

Additional Strategies and Activities for ESL

See the handout "Additional Strategies and Activities for Basic Tutor Training" for more activities that are appropriate for both adult literacy and ESL students.

Gestures

For lower level learners, use gestures to indicate when learners should listen, speak, stop speaking, point to items, etc.

Practice with Gestures

Gestures and body language can be as important as spoken words when conveying meaning. Take turns making common gestures and saying what they mean. (Tie this in with cultural awareness.)

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_gestures has a listing of gestures. Click on the name of the gesture to see a visual example.

Listening Activities

Response Cards

Provide the student with pairs of cards: yes/no, true/false, same/different, or letters. Ask the student questions; the student chooses which card applies. Am I wearing a blue shirt? I am wearing a blue shirt. The starting sound of bus and bat. bat: /b/ or /p/;

Listening Comprehension Activities (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Students have pictures and/or flashcards of words that follow a theme (such as work related, shopping, clothing). The tutor says a word as student listens. The student points to or chooses the correct picture. A picture dictionary is a good resource for learning job-related vocabulary.

Find It

The teacher says names of two items in a newspaper ad and the student scans to find the items.

Drawing

Ask the student to draw something from a description. The more ridiculous the description, the better.

The alien had a large round body with five short legs underneath. He had no head but three big eyes in the middle of his body. Above two of the eyes he had a small pointed nose. On parts of his body he had short spiky hair.

General Listening Practice

Prepare a chart for the learner to complete with the predicted and actual day's weather after listening to a broadcast.

Pronunciation Bingo (<http://iteslj.org/games/9931.html>)

Make a bingo game of words with the same spelling but different pronunciation.

Examples

prógress-progréss	présent-présent	prótest-protést
cóntract-contráct	désert-desért	rébel-rebél
súspect-suspéct	cónsole-consóle	cónflict-conflićt
récord-recórd	cónvict-convíct	ínsert-insért

Listening or Speaking Game

Find pictures depicting words with sounds that need practice. For instance:

/th/ /t/ - thorn/torn, thread/tread, three/tree, thug/tug

/i/ /ee/ - sit/seat, mitt/meat, fit/feet

/b/ /p/ - bill/pill, bat/pat, bear/pear

Have the learner choose the correct picture when you say the word or pick a card and pronounce it or make the pictures into a bingo or memory game.

Write or say a sentence with a blank; the learner says the word that fills the blank.

Picture Dictionary Hunt

Give the student a picture dictionary and then give him/her clues to find certain things.

On page 58, "Who is wearing a hat?"

On page 55, "What do you wear on your finger?"

Show Me a Pen (*The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists*)

Give students sets of twelve concept cards that show pictures of words having problem contrasts, for example ramp and lamp, rake and lake. Ask students to arrange the cards face up on the desk and have them point to the picture of the objects you say.

Simon Says (*The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists*)

Use this children's game to review vocabulary, gestures, and active verbs.

Van Gogh? (*The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists*)

Ask students to follow your directions to complete a drawing. Give simple directions, focusing on lines, space, shape, dimensions, and position words. Example: Draw a triangle. Draw a long line over the top of the triangle. Be sure the line and the triangle touch. What did you draw? (a seesaw)

Wanted Pictures

Cut pictures of various people out of magazines. The more you have, the harder the game is. Give the students a wanted poster and have them find the outlaw.

Wanted Dead or Alive ~ Crazy Daisy Malone, \$10,000 reward!

Last seen in Carlisle, Pennsylvania

Youngest member of the Malone Gang

4 ½ feet tall, Freckles and red cheeks, Shoulder length, red, curly hair.

For higher level students, give an eyewitness report of a crime with a partial description of the criminal. Let them decide which picture shows the criminal.

What Do You Think? (*The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists*)

Tell students to listen as you read them sentences and indicate whether the sentences are true or false.

Which One in Which Square? (Listening and Speaking Activities for Adult ESL Learners)

Find nine small pictures or illustrations (about 2" x 2"). The pictures should all be of the same concept, but distinguishable (all women, but each with a difference). Make a 3" x 3" grid with spaces large enough to hold the pictures. With the learner, describe each picture (woman with brown hair and red shirt; lady with long blond hair and eyeglasses). Ask the learner to find a specific picture (woman with blue hat) and place it on the grid in a specific spot (upper left).

Ask the learner to find another specific picture (woman with black hair and straight bangs) and place it on the grid in a specific spot (to the right of the woman with blue hat).

Encourage the learner to repeat the instructions. When all pictures are placed, ask questions (Where is the woman with the blue hat? She is to the left of the woman with black hair and straight bangs).

Barnyard Dash (How You Can Use a Whiteboard: 10 ESL Games)

The goal is for students to identify a barnyard animal from the sound it makes. Depending on your students' level, you can either draw the pictures of animals on the board or write the words for each. Give each team a different color marker and have them line up. Make the sound yourself, i.e. crow like a rooster, or have a CD ready with animal sounds. As they hear each sound, students race to the board and circle the right word or picture. You can adapt this game to all types of sounds, like a phone ringing, a car honking a horn, or someone sneezing. You may also record expressions or phrases that they have to circle on the board, like "Thanks!" and "You're welcome".

Backs to the Board (How You Can Use a Whiteboard: 10 ESL Games)

This game is great for practicing numbers, especially those tricky ones like 16 and 60, 13 and 30, etc...Write several numbers on the board. Give each team a different color marker. Have students stand with their backs to board. Call out a number. Students turn, try to find the number and circle it. At the end of the game, tally up the scores by counting the different color circles.

Word Grab with Songs (The Internet TESL Journal)

Choose a song that the students have or have not heard before. Choose 10-15 pieces of vocabulary from the song and write them on separate pieces of paper. With lower level groups you may want to pronounce the words with the students first. Stick each word to the board with putty (blue tack). Put the students into 2 teams each one in a line before the board. Play the song. When the 2 students at the front of their line hear a word in the song that is on the board they must race each other to grab that word from the board (this can get quite violent!). They then go to the back of the line and it's up to the next pair. The team with the most words wins.

I don't usually stop the tape so don't choose words that come one after the other. If you want to make it more difficult you can put red herrings up. You can usually play the song a couple of times until they get all the words.

Stand up if you've ever ... (ESL Games Stand up if you've ever...)

This can be played as a game for points (the student gets a point if he/she is the only one standing), or it can be played as a way to get to know each other. In addition to standing, the students can talk a little about the experience.

Demonstrate the game using some examples from your own life. For example:

Stand up if you've ever flown in a helicopter.

Stand up if you've ever been to Disneyland

Stand up if you've never eaten a hamburger

If you manage to be the only person standing for one of your examples, you would get a point.

