepared to understand the standards they are writing to, having themselves identified many of the elements on the rubric, and are prepared for their first writing assignment.

236 . WHAT CAN YOU DO IN YOUR SECOND DRAFT?

After handing back students’ first drafts of essays, it’s time to discuss what they can do for the second draft. The teacher can ask students, “So all you need to do is fix the grammar and spelling, and you’ll be through, correct?” This is likely to get many nods of heads. The teacher can then lead a discussion on how a second draft is much more than just fixing surface mistakes and give out a handout showing all the things that can be done in a second draft. A system of symbols can be used: e.g., an addition sign =add development, analysis, details. A minus sign means take out repetition and irrelevancies. A multiplication sign means change the same old introduction or same old conclusion. This is an effective lesson summary because it gives students direction for their second draft and a set of symbols to talk about revision strategies.

237 . WHAT SHOULD YOU DO? ETHICAL DILEMMAS

Teachers can introduce this lesson by first discussing the word “dilemma” and its root and meaning: the beginning “di” suggests two, in this case, two choices, neither necessarily good or obviously the best. Give an example of such a dilemma: e.g., The person sitting next to you in a bus dropped his wallet as he was getting off. There is \$100 cash in it. What should you do? Have students brainstorm a list of options, such as try to follow the owner and return it, keep it, give it to the driver, etc. Together try to come to consensus on the best choice. As a follow-up activity, students can work in groups with a list of ethical dilemmas, working through them and coming up with best solutions. This activity develops critical thinking skills and discussion skills and can serve as an introduction to a unit on ethics or moral choices.

238 . POP QUIZ ON THE READING

After students have come in having read on some academic topic like the sociocultural foundations of war, have them take a simple pop quiz. Write one question on the board: for example, “According to the author, is war natural to humans? Why does she think so?” Students must write their answer on a slip of paper and turn it in. They can, once everyone has turned in their

papers, discuss their answers with their peers. This activity not only ensures students have done the reading but also serves as a launching point for discussion of the reading.

239 . MINI-DEBATE ON TOPIC

After students have read on a controversial topic, such as the cultural and societal foundations of war, divide the class in half to debate the issue: you have news another country is planning to attack yours, and now your committee must decide whether or not to go to war. Allow students to choose their own sides initially, pro or con, and then make adjustments as necessary: if one side has too many people, ask volunteers to switch sides. Then each team has a set time to prepare their case to present to other side. The other side will have the chance to argue against them and ask questions, so they must be prepared for that, too. A major rule is that each side must allow the other side to present before speaking. This is valuable in teaching basic debate skills as well as team work and critical thinking/argumentation. Students may also learn some research skills as they will often get on the Internet to support their position.

240 . A FILM CLIP

Before assigning a reading about a highly cultural American topic, such as stereotypes of the Old West and cowboys and Indians, show a clip from a related movie, a traditional “B” cowboy movie, in this case, many of which are available on the Internet. Showing the interaction between the two groups highlights the cultural difference and the conflict. Stereotypes held by the movie makers about Indians as a violent group can also be discussed. By seeing the movie, students then have a deeper understanding of the topic and are primed for the reading and its discussion of the conflicts during the expansion westward and the stereotypes held of different groups.

241 . WHAT CAN YOU WRITE ABOUT COOKIES?

Give out cookies, such as Oreos, to everyone. Tell them the class will fill the chalk board with material about the cookies. They will describe the cookies, analyze the quality of the cookies, discuss the process of cooking or eating the cookies, tell a story about the cookies, and evaluate the cookies. Model with the students writing one of the paragraphs on the board then have them complete one in groups. Students often turn in papers with undeveloped paragraphs, stating they had no more to say on a topic. This demonstrates in a fun way that almost any topic can be developed and written about in detail.

242 . TV COMMERCIAL WARMER

In groups, students must develop a three-minute TV commercial on the topic of the reading. The TV commercial does not necessarily have to sell something if, for example, the topic under discussion is global warming, but it must inform the audience on the subject. The audience is assumed to be intelligent but uninformed. The students must then get up and perform their commercial for their peers. This activity not only forces students to review and summarize the material to an audience, pulling out its key ideas, but also develops a sense of audience awareness as they will have to present the material to their peers in a way that is clear and easy to follow.

243 . TEACH PRONUNCIATION AND IDIOMS FOR HELLOS AND GOODBYES

Even a simple “hello” can be an occasion for a mini-lesson in an ESL class! The teacher can tell students after they’ve greeted each other that Americans rarely greet each other with “Hello”. “Hi” is more common, and “How are you?” or “How’s it going?” more common still. This can also lead into some discussion of the true meanings of these expressions. Unless it’s from your doctor, “How are you?” is not a real inquiry into your health but just a greeting, and the appropriate response is “fine.” Teachers should also go over correct pronunciation of the expressions: in phrases like “How’s it going?” typically words are reduced and connected, not pronounced individually, as it is written, and “How’s it” sounds something like “Howzit.” Additional expressions

for greeting and expressions for farewells can also be gone over if time. This is an effective warmer because it takes what students are likely doing at that moment, greeting each other, and turns it into a lesson on idioms, culture, and pronunciation.

244 . CLASSROOM SIGNS AND PRAGMATICS

A good warmer is to look around at the signs that have probably been posted on the walls of the class or its halls and have students consider their meanings. Often students have misconceptions about the true meaning of such signs. For example, a student might think a sign reading “Thank You for Not Smoking” is expressing appreciation for the act of refraining from smoking. This is actually a good opportunity for a lesson in pragmatics, or how language is used to get people to act. The teacher can point out that actually the sign is not really an expression of gratitude, even if it seems so with the use of “thank you.” It’s actually a polite directive: “Don’t Smoke.” This becomes a lesson not only in how to decipher a specific sign but in pragmatics, or how language is actually used to get others to act.

245 . CLOSER: TEACH IDIOM AND COLLOCATION

After introducing a reading, spend some time going over its idioms and collocations, those formulaic expressions that occur together. The teacher can give the first examples, just by skimming the first paragraph or so of any text, such as the students’ current reading: “at large” “effect on,” “delicate balance” are examples of such expressions. Discuss the meaning of these expressions, and point out their relatively fixed nature: speakers can talk about the public “at large,” for example, but not the public “at big.” As a follow up, have the students work in pairs to skim the text for other such expressions. This is a useful lesson because it raises awareness in students of how words occur together, an understanding that is very important in being truly fluent in a language. To write or speak effectively, students must know which words go together.

246 . EUPHEMISM, OR HOW MANY WORDS ARE THERE FOR “TOILET”?

Students need to learn euphemism, or the “pretty” language used to cover up something taboo within a culture. Begin the discussion asking about this “pretty language,” and students will often be able to come up with examples, like the words for “toilet.” Students should learn “toilet” is not said in American culture although it is widely used to describe public facilities elsewhere. “Bathroom,” itself a euphemism, is also usually too blunt, and terms like “restroom,” “men’s room,” and “ladies’ room” are more acceptable. Often the more taboo something is, the more euphemisms there are for it. Students find discussion about euphemism and the different words we use and why highly engaging, and the information is necessary for them to function successfully in society.

247 . TEACH CORRECT MEANS OF ADDRESS

Students are often unaware of the appropriate way to address faculty and will address their instructors as “Miss Janet,” “Professor Janet,” or even “Lady.” This is worth a quick lesson in the appropriate way to address people: titles like “Miss” and “Professor” are used with the family name, and in American culture, at least, adults, even student and teachers, usually call each other by the first name. If time allows, it’s interesting to go into points like “Lady” being a polite way to refer to someone: “Janet is the lady in the red blouse” but not a polite way to address someone: “Lady, I need help with this,” is considered rude because “Lady” as a means of address is actually a dishonoric. Students often appreciate knowing these finer points and find them useful in being able to relate to Americans as well as interesting.

248 . RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

At the beginning of a class, especially a conversation/discussion class, begin by going over the “rules of engagement” or rules for class discussion. After some discussion of guidelines and what they might be, have students brainstorm the rules in groups. Then collect them and

compile them, eliminating redundancies, as there will probably many similar rules, such as “don’t interrupt others” or “listen to the speaker.” Type them up and give them out at the next class session as the rules for the term. This activity not only leads to discussion of appropriate behavior in groups but also leads to more compliance as students are more likely to follow the rules they set up themselves. It also teaches students the democratic process in establishing their own rules.

249 . ACTIVE ALPHABET WARMER

Project the ABC on the board, above each letter write the following letters at random: L for left, R for right, or C for clap. The students have to say the alphabet while they raise their Left (L) or Right (R) hand or clap (C) as the teacher proposed. This warmer is excellent for kinesthetic students!! They participate a lot, you can do it in pairs in front of the class, with rows or with the whole class as you wish!! Coordinate if you can!! Example: L C R R L C L L L R C L R R R L A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P

250 . ARGUE FOR A NEW CAR

When introducing the concept of argumentation to students, use the example of arguing to a family member for a new car. The thesis/premise begins the argument: We need a new car. Students then need to support the premise with various arguments. The class can brainstorm arguments that can be made for a new car, and the instructor can help label the types of argument: a new car is ultimately cheaper (fewer repairs, less gas) - a logical argument, a new car is more fuel efficient and causes less environmental damage (ethical argument), and a new car is safer for the family (emotional argument). Discuss support that can be marshaled: the receipts for car repair over the past year, for example, to support the logical argument. Finally, discuss the counter argument: what objections are anticipated? For example, if the family member will probably raise the economic issue, that a new car is just too expensive, be prepared with some additional argument to refute the point. This is effective because it lays out an outline of an argument which can be referred back to over the course of the unit of instruction.