Now ask students to think of three experiences from their own lives which they can use in the game. Write the name or initials of each student on the board in a line on the board. The first student makes his/her *stand up if...* statement and gets to his/her feet. If he/she is the only student standing he/she gets a point. Mark the point on the board under the name and move on to the next student. Go around the class two or three times and make sure to encourage questions about some of the stories as you uncover them.

Pit Pat Putt: A Pronunciation Game (ESL Games Pit Pat Put: A Pronunciation Game)

Play after identifying a problem with students' awareness of vowel sounds.

Choose ten one syllable words that begin and end with the same consonant. Examples:

Pit Pat Putt Port Pert Part Pet Pot Peat

Cut Court Cute Cat Kit Cot Cart Coat Kite Coot Kurt

But Bet Bat Bit Bought Bait Beat Bite Bot Boat But Bert

Ten Tan Ton Tune Teen Tone Torn Turn Tin Tine

Write the numbers 0 to 9 across the board and underneath each number write one of the words.

0 1 2 3...

Bet Bat But Beat...

Drill the words with the class until the students can recognize and reproduce the different sounds.

Tell students that you are now going to give them your telephone number.

Read your number from the board but instead of giving them the number, give them the representative word. Ask the students to repeat your number back to you and point out any mistakes and practice further.

Ask students to make up their own seven-digit telephone number and then write it down along with its partnering words.

Students then say their number to their neighbors who must decipher each word and write down the appropriate number. Students then compare the numbers and identify any problems.

The activity can then be repeated with different partners until improvement begins to be made.

Speaking Activities

Teaching Pronunciation

Learn how to pronounce the sounds yourself first (it's automatic for native speakers). Then pronounce the sound for the learner. Have the learner watch you say the sound, then look in a mirror as he/she says the sound.

Questions to ask about sounds:

- Is the sound continuous or does it stop?
- Are the vocal cords used in making the sound?
- Does the sound come from the mouth or from the nose?
- What part of the mouth is used to make the sound?
- Are the muscles of the mouth tense or lax?
- Are the lips rounded or unrounded?
- What is the length of the vowel?
- Where is the tongue?

Reduction Drill

Model the statement and have the student provide the pronoun, possessive adjective, contracted form, or other shortened form. Practice one thing at a time.

- I have a pen. I have it.
- Mary is a student. She is a student.
- They are Ed's books. They are his books.

Substitution Drill

Model a statement and give a substitution or show a picture that represents the substitution.

- It's a chair (table, door...).
- I'd like a banana (sandwich, donut, ...).
- The boy is going to the store (playground, library, ...).
- I'm (you're, we're) sitting.
- Mary is running (walking, standing, ...).
- Where is the book (exit, door, ...)?
- He's wearing a hat (coat, shirt, ...).

Extension: Model the statement and provide a new element for students to add to the sentence.

- I have a pencil. (yellow) I have a yellow pencil.

Transformation Drill

After modeling the statement, provide a substitution or cue that forces the student to transform another part of the statement.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| I work in an office. (Robert) | Robert works in an office. |
| He works on Saturday. (last Saturday) | He worked last Saturday. |

Repetition Drill

Model a statement and have the student repeat the statement.

Cadence Drills (*The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists*)

Give students lists of words having the same stress patterns. Model the correct stress pattern for the first few words, then have students read the words with you, then by themselves.

Describe a Picture (Listening and Speaking Activities for Adult ESL Learners)

Find a large, high interest picture. Take turns saying something about the picture.

Intonation Fun (<http://iteslj.org/games/9918.html>)

Use this activity to underline the importance of intonation if your students talk in a monotone. Get them to say 'Hello' in the contexts that follow.

- To a friend.
- To a friend you haven't seen for 3 years.
- To a neighbor that you don't like.
- To a 6-month old baby.
- To someone you have just found doing something they shouldn't.
- To someone on the phone when you're not sure if they are still on the other end.

Movie Lines (adapted from Center for Applied Linguistics)

Find clips of famous movie or TV lines. Have the learners repeat the lines, emphasizing the stresses or intonation patterns.

Poetry (*The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists*)

Use nursery rhymes, limericks, short poems, proverbs, and song lyrics as practice for intonation patterns.

Sentence Tunes (*The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists*)

Have students read a series of similar sentences: statements, open ended questions, yes/no questions, etc. Model the correct stress pattern.

Show and Tell (*The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists*)

Ask students to bring something to class and give a brief presentation about the item.

Twenty Questions (*The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists*)

Find pictures of nouns in the students' vocabulary. The student picks a picture and you ask questions, or you pick a picture and the student asks questions to identify the object portrayed.

The questions should require a yes/no answer.

How Long Can You Talk About ...? (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

The teacher gives a student a topic that she must talk about without pausing (e.g. "a mistake I've learned from," "someone I look up to," "a project I'm working on," "time management," etc.). The teacher uses a timer and the student tries to talk as long as possible without stopping. This activity can be done in small groups to maximize student talking time.

Just a Minute Tic Tac Toe (No-prep warm up activities)

Draw a Tic Tac Toe grid on the board. In each space write a topic in which you think the students have an interest or have some knowledge. Play the game with two teams. To claim the **X** or **O**, a team member must attempt to talk about the topic in the chosen square for 45 to 60 seconds (depending on level) without pausing or repetition.

English Practice Outside of Class

- Public libraries often have audio- and videotapes for English learners.
- Some libraries have ESL books and English language conversation groups.
- Students call each other and talk for five minutes a few times a week.
- Listen to English on television, radio, and the computer and repeat what is said.
- Help the learner find a phone buddy (a volunteer who will talk with him/her).

Listening and Speaking

20 Questions (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

One person thinks of something and the other students ask yes/no questions to try to guess what it is. Students can ask a maximum of 20 questions.

More difficult version: Students can only ask certain types of question (questions in the simple past, for example).

For example: My favorite gift (Listening and Speaking Activities for Adult ESL Learners)
When finished, describe the gift fully.

Answering Simple Questions (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Compile a list of level-appropriate yes/no, one word answer, and who/what/where/when/why questions that are pertinent to the life skill topic or subject matter being studied. Brainstorm possible answers.

Answer Questions

Ask questions for which the answer sounds like another word. Would you rather eat soup or soap? Does a key lock or luck your door? Do you put food in your mouth or your mouse? Do you feel or fill your glass with milk? Do you scratch your itch or each?

Asking Questions (Center for Applied Linguistics, link is no longer active)

Take turns asking each other questions related to a picture. Try not to repeat a question. To practice follow-up questions, take turns asking a simple question and, based on the answer, give an appropriate follow-up question.