251 . CLOSER: READING AND USING EDITING MARKS

After returning student compositions, take some time to review the marks on student papers that they often ignore. “How many students see ‘R’ on their papers?” the teacher can ask. Quite a few students will probably respond affirmatively. “What does ‘R’ mean?” This will probably send some students digging for the list of editing marks the teacher gave them at the beginning of the term. After it is established ‘R’ means “run-on,” the teacher can follow up by writing several run-on sentences on the board and discussing why they are run-ons and how to correct them. This teaches several things: that the marks teachers put on student papers mean something, how to read the editing marks, and how to use them to edit work.

252 . RELATE MATERIAL TO A WELL-KNOWN CULTURAL ICON

Teachers often bring in elements of popular cultures to lectures for students to relate to. It can work even better if the material is a cultural icon. Not everyone knows who Lady Gaga is, especially recent immigrants or middle-aged students, but most students will be familiar with a cultural icon like the movie *The Titanic*. Bringing in something like this to teach plot structure brings a lecture to life. The teacher can link elements of plot to the movie: the plot problem of *Titanic* is Rose is being forced to marry a man she doesn’t love. The plot becomes complicated when she meets and falls in love with Jack, another passenger on the ship. Further complications are their differences in social status, and so on. Having the well-known story of *Titanic* to relate the elements of the plot to helps students in remembering these elements.

253 . REVIEW SENTENCE TYPES

Begin a lesson the day students bring in essays by reviewing the three basic sen-

tence types in English: simple, compound, and complex. A simple sentence is a subject, verb, and complete idea. (Jack Nicholson is an actor.) A compound sentence combines two simple sentences. (Jack Nicholson is an actor, and he has been in many movies.) A complex sentence is an independent and dependent clause (Because he is an excellent actor, Jack Nicholson has won many awards.) After reviewing these sentence types, students can then look their own papers over. Tell them to connect at least two sets of simple sentences. This review makes learning sentence types easy and helps students apply the learning to their own writing.

254 . REWRITE THE ENDING TO A STORY OR MOVIE

After students read a well-known story or watch a famous movie, have them rewrite the ending. For example, if they watch the movie *West Side Story*, have them consider the possibilities if the hero Tony isn't killed at the end. How would the story end then? Would it be a happy ending? Is there a possibility for the rival gangs to make peace? Have students work in groups, each coming up with their own new ending to the story. This activity leads to discussion and critical thinking as students consider alternate possibilities.

255 . BOOK GROUP

Have students get into small groups at the end of class to discuss that session's reading. Each group member should offer an opinion on the reading with support for that opinion. One member should moderate, making sure everyone participates. If the book group is held regularly, every week, the moderator role can alternate. Moderators may choose to prepare questions or bring in supporting material, like pictures from the web related to the reading (a reading on the actress Sarah Bernhardt, for example, could be supported with pictures of her.) This simulates the experience of an actual book group and leads to more connection to the reading.

256 . BUMPER STICKERS

In the last part of class, have students create "bumper stickers" around a course concept. First explain what a bumper sticker is (a short, usually clever slogan placed on the back, or bumper, of a car). Model it on the board as necessary. For example, if a class topic has been environmentalism, some bumper stickers might be "Save our Water" and "Be Kind to the Air." Students can work together to create their stickers and share them. With this method, students are working in groups, practicing speaking and writing skills, as well as extending knowledge of the course by targeting key concepts of their bumper stickers.

257 . CONCEPT MAP STICKY NOTES

After introducing a new topic, have students write keywords related to the topic onto sticky notes and organize them in a flow chart on a large poster board. For large classes, students can be broken into smaller groups, each working on their own charts. Smaller classes can work together on one chart. This strategy not only provides valuable review of the topic and its vocabulary but also speaking skills and group work practice. In the end, students will have a graphic organizer of key course concepts to put on the wall and refer to during this unit of instruction.

258 . INVENTED DIALOGUES WARMER

After teaching students how to quote, have students work in pairs to create imaginary conversations by selecting quotes from their text and then mixing them up with new dialogue they write themselves to create a coherent conversation. The only rule is the dialogue should make sense. After, volunteer students can perform their dialogues in pairs for the class. This exercise extends the lesson on quoting as well as developing writing and critical thinking skills.

259 . DISCUSS AN IDIOM

A good end-of-class filler is to further discuss an idiom that came up that day: its meaning and origin. For example, an idiom that might come up in class is “under the table,” to discuss business that is not legitimate: e.g., to hire someone “under the table,” or off the record. This can lead into further discussion of cultural values and practices and more broadly, the gap between what we do and say we do that exists in to a degree in all cultures. Students can bring their own ideas about how much is “under the table” in their home as opposed to adopted countries. Students appreciate being introduced to common idioms and the window they provide into culture.

260 . CREATE A TABLEAU

After reading a story, have students create a “tableau” from that story. A tableau is a “living picture” and is silent. It was a popular party game in Victorian days. Students assign roles in groups, discuss what scene they want to create—the teacher might offer a list of suggestions—and then perform their tableau for their classmates, who will have to guess which scene from the text it is. Through this exercise, students not only get valuable practice working and speaking in groups as they select and plan their tableaux, but they also develop their comprehension of the text in developing a tableau that their peers will recognize.

261 . DREAM HOUSE

After introducing the vocabulary of housing and furniture, put students into groups to design their dream houses. One person can “draft” the plan while the whole group contributes to the design and furnishing of the house. The teacher might model this on the board first—drafting the layout of the floor plan and then discussing with the students what should go into each room. The students can then work together to complete their plans. This provides practice in speaking skills, group work, vocabulary, and critical thinking in the planning of the house.

262 . DINNER PARTY

At the end of class, have students work together to plan a dinner party of the characters or real people that appeared in their reading that day. Who would they invite? Why? Who should sit next to whom, and who shouldn't sit together? Why? Have students work in groups to plan the guest list and seating arrangements. With this method, students are practicing group work and speaking skills as well as extending their knowledge of the text in discussing the traits of the characters in their reading and how they relate to being dinner guests and table partners.

263 . WRITE AN ENDING

Play the beginning of a popular TV series, such as an episode of the detective series “Monk” or an older series such as the comedy “Friends.” It should be a series with half-hour length episodes that have definite plot lines. Play the first part of the show then have students guess the ending. They may write the ending in groups. The teacher may play the ending in the next class session so students can see how close they were. This is valuable practice in both listening skills, as students will have to follow the episode, as well as speaking and writing skills, as they discuss and write the ending, . In addition, because the language of a TV series is written for a general audience and is highly contextualized, it should not be difficult to understand.

264 . INCORPORATING OUTSIDE SOURCES

After introducing to students how to paraphrase and quote, a good follow-up activity is to practice incorporating sources. The teacher should a position related to a current reading on the board: for example, if you are reading on the topic of the global warming, write the position: “Much evidence suggests that the earth's climate is changing at a rapid rate.” Then have them look for quotes in the essay to support this position. This exercise gives students hands-on understanding of the reason for and practice in integrating source material.

265 . INTERVIEW AN AUTHOR

After students complete a reading, have them “interview” the author. Have them brainstorm some ideas of what they would like to ask the author, such as “When did you first become interested in environmentalism?” in an interview of the naturalist John Muir. Have them complete the interview questions in pairs and then role play the interview. This provides practice in writing and speaking skills as well as group work and extends critical thinking about the reading.

266 . MAKE A SCENE

After reading a narrative passage, such as a story or narrative essay, have students work in groups to create scenes from that reading. They assign the roles, and then perform the scene. They may use a scene taken directly from the text, or more advanced groups can use the text as a jumping off point, assign a writer, and create their own dialogue. Given the size of the group, they might also choose a director to manage the stage movement and lead the group. With this exercise, students are not only practicing group work and speaking skills, they are also demonstrating as well as further developing their understanding of the text.

267 . MUDDIEST POINT

After a reading or lecture, have students write for several minutes about what they view as having been the “muddiest” or most difficult or unclear portion of the material. They can then confer with a peer before a general class discussion about the different “muddy points” students found and debriefing and clarification from the instructor. With this method, students are not only clearing up any confusion but also gaining insight into their peers’ thinking processes while practicing reading and writing skills.

268 . CREATE A NEW ENDING

At the end of class after watching a movie or reading a story, have students create a new ending for the story. Begin by asking, “What would happen if John and Mary didn’t get married?” or “What if the war was won by Germany?” as possible alternate endings. Students can then work in pairs and share their new ending with their classmates. With this strategy, students are practicing discussion and writing skills as well as using critical thinking skills in coming up with a new ending.