Drill (7 ways to use flashcards in English language teaching)

Drill vocabulary of phrases the students have learned. Divide students into two groups, and ask them to stand in two lines. For example, show a picture of a girl. The student who is first in line asks "What is the girl wearing?" The second student in line answers "She is wearing a red dress, a blue jacket, and brown shoes." The second student then turns around and asks the same question of the third student in line. The team that finishes first wins.

Guess the Word (7 ways to use flashcards in English language teaching)

Divide the students into two teams. One student of each team can see the card. He/she needs to explain to the rest what the word is. The team that guessed most words wins.

Guess the Word 2 (7 ways to use flashcards in English language teaching)

This is similar to Guess the Word. One student of each team sees the card. The rest of the students ask question in order to guess the word.

Word Association (No-prep warm up activities)

Give an initial word, for example, *banana*, and each student takes it in turns to say a word which he/she associates with the previous word. If the connection isn't obvious, challenge the student to justify their choice.

banana - monkey - zoo - tourists - hotel - bible ...

Two Truths and a Lie (No-prep warm up activities)

Write or dictate three sentences about yourself. Two statements should be true and one false, for example:

I used to be an air steward I can ride a unicycle My favourite food is sushi

Now invite students to discuss in pairs which statement they think is the lie. Ask each pair which statement they think is untrue and have them explain why. Reveal your answer, and ask students to come up with 3 sentences about themselves. I find students need quite a lot of time (at least five minutes) to come up with three ideas. If some students are still short of a sentence or two, start the game anyway, and they can finish their statements during play. Check students' statements and then have them take it in turn to read them out to the class. In each case, the other students have to guess which is the untrue statement.

Fact or Fiction - Storytelling (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

Students are placed in small groups. Each person tells two stories, one true and one completely made up. The other members of the group try to guess which story is true.

I'm going on a picnic and I'm taking a ... (No-prep warm up activities)

This is a guess the rule type game. Think of a rule which governs which items can be taken on a picnic, for example, it must be six letters long, or it must start with a vowel. In this example the rule is that the word must be an uncountable noun.

Teacher: *I'm going on a picnic and I'm taking milk.*

Student A: *I'm going on a picnic and I'm taking eggs.*

Teacher: *No, you can't take eggs.*

Student B: *Can I take orange juice?*

Teacher: *Yes, you can take orange juice.* Etc.

Continue until students guess the rule. If they're not making any progress, continue to add further items you would take e.g. love, information, air (the choices don't have to make sense within the picnic scenario). Invite the students alone or in pairs to come up with their own rules and let them run the game.

Three Things in Common (No-prep warm up activities)

Ask students to work in pairs and find three things that they have in common and then report back to the class. You can narrow the topic down to areas like: three things we both did at the weekend, three foods we both like, three things we both don't like about this city,,three things neither of us have done yet but would like to, etc.

The Question Game (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

This is a great warm up for getting students to practice asking questions. Students sit in a circle or around a table. One student starts by saying the name of another student and asking that student a question. The student that was asked the question does not respond to the question. Instead, she says the name of another student and asks that person a question. Students continue asking each other questions. A student is out of the game if she cannot generate a question within five seconds. The game continues until only one student is left.

More difficult version: Students are restricted to asking only certain types of questions ("Have you ever questions," second conditional questions, indirect questions, etc.).

One-Upmanship (No-prep warm up activities) (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

Start off by explaining the concept of one-upmanship: some people always like to appear to be more interesting or superior to others in their company. Tell the students a relatively mundane story about something that happened recently and invite a student to tell a similar story but to top it in some way. Each student in turn tries to top the previous student's tale. For example:

Teacher: *Yesterday I overslept and was five minutes late to class.*

Student: *That's nothing, I overslept and was an hour late.*

Student B: *An hour! I once overslept a whole day!*

If the students are sufficiently advanced you could have them watch/read through Monty Python's [Four Yorkshiremen](http://eslgames.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/MontyPython-FourYorkshiremen.pdf) (<http://eslgames.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/MontyPython-FourYorkshiremen.pdf>) sketch which is a very funny illustration of the concept.

More difficult version: Students have to use only one particular grammatical structure.

Fortunately / Unfortunately (No-prep warm up activities)

Start a story and have learners alternately advance the story using these adverbs.

For example:

Teacher: *Yesterday my car was stolen.*

Student A: *Fortunately, it was insured.*

Student B: *Unfortunately, the insurance company went bankrupt.*

Student C: *Fortunately, my grandfather said he would buy me a new car.*

Student D: *Unfortunately, he's lost his mind and doesn't have any money.* Etc.

Organize Yourselves (No-prep warm up activities)

Have students arrange themselves in order according to a given criteria. For example by age, alphabetical order of first name or surname, number of shoes owned, etc.

Describe the Picture to a Partner (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

Student A gets a picture. Student B takes out a blank sheet of paper and something to write with. Student A describes the picture to Student B, and Student B has to draw the picture. Student A cannot use gestures to describe the picture. Student B is allowed to ask questions about the picture. After five minutes, the class votes on whose drawing is the best and most resembles the picture.

More difficult version: For advanced students, difficult-to-describe images can be used.

Describe the Video Clip to a Partner (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

The teacher chooses a short video without dialogue (e.g. a Pixar film or old silent film). Student A watches the first two minutes of the video while Student B puts his head down or leaves the room. After the first two minutes of the film, the teacher pauses the video and Student A describes what he saw to Student B. Students then switch roles for the next two minutes of the video. At the end of the video, the students must put together an accurate summary of everything that happened in the film.

More difficult version: Students describe what is happening while they are watching the video.

The Expert Game (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

One student is chosen to be an “expert” on a certain topic (female fashion trends, child psychology, baseball cards, aliens, etc.). The other students ask the “expert” questions about her area of expertise. The “expert” must immediately answer everyone’s questions by making up the information on the spot. Students should be encouraged to be creative and to try to convince the class that they really know about the subject. To make the activity more fun (and challenging), the teacher should choose topics that the students know absolutely nothing about.

Would You Rather ...? (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

The teacher writes “would you rather” questions on the board and students discuss them in groups. Students explain their answers and then think of their own “would you rather” questions to discuss with their group.

Taboo (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

Taboo is a word guessing game by Hasbro. A player chooses a card and has to make his partners guess the word on the card without saying the “taboo” words. For example, a student may have to make his partners guess the word “pool” without saying the words “swim,” “water,” or “bathing suit.” Students work in pairs or groups of three and compete against other groups. Students can use the actual game cards from Hasbro or cards that the teacher creates. For ideas, see these sets of game cards:

Business English Taboo Cards <http://www.businessenglishresources.com/business-english-taboo/>

Taboo Cards (beginner-intermediate) <http://www.businessenglishresources.com/taboo-cards-beginner-general-english/>

Taboo Cards (intermediate-advanced) <http://www.businessenglishresources.com/taboo-cards-intermediate-advanced-2/>

Four Corners (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

The teacher reads a statement and students have to decide if they *strongly disagree*, *somewhat disagree*, *somewhat agree*, or *strongly agree*. Each corner of the room is reserved for one of the four possibilities. After students hear the statement, they must go to the corner of the room that corresponds with how they feel about the issue. The teacher then asks students to explain their opinions.