269 . ONE-SENTENCE SUMMARY

After reading a story or article in class, have students work in pairs to create a one-sentence summary. One person writes while the other refers to the reading to come up with ways to summarize the text in one sentence. Remind them to focus on only the main idea and to change the words. This exercise provides practice in working together as well as reading and vocabulary skills and critical thinking skills, in distilling the reading into its most essential concept.

270 . MY PARTNER’S BIOGRAPHY

On one of the first days of class, have students interview each other in pairs and then write short one paragraph biographies of their partners. The teacher should start the lesson going over the end product: discussing with the students the kind of information that should be in a biography such as name, age, nationality, occupation, etc., and the questions that students should ask to get the information. The teacher might want to pass out her own biography as a sample and discuss culturally sensitive information (such as age) and if students want to include that information or not. This is a valuable exercise in students getting to know each other while practicing speaking and writing skills.

271 . PRESS CONFERENCE

At the end of class, have students come together and create a “press conference,” a plan to meet the press, played by the teacher. Students’ job is to report on a specific aspect of the course content or something that happened in class, but they have to “spin it”—that is, give their own perspective on it that they want the press to believe in. Students can work in groups to create a different conference based on different events or aspects of the content. From this, students master course content and learn something about bias and perspective.

272 . MY RESUME/CURRICULUM VITAE

At the end of a lesson introducing terminology for jobs, have students design their own resumes. The teacher may pass out her own resume and discuss information that typically goes into one, such as past jobs held and education. Format and purpose, to convince a potential employer you are suitable for a job, should also be addressed. Discuss alternates to employment that might be listed, such as volunteer work or education, that students might put down if they have no job record. The students can then start work on their resumes and review a peer’s as time allows. From this activity students gain valuable knowledge job search techniques while practicing writing and vocabulary skills.

273 . TV COMMERCIAL

In the last part of class, have students create a TV commercial involving the course content of the day. Remind them of the purpose of a TV commercial, to persuade the viewer to buy something. The student commercials should persuade the viewer to “buy” their perspective on the topic. such as reasons to end a war. Students can then work in groups to script, direct, and perform the commercial. This is good team work practice, practice with the content material and perspectives on it, and use of persuasive language.

274 . UNDERLINING TEXT

After doing some in class reading, have students get out their pencils or markers and underline or mark key ideas. The teacher can model this for them as necessary, perhaps passing out her marked copy. Also encourage students to take marginal notes. Discuss the purpose of marking text: if they underline and annotate their text, they are building their own study guide into to go back and review at test time. After they are finished marking their texts, students can compare their annotation to a peer’s, but emphasize they won’t be the same. With this strategy, students are learning a valuable study skill as well as extending practice with a particular text.

275 . WHAT WORDS GO TOGETHER?

At the end of class, review the reading and vocabulary by discussing what words together or collocation. This is an important but often-ignored area of language. Select a word from the text, and put it on the board: suggestion. Ask students what words might go with that. They may use their books to come up with “make” (not “do”) and “offer.” Knowing the words that go together help student fluency because they won’t have to search for the next word.

276 . PLAN A BROCHURE

After a unit in which students discuss various places they have been, put them in groups and have them select a destination to plan a brochure for. Explain they are a committee whose job is to attract tourists to their place of choice. The teacher may show example brochures. Students may then assign roles within their groups, such as organizer, artist, writer, etc., and plan out the brochure. With this activity, students are not only practicing vocabulary for the unit, they are also practicing writing to a specific audience and purpose as well as practicing working in groups.

277 . CAREER GOALS

Begin the class by having students get into groups to discuss career goals. Write the topic “What is your career goal?” on the board and have students in groups of about four speak to it for several minutes each. Then can lead to some stimulating discussion as students ask each other for more information about future careers and give advice. They will also be practicing the language related to jobs and careers.

278 . CONDUCT A CAMPAIGN

Tell students they are going to be choosing their class president. Discuss the duties of a class president as necessary. Have them get into groups and choose a candidate for their group. Everyone in the class will vote by secret ballot, but not for their own candidate. Students will then conduct a campaign, trying to get votes for their candidate. This is good practice in the language and art of persuading as well as team work. The passive voice structure is also used a great deal as in “My candidate was voted most likely to succeed in high school.”

279 . DISCUSS A CULTURAL VALUE

Start class by discussing an important American value related to the class. For example, if students habitually come late, begin class by discussing the American value of punctuality, its origin (Anglo-Saxon culture) and how it affects our lives (people who are habitually late are viewed as careless or inconsiderate.) Our language is affected by this value—we have sayings like “Time is money” and talk about time in terms of money: “spending,” “saving,” and “wasting” time. Students in this way expand their knowledge of the culture and of the language.

280 . DISCUSS A NEWS EVENT

Open class discussion at the beginning of class by discussing a recent news event, such as the royal wedding or a more serious occurrence, like a recent election. Spend about five minutes discussing it as a class, asking for opinions and taking questions. If students respond well to the activity, they may be asked to bring in news clippings of recent events that interest them for discussion at the beginning of class on a regular basis. This activity warms students up to speaking and thinking in English and also gives valuable experience in offering and listening to opinions on current events.

281 . DISCUSSION TOPICS

Keep a set of index cards with discussion topics on them, such as best places for vacation. Topics may also be more controversial or academic, such as whether same-sex couples should be allowed to marry. Have students sit in groups of three or four and establish guidelines: everyone must contribute to the conversation, and everyone must listen. You might set up further parameters, such as the speaker rotates clockwise, starting with the person seated nearest the board, given the students’ level and willingness to talk. Set a time limit of approximately 10 minutes per conversation: this ensures everyone gets a chance to talk without dragging the conversation on too long. You might also choose to ask each group to turn in discussion notes. This activity gives students practice in the discussion skills of listening and contributing to a conversation.

282 . DOUBLE ENTRY JOURNAL

As a warm-up after doing a reading at home, have students start by writing a double-entry journal: first a summary of the reading and then their response to and/or critique of the reading. Students can fold a piece of paper in half and devote the first half to the summary and the second to the critique. They can then share their journal with a peer before turning it in. With this activity students, as well as the teacher, get an idea of their own understanding of the reading, through their summaries and how well they coincide with their peers’. Students are also developing valuable skills in responding to reading.

283 . EMPTY OUTLINE

Give out a partially completed outline of a short lecture on a topic related to course content and go over it with students. Then deliver the lecture and have them complete it. They can compare notes with each other after the lecture. With this activity students are not only getting primed to listen to the while in going over the note taking form but also practicing speaking skills with a peer. Finally, their note-taking skills are scaffolded with the partially completed outline.

284 . FINISH THE QUOTE

When beginning a new topic in class, such as cultural perspectives on marriage, put the beginning of a related quote on the board: for example, “Marry in haste, repent at—“(leisure). See if students can supply the rest of the quote. If they can’t, finish it for them and discuss. This activity not only gets students prepared for the topic but also teaches new language and a quote within their new culture.

285 . FISHBOWL

In this activity, a student volunteers to be in the “fishbowl”: that is, she sits in the center of the room with her classmates all around. She gives her ideas on a topic for several minutes. Her peers should avoid asking questions until she is finished. They may take notes and write a response. Another student may then volunteer to be in the fishbowl. This is good practice for both speaking fluency and listening accuracy: since students aren’t engaged in exchange in the process, the listeners must focus solely on the speaker, who in turn must focus completely on speaking clearly.

286 . GOAL RANKING

On the first day of class, have students write down, in order, their three main goals for the class, what they hope to accomplish. This can be done anonymously on index cards handed out. The teacher should then collect and compile a list of goals to refer to as the class progresses. With this activity the teacher has created an informal needs assessment toward which to tailor instruction. Targeting student needs increases motivation and success in class.

287 . NEEDS ASSESSMENT OR HOW ARE WE DOING?

At the beginning of a course, conduct a needs assessment: find out what students are interested in learning related to the course content. For example, if it’s a class in writing, are they more interested in writing for academic or for business purposes? Then, periodically throughout the class, informally poll students on if they feel their learning needs are being met. Let their responses in both cases help guide the curriculum. Giving students a say in their own education is a powerful motivator.

288 . MY IDEAL MATE

Begin the discussion by introducing the topic and brainstorming some personal qualities on the board: intelligent, has sense of humor, etc. Then pose the question of who students’ ideal mates are. Model a response as necessary: “My ideal mate is someone who is intelligent and caring and successful in his or her career...” Have students get into groups and record each other’s ideas about ideal mates. This leads to practice of terms for personal qualities and some stimulating conversation in addition to critical thinking as students weigh the qualities of what makes an ideal mate.

289 . INTEREST SURVEY

At the beginning of a class, in the first days, an interest survey is a good idea. Have students—anonynously, if they wish—fill out a survey on the topics they would like to discuss. Providing them with some alternatives related to the course content and objectives is a good idea. At the same time, the teacher can get an idea of which language skills students are most interested in working on: speaking or writing, for example. Later, the teacher can compile the results of the survey to use as a plan for the curriculum. Taking into consideration student interest and goals increases student motivation and retention.

290 . INTERESTING TALENT

A good first-day warmer is to discuss any interesting talents we might have. Everyone has something unique or near-unique they can do. For example, one student play several musical instruments, another might be able to create a scary story impromptu. While not strictly “unique”, these are fun and interesting talents to share that make remembering each other easier.