More difficult version: Students in the *strongly agree* corner debate the students in the *strongly disagree* corner.

Small Talk (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

Students work in pairs. Student A asks Student B questions. Student B answers the questions but does not elaborate. The idea is for Student A to continue to ask follow-up questions to get more information.

Example:

Student A: Have you ever been to France?

Student B: Yes, I have.

Student A: Did you enjoy your trip?

Student B: It was okay.

Student A: Were you there on a business trip?

Student B: No.

Student A: Were you on vacation?

Student B: Yes.

Student A: Who went with you?

Student B: My family.

This warm up forces students to ask for more information and keep a conversation going.

Conversation Starters (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

Intriguing conversation questions can also serve as a warm up for business English classes. See these business English Conversation Starters for ideas.

<http://www.businessenglishresources.com/conversation-starters/>

Find someone who... (ESL Games Find someone who...)

Find someone who:

	name	extra information
works with children		
speaks another language		
needs English for their job		
likes the same music as you		

Give each student a copy of the question sheet and tell them not to write on the paper until the activity has started. For each item, elicit the question needed to find someone whose name can be written in the *name* column. Brainstorm examples of secondary questions they can ask

Find someone who:

	name	extra information
has won a competition		
has lived here in the same house/flat for longer than 10 years		
has never been to England		
has seen the pyramids		
has had food poisoning		
has missed a flight		
has eaten frogs legs		

to find out something for the *extra information* column.

Leave a couple of blank rows at the bottom of the question sheet and ask the class to come up with their own ideas for the last two items.

It's worth stressing that students need to find only **one** name for each row. Be sure to model the activity because there's plenty of room for students to misinterpret the instructions.

When everybody has finished, usually after fifteen to twenty minutes or longer, go through each of the questions and ask students who they found and any extra information they discovered.

Printables with a blank template and with sample questions in different verb tenses are available at <http://eslgames.com/find-someone-who/>

Communication Activities

(<http://www.cal.org/adultspeak/pdfs/InstructionalActivityPacketBEmployment.pdf>)

- Model dialogues: Students practice reading and performing simple model dialogues related to real-life scenarios such as: on-the-job interactions, shopping, a visit to the doctor's office or clinic, etc.
- Substitution sentences: Students practice key learned sentences by substituting one word in each sentence (e.g., "Please help me with this customer [machine, task, bag]").
- Personal referents: Pronouns and possessive adjectives are learned and practiced to avoid confusion in relaying information (e.g., "I drive my car to work," "He uses his hammer").
- Alternate forms: Given a sentence or a picture, students practice saying similar information in different ways (e.g., "I don't have benefits = I don't get vacation time. I don't have health insurance").

A Day in the Life of My Paper Friend (adapted from Center for Applied Linguistics)

Find large magazine photos of people at work (one person per photo). Select a photo and describe the daily routine of the paper friend, perhaps an activity per hour, or choose specific times.

Describe a Process (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Bring a small portable appliance or tool to class. Identify the parts of the appliance. Ask the learner to operate the appliance based on your oral instructions. While describing the process, use connecting phrases such as to start, first, then, after that, the next thing to do, the next step, finally, the last step.

Encourage the learner to repeat the instructions while following them.

Ask the learner to select an operation to describe.

General Listening and Speaking Practice

Plan with the learner to listen/watch the same TV/radio broadcast, such as the news or weather. Discuss it at the next session.

Provide audio recordings of a passage. Discuss it at the next session.

Describing a Picture (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Find a high interest magazine photo or textbook illustration. Take turns saying something different about the picture.

Getting the Facts (*The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists*)

Have students listen as you read a passage, then ask them questions about details in the passage. Answers can be multiple choice, yes/no, or short statements.

It Happened Last Week

(Listening Speaking Activities for Adult ESL Learners) (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Review question words: who, what, where, when, why, how, how long, how many/much.

Make a one or two sentence statement about something you did the previous week.

My family went on a trip last weekend.

Have the student ask you questions about what you said.

Switch roles.

Pause to Respond

Brainstorm and practice ways to pause and ask for time to think before responding to a question.

- One minute please.
- Let me think.

Picture Description – That's Not Right! (Listening and Speaking Activities for Adult ESL Learners)

Find an interesting picture with a fair amount of detail. Pre-teach any necessary vocabulary and give the learner a few minutes to study the picture. Explain to the learner that you are going to describe the picture, but you will be making mistakes. When you make a mistake, the learner should say "That's not right" or hold up a card with those words. The learner then says a corrected statement, first saying "I think you meant to say ..." or "Did you mean to say ...?"

Picture Descriptions (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Find a large magazine photo or textbook illustration that shows a specific setting (city, park, kitchen, school, office, hospital, store, etc.) and several people engaged in one or a variety of activities. Ask a series of yes/no (Is the man skating or sledding?) or who/what/where/when questions related to the picture. Some questions will be based on direct evidence in the picture; other responses will be imagined or referred.

Teach Conversation/Social Phrases

Practice useful social phrases. Try to avoid shortened, informal statements. Say "Do you like to watch soccer?" instead of "Like soccer?"

What is your name?

My name is ____.

Where do you live?

I live at ____.

Where do you shop?

I shop at ____.

Do you work? Where do you work?

Yes, I work at ____.

Do you have children? Are you married?

Yes...No...

Question and Answer Practice (Assembling an ESL Teaching Toolbox)

Beginning students need to understand and respond to different types of questions. The questions in this list get progressively harder to understand and answer, since they require more language to answer and they become more abstract.

Type of Question	Examples
Yes/No questions	Is it a man? Do you like to swim?
Choice questions	Is it night or day? Do you prefer coffee or tea?
Information questions	Who? Where? When? What? How? What do you like to do on Sundays? Where do you usually buy your groceries?
Open-ended and opinion questions	Why is he doing this? What do you think?

Use a set of prepared questions with a picture as a quick assessment of understanding. Any time there is a communication block, consider the type of question you may have asked. Re-phrase using a different question type. Vary the question types to check comprehension and avoid asking "Do you understand?" since students will generally say they do.

Visit a Store (or the Library)

Say hello to the clerk or other shoppers. Find specific products and/or ask the clerk a question.