291 . JURY TRIAL

To discuss a controversial subject, like same-sex marriage, or a value, like individualism, put it on “trial,” and hold a mock jury trial. Assign students roles of defendant, judge, jury, and so on. Discuss these roles and the process of a jury trial as necessary. Give students some time to prepare, and then hold the trial and either acquit or convict the topic based on the “evidence.” In the exercise students get speaking and listening practice as well as learn something about our justice system.

292 . K-W-L CHART

As a warm-up to a new topic, perform a K-W-L (Know-Want-to-Know-Learned) analysis. The teacher should write “Know” on the board and ask students what they already know on the topic: The Vietnam War, for example, if the reading focuses on that. The teacher should then list student answers on the board. Then write “Want to Know” on the board and ask students what they want to know on the topic and note their responses. The students should then read the material and after discuss what they learned. Using this method, the students get primed for the reading and have focus questions to answer and discuss after the reading.

293 . OPTIMIST AND PESSIMIST

The teacher should begin by explaining the terms “optimist” and “pessimist,” perhaps using the “glass-half-full-half-empty” analogy. Then in pairs, have students take opposite perspectives, one of an optimist or pessimist, on an issue that can be as easy as “Will it rain tomorrow?” to the more complex, “When will the economy improve?” Have them talk for about five to ten minutes then switch topics, and have students switch roles as well. Besides providing vocabulary development and conversation practice, this exercise develops critical thinking skills as students discuss from a variety of perspectives.

294 . OUTLINE AN ESSAY

When students are writing essays, it’s helpful to review on the board the basic outline an essay. Making the process as interactive as possible is helpful. Choose a simple topic just to focus on the process: e.g., cats and dogs. Review with the students how to take a position on the topic: e.g., which animal makes the better house pet (the thesis) and support the thesis with various reasons and examples (the body). Ask for their help in completing the outline on the board. This process clarifies the sometimes confusing and counterintuitive structure of an essay in an interactive manner.

295 . PASS THE CHALK

One way to increase student involvement in a quiet classroom of reluctant speakers is to use the strategy of “pass the chalk” (or marker, if you use a white board). After introducing a topic, “pass the chalk” to a student. This signals that he or she now has the floor. Sit down and allow that student to speak for several minutes on the topic. He or she then will pass the chalk to the next speaker, who will then take the floor, and so on. This strategy creates a more student-centered class and is especially effective when discussing topics on which there might be a variety of opinions.

296 . PERSUADE SOMEONE

Begin the class by having students choose a side on some “issue,” like “Which is better, cats or dogs?” Then teach them some language of persuasion, as necessary: “I think cats are better because...” or “In my opinion, dogs are a better choice for pets because....” Students should then go around the room and attempt to persuade someone to their own point of view. They must also listen to other’s arguments. When a student has persuaded someone, he or she may sit down. This is good introduction to the use of the language of art of persuasion.

297 . PICTURE PROMPT

When introducing a new topic, such as body image in Western culture, show a picture, such as Marilyn Monroe as a young woman. Direct students to discuss the picture on their own without teacher guidance or prompting. They will almost certainly touch on issues related to the topic: for example, that by today’s standards Monroe is “fat” and how attractive they do or don’t find her. With the use of a picture and minimum teacher guidance, students develop discussion skills and get prepared to read about and discuss the topic in depth.

298 . POLAR OPPOSITES

When introducing a new topic, such as language acquisition, present on the board two versions of the fact or theory, correct and incorrect: for example “It takes about one year to learn a second language fluently” and “It takes about five years to learn a second language fluently.” Have students discuss with peers and try to guess the correct version before presenting the correct one. With this strategy, students are not only introduced to the topic but some common misconceptions on it it while practicing speaking skills.

299 . QUAKER MEETING

Direct students to read assigned material in class, individually highlighting what they see as key portions. Then they should sit in silence (like at a Quaker meeting) until someone volunteers to read his highlighted material out loud. Others then follow. End with discussion and then a brief writing about what was learned from these key passages. This method gives students not only practice in finding main ideas in a reading but also in gaining insight on what others consider key points. They also practice discussion and reading skills.

300 . QUALITIES OF A GOOD STUDENT

Start the semester off with a writing assignment on what makes a good student. Have students write in class the first day on this topic. They may brainstorm ideas first with each other and teacher. Or they may do a quick write silently and then share their ideas with peers. Often they’re very surprised when their ideas are similar. The final essay on the topic can be due in a week. With this method students are generating ideas at the beginning of term on how to succeed academically while practicing writing skills.