Which Would You Rather Do? (Listening and Speaking Activities Adult ESL Learners) (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Create a deck of ten to fifteen cards, on which are written pairs of phrases of contrasting things people do:

watch TV – read a magazine

get up early – sleep late

vacation at the beach – vacation in the mountains

Learner draws a card. Ask the other person "Would you rather watch TV or read a magazine?" Person responds with his/her preference. Ask "Why?" Switch roles.

Will You Repeat That, Please? Clarification Strategies (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Compile a list of clarification strategies. Post these on a wall or write them in the learner's journal.

Please repeat.

Would you please say that again?

Please speak slowly.

How do you spell that?

Is this right?

Did you say ____ or ____?

What is the word for this in English? (while pointing to an object)

Extension: Practice by saying a sentence, but say 'blah blah' in place of a real word.

Where do you work? I work at blah blah.

What time do you get to work? I get to work at blah blah.

Wrong Answer

Write a list of statements with words and structures used in recent lessons. Some statements should be true and some false, or some yes and some no, or some right and some wrong.

Read a statement to the student. The student determines and states true/false, yes/no, right/wrong. For incorrect statements, the student adds a correct statement. Example: We are in New York. No, we are in Pennsylvania.

Have the student write and/or state questions for you to respond to.

Wrong Word (Listening and Speaking Activities for Adult ESL Learners) (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Prepare several statements. In each statement, include one word or phrase that is not right for the context. Read the statement to the learner. Ask the learner to identify the word that is wrong and suggest an appropriate word. (I'm going to the dentist yesterday. I went to the dentist yesterday; I'm going to the dentist tomorrow).

Vocabulary

Identify Objects

Take a walk with the learner. Encourage students to ask the names of objects and actions they see. Take a notebook to record the words.

Teaching Words / Vocabulary

- Teach only a few words (four to six) at a time; repeat, review, recycle frequently.
- With beginning learners, choose one way of saying something and stick with it. Example: "Turn off the light.", not "Switch off the light." or "Turn/put out the light."
- Use pictures or the real object, but use multiple examples of the same word to avoid confusion. (Show three different types of pencil; pencil, not yellow, straight, write)
- Use Total Physical Response (TPR). (Contact TLC if you need more information on TPR, or search YouTube).

Vocabulary Practice

Draw a 3" x 3" grid and provide themed pictures sized to fit the spaces. Ask the learner to place the chair in the upper left corner, the lamp in the center, etc.

What's in the Bag? (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Locate four to six objects for which learners know the names. Place each object in a separate bag or box. One bag at a time, give clues about the object (color, material, use, cost). Give the most generic clues first, saving a give-away clue for last.

Variations: Have the students ask questions about the object.

Have the students bring the objects and give the clues.

Suction Cup Ball (How You Can Use a Whiteboard: 10 ESL Games)

Buy one (or several!) inexpensive suction cup balls. These balls are made up of several tiny suction cups that stick to whiteboards. Fill your whiteboard with letters or syllables and each student has to supply a word that starts with the letter or syllable they hit.

What Is Missing? (English Teachers What's Missing)

Arrange a variety of items whose names the students are learning, such as foods or school supplies, on tray. Separate the class into groups of about five students each. Ask the students to look carefully at the objects and try to remember what they see. Then have the students close their eyes while you remove one object. The students then open their eyes and try to notice which object was missing, and state its name. Repeat this several times, removing a different object each time.

Variation: Instead of removing just one item, remove the tray with all the objects. Have the students write a list of all the objects they can remember.

Variation: Use pictures of objects instead of the real objects.

Make the Most Words (No-prep warm up activities)

Write a topical vocabulary item on the board. In twos or threes students make as many new words from it as they can. Use longish seed words such as, *apologize*, *dictionary* or *September*. Score teams a point per word and award a bonus point for the longest.

Make the Longest Words (No-prep warm up activities)

Write a topical target word vertically down the board, for example, WINTER. In twos or threes students attempt to come up with the longest word that begins with each letter. Give teams a point per word and a bonus point for the longest.

Waterfall

Industrious

Nausea

Terrified

Empty

Retailer

What Does Your Name Mean? (No-prep warm up activities)

Using a dictionary, google or any other resource, students find and write down an appropriate adjective that begins with each letter of their first name. For example:

Flirtatious, Relaxed, Extrovert, Desirable

Mixed Up Sentence – Anagram Variation (adapted from No-prep warm up activities)

Write a sentence on the board that incorporates vocabulary being studied, but scramble the letters of each word. For example:

What do you know about bananas?

Ahwt od ouy wonk aoubt aaabnns ?

Describe the Word to a Partner (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

The teacher writes vocabulary words on small pieces of paper. Students work in pairs. The pieces of paper are placed face down in front of the students. Student A starts by picking up a piece of paper and describing the word to Student B. Student B has to guess the word. Once the correct word is guessed, the students switch roles. The winners are the two students with the most correct guesses after 10 minutes.

More difficult version: Students have to guess abstract nouns, phrasal verbs, adjectives, and adverbs (words like "clever," "determination," "come up with," etc.).

Collocations Game (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

Students are given three words and have to determine what word collocates with all three words. For example, if the words are "super," "mainframe," and "personal," the word that collocates with all three is "computer."

For lists, see:

Collocation Game <http://www.businessenglishresources.com/collocations-game/>

Business Collocations Game <http://www.businessenglishresources.com/business-collocations-game/>

Odd-One-Out Collocations Game <http://www.businessenglishresources.com/odd-one-collocations-game/> (Which one is not grammatically phrased correctly?)

Categories (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

The teacher chooses a category that is relevant to what the class is studying. For a business English class, the teacher might pick "positive adjectives for people," or "company slogans." Students go around in a circle and have to name something in that category. If a student can't think of something in five seconds, he/she is out of the game. The game continues until only one person remains.

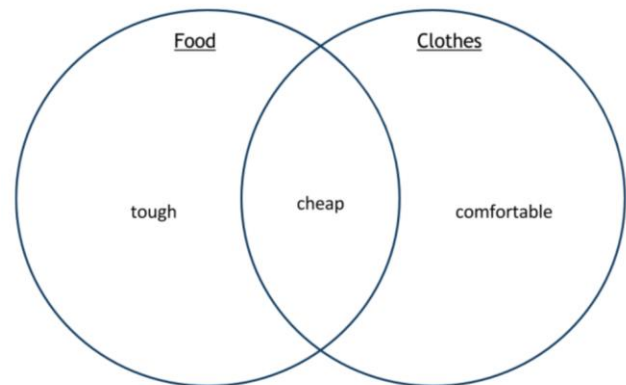
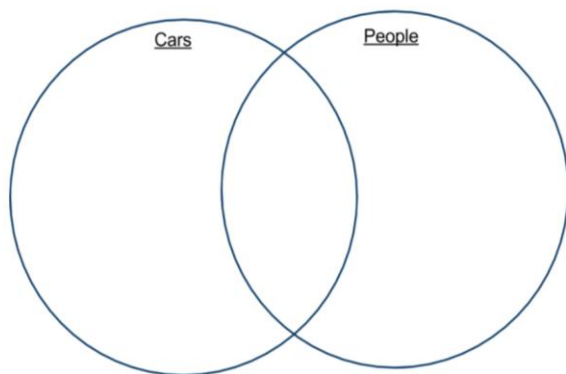
Synonyms/Antonyms/More Intense Words (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

Students work in pairs. The teacher gives students a word (*good*, for example). Students have to think of synonyms, antonyms, and more intense words (*terrific, great, wonderful, horrible, awful*, etc.). The pair of students that thinks of the most words wins. This warm up helps students avoid using the same bland words over and over again (*good, nice, bad, interesting*, etc.).

Comparing Adjectives (ESL Games Comparing Adjectives)

Prepare a handout with a Venn Diagram with two circles. Tell the students two topics, and provide about twenty words that describe one or both of the topics. Students write each word where they think it fits. Students then take turns explaining why they placed each word where they did.

For example:



comfortable, cheap, tough, delicious, horrible, stylish, juicy, fast, trendy, hot, checked, junk, crispy, bland, plain, bright, spicy, baggy, sweet, tasty, cool, healthy, frozen, boring, striped

cheap, expensive, fast, big, small, intelligent, stylish, interesting, boring, powerful, spacious, slow, funny, sleepy, busy, dangerous, lazy, good, bad, rich, old

See the web page for more possible combinations and relevant adjectives.

A to Z Word Race (ESL Games A to Z Word Race) (No-prep warm up activities)

Write the letters **A** to **Z** in columns down the board (see the illustration). Make sure that there's enough space next to each letter for a word to be written.

A	Banker	Chef
D	E	F
Gardener	H	I
J	K	L
M	N	O
Pilot	Q	Rockstar
S	T	U
V	Waiter	X
Y	Z	

Divide the class into two teams, with each team to nominate a writer who comes to the front and stands by the board. Each writer will need a different colored board pen / piece of chalk.

As soon as you say start, students must race to write an appropriate word next to each letter. For example if the theme is adjectives then they might write. **Angry**, **Beautiful**, etc. Team mates help by shouting out suggestions and giving spelling tips. Students use any resources they have such as textbooks and dictionaries. Only one word can be written for each letter so the first to start writing claims the letter.

After a five or ten minute limit, or when all the letters have been used (leave out **X**) give a point for every word each team has managed and congratulate the winners. If there are any spelling mistakes then elicit the correct spellings from the class.

Variation: Students from each team line up. At the start the first student in each line goes to the board and writes a word, then goes to the back of the line and the next student in line goes to the board to write a word.

Variation: Pairs of students at their seats do this on paper.

Variation: A single student does this for homework.

Categories (ESL Games Categories)

Divide the board into six squares and at the top of each square write a category heading. Categories might include: *Countries, Games and sports, Cities, Animals, Food and drink, Verbs, Adjectives, Jobs, Famous people, Things you find in the bathroom / kitchen, Things you take on holiday, Fruit and vegetables, Things that fly*

Countries 	Famous people 	Food and drink 	B T S D M E
Adjectives 	Animals 	Things you take on holiday Coel dudes Tigers	

Divide the class into two or three teams. Give each team a blank sheet of paper and ask them to create an answer sheet by copying the category layout on the board.

Choose a letter of the alphabet. Write it next to your table so you don't repeat yourself later.

As quickly as possible teams must try to think of a word that fits each category and which begins with the given letter. They should write their answers under the appropriate category on their answer sheet. For example,

if category headings include **Animals** and **Drinks**, and the letter you've chosen is *B*, teams might write *Bear* and *Beer* in the appropriate categories. The game can be made more difficult by choosing more challenging letters. As soon as a team has a word for every category they should shout *stop!* The other team(s) must immediately stop writing and put their pens down.

Take the answers from the first team to finish and give a point for each word that fits correctly, then collect the answers from the other teams and award further points. The team with the most points at the end of *x* rounds is the winner.

Cross Word Puzzle Variations (SimpleESL)

The words in the crossword puzzle probably follow a theme, such as adjectives or adverbs. For examples see:

<http://simpleesl.com/esl-activities-english-adjectives-crossword-puzzle-activity/> or
<http://simpleesl.com/adverbs-of-manner-esl-puzzle-english-crossword-activity/>

The puzzle might be of places and buildings, with questions that refer to what you do at each place. See http://simpleesl.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/BPCP2_150x150_p1.jpg for an example.

Use pictures instead of definitions for the crossword. For example see <http://simpleesl.com/have-you-heard-of-esl-puzzle/>

Dice Matrix Games (Skills Workshop)

Each person throws two dice, one at a time. The first die determines the column; the second die determines the row. The target word at the intersection must be used correctly in a complete sentence. For an example see

<file:///C:/Users/COLLE~1/AppData/Local/Temp/e1e3matrixdicegames.pdf>

Dice matrix games – homophones A



		1st THROW					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
2nd THROW	1	find	way	hole	our	made	here
	2	heal	road	new	worn	too	allowed
	3	won	court	bare	break	pair	groan
	4	wood	their	peace	write	steal	sun
	5	flower	waste	weather	week	wear	check
	6	which	through	site	see	poor	passed

Variations for words: body parts, clothing items, kitchen utensils

Variations: list the word, student gives the plural or past tense

Variations: Students write the sentence. Other students write the sentence as a dictation exercise.

Name Ten (No-prep warm up activities)

Have students think of 10 items that fit a certain criteria. For example:

- Jobs where you have to wear a uniform
- Sports that are played with a ball
- Foods that contain egg
- Animals that lay eggs
- Three letter parts of the body – *eye, arm, leg, hip, ear, toe, jaw, rib, lip, gum*

Spontaneous Scatter Sheet (No-prep warm up activities)

Scatter Sheets are a great way to review vocabulary, introduce a theme and get students talking. As a warmer, have students brainstorm words connected to a theme, for example, the seaside, London, marketing, etc. Write these words on the board randomly, not in straight lines or columns but higgledy-piggledy and at jaunty-angles. When you have around 20 words on the board, go around the room asking each student in turn to describe one of the words; when it's been successfully guessed, circle it and move on to the next student. Encourage students to let the describer produce at least two sentences before shouting out the answer.

Phrasal Verb Match Up (ESL Games Phrasal Verb Match Up)

For each group of 2-4 student make two piles of paper slips. On one pile write the verbs that you want to practice and on the other pile, prepositions which are commonly used in phrasal verbs.