BONUS

301 . MY FAVORITE CLASS

Begin the second or third class session by having students discuss their favorite class. Have them get into groups, with a note taker recording material on what students' favorite classes were and why. Collect the notes when they are finished. Not only does this provide valuable discussion practice for the students, it also provides information to the teacher about learning styles and what strategies might be most effective with this group of students.

302 . BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONNAIRE

As a way to introduce a new topic, such as the process of second language acquisition, have students complete a short questionnaire on the topic, asking questions such as "How long does it take to learn a second language?" After they've completed their questionnaires, they can compare their answers with their peers before the teacher supplies the correct answers. In this way, by learning some basic facts and theories on the topic as well as probing some common misconceptions, students get prepared to read about and discuss the topic in depth.

303 . ROLE REVERSAL

Start the class by telling the class that the roles are going to be switched: the teacher will be a student, and students will rotate the teacher role and teach the class something they know how to do for about ten minutes each. It can be something simple, like making a good cup of tea. Take volunteers, and give the student several minutes to prepare. Then give the floor to the student. This not only makes a more student-centered class but also gives students valuable speaking and presentation practice.

304 . SELF-ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING STYLES

On the first day of class, have students complete a short questionnaire that assesses their learning styles. For example, ask questions such as "Do you prefer to hear directions or see directions?" "Do you prefer reading or doing hands-on activities?" Ask about ten questions. Collate the answers after class to find out if more students in the class are visual or kinesthetic learners, for example. This activity is helpful for the teacher to find out not only what the whole class's overall preferred learning styles are but also those of individual learners, important information in preparing lessons.

305 . SEMANTIC FEATURES ANALYSIS

When introducing a unit that has a lot of closely related vocabulary, the instructor can conduct a semantic features analysis. This involves listing the terms analyzed down the left margin of the paper and then the features of those terms across the top and then putting checks in the boxes where they apply. Follows is a simple example of a semantic analysis on garden tools: With this chart, students can distinguish between terms, developing and refining their vocabulary.

306 . SEMANTIC WEB

Before giving students an academic reading on a topic like the AIDS virus, create a semantic web on the board. This involves writing the word "AIDS" in the center of a circle and then

branching out from that with related words connecting to the original word or to each other. So, for example, the word “virus” might connect to “AIDS” and then “communicable” to “virus.” Students call out words they associate with the word “AIDS” or other words connected to it. This is a good way to review or develop vocabulary related to the topic. In addition, at the end students will be primed to read on the topic having gone over related concepts.

307 . STUDENT POLLING

To get the class’s opinion on a topic, select students to travel the room and poll others on their opinions and then report the results back. For example, on the topic of same-sex marriage, students can give opinions on whether or not it should be legalized. The job of “pollster” can rotate for a different topic until everyone has had a chance to poll. This exercise gives students valuable speaking practice as well as primes the student for more in depth discussion on the topic.

308 . TABLOID TITLES

As a way to introduce the passive voice, as well as some colorful vocabulary, have students write about their class in tabloid titles. The teacher may start by passing around a few actual tabloids so students become familiar with what they are: “news” that isn’t news but entertainment. Students can then write their own tabloid titles about their class, working in pairs: “Teacher’s purse is stolen! Students are suspected!” “Jose was seen at Starbucks with a strange woman!” More outrageous titles can also be written: “Class is contacted by aliens!” With this activity, students are gaining reading, writing, and speaking practice as well as vocabulary development.

309 . THINK-PAIR-SHARE

On a given topic, such as different kinds of families, students should first read or listen to a lecture on the material. They should then share and compare their ideas on the topic with a partner before addressing the larger class. A variation of this is pair-share-repeat, in which students switch partners and share the ideas of the old with a new partner. In engaging in this exercise, students get to speak to a variety of audiences and hear different perspectives on an issue while practicing speaking and listening skills.

310 . TITLE SCRABBLE

Before beginning a reading, write its title on the board and play a modified game of “scrabble” with it: finding as many words within the title as possible. Even a simple title like “Reunion” yields “union,” “run,” and “rein,” etc. Students will also inevitably discuss the title itself, what it means, and what the reading is likely to be about. In this way students are developing their vocabulary as well as preparing for the reading.

311 . HOLD A “TOWN HALL MEETING” ON AN ISSUE

When introducing a new topic, tell students you will conduct the class session like a “town hall meeting,” with different speakers on the topic. The teacher should turn over the speaker role to a volunteer, who speaks for a few minutes on the issue, and then selects the next speaker on the topic from volunteers. This can go on for several speakers or until volunteers run out. This creates a more student-centered class and gives a variety of students the chance to speak as well as hear a variety of opinions on the topic.