Example verbs: *come, give, go, get, hold, keep, make, put, see, set, take, turn*

Example prepositions: *over, on, in, through, down, up, at, off, of, out, around, about, away, for, with, back, into*

Student in each group takes turns to turn over a slip from each pile; for example, they might get *keep* and *off*. If the student thinks that it's a valid phrasal verb then he/she must use it in a sentence in order to get a point. The other students can challenge if they are skeptical; dictionaries and the teacher can be used to solve disputes.

Variation: If students have smartphones, they can also use the Phrasal Verb Match Up web app.

Snap (to be) (ESL Games Snap)

This variation of Snap practices forms of to be.

To play: Two players. Place question cards in one pile, response cards in separate pile.

Turn over one card from each stack at same time. If the two cards make a correct statement (with respect to proper pronoun and verb form) first player to slap the cards collects them. Object is to have the larger pile when all cards are collected.

Easy: Pile one contains pronouns I, you, he, she, it, we, they. Pile two contains am, are, is.

More difficult: Pile one contains questions. Pile two contains positive and negative responses:

Questions written on cards:

Are you English? Are John and Elizabeth at school. Is Peter Australian?

Is your father a businessman? Are you from Spain? Are you a taxi driver?

Is Maria a student? Are you married? Are you and your friend on holiday?

Are his friends programmers? Are they tourists?

Responses written on cards:

Yes, I am. No, I'm not.

Yes, you are. No, you're not.

Yes, he is. No, he's not. Yes, she is. No, she isn't.

Yes, we are. No, we aren't.

Yes, you are. No, you're not.

Yes, they are. No, they aren't.

Reading Activities: Decoding

Make Your Own Picture Dictionary

Have learners cut out pictures or print their own pictures to make personal picture dictionaries.

Minimal Pairs (Literacy Development among Adult English Learners)

Write a two-column chart of words that are the same except for one sound (goat/coat; cab/gab; curl/girl). Practice reading the words together. Read one word from each row; the learner circles the word he/she hears.

Using Flashcards

Put the word on the front; the reverse can be blank or contain the translation from the first language, an illustration, or a definition. (Have the student do the writing for practice writing.) The student might first practice by placing the English word face up, and name the word in his/her language. Then place the native language face up and name the English word (considered more challenging).

Sentences with Difficult-to-Pronounce Words (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

The teacher keeps track of words the students are having trouble pronouncing. The teacher then makes sentence strips using these words. Students take turns reading these difficult-to-pronounce sentences.

For example, if students have trouble pronouncing the words *responsibility*, *prioritize*, *comfortable*, *educate*, and *extremely*, the teacher might make the following sentence strips:

This office chair is *extremely comfortable*.

We need to *educate* people on how to *prioritize* their *responsibilities*.

For ideas, see these commonly mispronounced words:

<http://www.businessenglishresources.com/31-2/teachers-section/mini-lessons/commonly-mispronounced-words-english-language-learners/>

Word Mazes (ESL Games Word Mazes)

Word mazes are a form of puzzle where students must follow the correct sequence of words to make their way from the start of the maze to the finish.

These links provide examples:

<http://eslgames.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/twosyllablewordstressmaze.pdf>

<http://eslgames.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/3syllablecharactertraitsmaze-1.pdf>

<http://eslgames.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Foursyllablewordstressmaze.pdf>

<http://eslgames.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/silentlettermaze.pdf>

Writing Activities

Part of Speech Practice

Copy an article of interest, for example sports, travel, or food. White out the part of speech you are studying (example all prepositions).

Read the entire article aloud to the student. Then read the article again, omitting the prepositions, and having the student supply them.

If working with a beginning student, have a list of prepositions available and have them write in the correct words. You can do this with nouns, verbs, adjectives, or other grammatical forms.

Variation: Work from a Mad Libs book, or an online equivalent (try Wacky Web Tales, <http://www.eduplace.com/tales/> or Mad Glibs, <http://www.madglibs.com/>).

Writing Race (How You Can Use a Whiteboard: 10 ESL Games)

This game is similar to **Barnyard Dash** but students race to the board to write a letter, a word, or a complete answer to a question. You can have each student write the complete answer or play it like a relay race where each student in the team only writes one word, then races to pass the marker to a teammate who must write the next one, and so on.

Mixed Up Sentence (adapted from No-prep warm up activities)

Write a sentence on the board but mix up the word order, then challenge students to reconstruct the original sentence. For example:

morning hadn't eaten wish that lasagna I at this 5am

What Do You Know about Bananas? (adapted from No-prep warm up activities)

Set a 5 minute time limit and in groups have students think up and write down as many facts as they can about bananas (or cats, Belgium, cultural or sports icons, etc.). One point should be given for each true sentence.

Error Correction Races (TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults)

The teacher puts students in two teams and gives each team a list of sentences containing mistakes. Students race to see which team can correct the entire page first.

More difficult version: The teacher includes some correct sentences as well as sentences with multiple mistakes.

For ideas, see links to error correction exercises:

<http://www.businessenglishresources.com/31-2/student-section/practice-exercises-new/>

Links to other exercises are found on this page as well.

The Recipe Game (ESL Games The Recipe Game)

Put students into pairs or threes and tell them that they are going to write a shopping list, then write on the board or dictate the following list (or give each group a copy of the shopping list available at <http://eslgames.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/shoppinglist2.pdf>

- a green vegetable
- another vegetable
- meat or fish
- a tin of something
- a jar of something
- something salty
- something sweet
- a dairy product
- an herb or spice

In groups students choose one food item that fits each category. When everyone has finished, collect the shopping lists and randomly redistribute them so that each group has a different group's list.

Students now have 15 minutes to come up with a three course meal using only the ingredients on their shopping list (plus salt, pepper and cooking oil). Circulate among the groups and help out where you can.

When the time is up, tell the groups that they must take it in turns to present their menu to the other students, encourage them to make each course sound as appetizing as possible. Give them five minutes to brainstorm a few ideas before starting the presentations. Finally students all vote on which menu they would be most willing to eat.

Integrated Activities

Ask Questions

Put vocabulary words (for example) on index cards. Place the cards face down. Ask the student to turn over a card then make up a question using that word. If the student asks a question correctly, he keeps the card; if incorrect, the card goes into a different pile.

Field Trips

Once students have some basic language skills, take them on a field trip. Field trips are opportunities to practice asking directions, writing simple thank-you notes, looking at bus schedules to plan the trip, etc.

- After learning the names of fruits and vegetables, visit the grocery store to find them.
- After role-playing buying stamps, go to the post office.
- Visit the library to get a library card and ask the librarian about books of interest.

Listening Exercise (Song Puzzle) (<http://iteslj.org/games/9927.html>)

For this exercise you will need the lyrics of a song in English. (Try <http://www.lyrics.com/> or <http://www.lyrster.com/>.) Cut the lines of the song into strips. The student will try to put the lines of the song in order. Play (or sing) the song as many times as necessary. Choose the song based on the level and interest of the learner.

Past, Present, Future (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Prepare ten to twelve level-appropriate sentences that are pertinent to the life skill topic or subject matter being studied. The sentences should utilize verb tenses already studied and practiced by the learner. On the board or paper write the words Past, Right Now, Future, Every Day. Read a sentence from the list. Have the learner point to the appropriate choice.

Picture Description – That's Not Right (Center for Applied Linguistics)

Find a large magazine photo or textbook illustration that shows a specific setting (city, park, kitchen, school, office, hospital, store, etc.) and several people engaged in one or a variety of activities. Make a card labeled "That's not right!"

Show the picture to the learner and let him/her look at it for a few minutes. Describe the picture, using level-appropriate vocabulary and sentences, occasionally stating something that is not true about the picture.

The learner listens, and when he/she hears a discrepancy between the oral account and the actual picture, he/she raises the "That's not right!" card. Ask the learner to say a corrected statement. Teach polite ways of doing this, such as "I think you meant to say" or "I think you said, Did you mean to say"

Play Jeopardy

Draw the chart on a white/black board, or project by overhead, or make a permanent chart on cardboard. Choose headings and choices, then cover them with amounts of \$100 to \$500 down each category. The student chooses a category and an amount, the word is uncovered, and the student asks a question, using words such as how many, how much, some, a little, too much, a few, some any. Play for highest total score or how many tries it takes to reach a set score. Adapt the suggested question styles to the vocabulary list.

Fruit	Vegetables	Meat	Dairy Products	Miscellaneous
cherries	onion	fish	yogurt	pasta
apples	beans	hot dogs	milk	turkey
fruit	chili pepper	beef	butter	green beans
orange	potato	chicken	ice cream	rice
banana	squash	sausage	cheese	hamburgers

In a class divide the students into two or three groups. Decide ahead of time if one person selected by the group will be the spokesperson, or if students will take turns stating the question, with assistance from the rest of the group.

Decide ahead of time if the points for wrong answers will be deducted.

Decide ahead of time, if the group choosing the question answers incorrectly, if the next group must try to answer that question, or just goes to their own choice.

Variations for categories: idioms, verb tenses, games played inside or outside, states and capitals, animals or plants, body parts, clothing items, kitchen utensils, furniture, plurals
Sample questions are provided at <http://eslgames.com/esl-jeopardy/> including one with idioms.

Plan a Restaurant Meal

Get menus from the learner's favorite restaurants. Practice choosing and ordering meals.

Plan a Special Family Dinner

Bring a grocery store ad to the lesson. The learner has xxx dollars to plan a special family dinner that includes a balanced main course and dessert. Create a shopping list and calculate prices. Write a menu for the meal including preparation directions.

The Question Game

Create a set of cards with vocabulary you've covered in recent lessons.

Decide on a type of question to review and practice forming questions.

Have students pick cards from a bowl or hat and incorporate those words into their questions.

For example: Create cards with the names of family members (mother, father, son, etc.) and practice asking questions. Is your _____ in Seattle? or Where is your _____?, filling in the blank with the card picked.

(Another) Question Game

Select a picture of one person and create cards with simple adjectives (big, small, pretty, thin, young, old, etc.). Practice asking "Is he/she _____?" and filling in the blank with the card picked.

(One More) Question Game

Create cards with the words who, what, where, why, when, how. Have students form questions appropriate to the cards they pick. If they pick "Where", they should ask "Where are you?" or "Where do you live?", if they pick "How", they should ask "How are you?" etc.

Understanding Folk Tales (Using Cultural Artifacts to Teach ESL)

Folk tales, like proverbs, represent the intellectual and artistic work of countless generations. They remain powerful because communities use folk tales to educate listeners about the values and behaviors expected of them. In the classroom, students and instructors can work together to understand what kind of cultural values are encoded in these popular and familiar stories.

You can start by choosing a folktale in English. Present key vocabulary and review any information students might need to understand the story. Students then read the folk tale and discuss it. Ask "What happens in the story?" then "What is the meaning of the story?". After the discussion, encourage students to identify folk tales from their own cultures that address similar issues (e.g., being kind or humble, the results of being greedy, judging somebody, etc.). Possible topics for investigation are:

- In what ways are the stories the same? In what ways are they different?
- Why do you think the stories are different?
- What might those differences suggest about the cultures that tell the various versions of the story?

Pictionary (How You Can Use a Whiteboard: 10 ESL Games)

This is a classic and one that may easily be adapted to any level. Students are split into two teams and they take turns drawing words, actions, or situations that they have drawn from a pile of cards. Teammates guess what is being drawn.

Tic Tac Toe (How You Can Use a Whiteboard: 10 ESL Games)

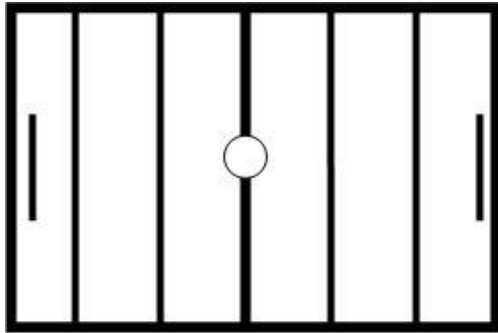
Draw a 3 by 3 grid on the whiteboard. For example, practice simple past tense. Write a sentence in each square but leave a space for the verb. Write a list of ten verbs on the side; one will not be used. The student states the correct form of the verb to complete the sentence, then gets the X or O on the board. Three Xs or Os in a row wins the game.

Tic Tac Toe (Try These 6 Super ESL Games for Grammar Review)

Decide which grammar your students need to review. Then write the topics on nine index cards or large enough pieces of paper. Arrange the cards face down on a table or stick them on the board, in the classic Tic Tac Toe 3 x 3 grid.

Next, teams take turns choosing a square (you can add letters across and numbers down to make it easier to call out the squares). You turn over the card and reveal to your students the tense/structure/grammar point written on it. Students must then either provide an example or ask a question that another team member must answer correctly to get their X or O on that square. The first team that gets three Xs or Os across, down or diagonally wins.

Football! (Try These 6 Super ESL Games for Grammar Review)



Draw a playing field like this one on the board or a large piece of paper:

Divide the students into two teams. Place a “ball” token at the center. Then, students must answer questions correctly to approach the posts and score a goal. For example, Team A answers correctly and moves right one step closer to their goal. Team B answers correctly and moves the ball left back to the center. Team A answers incorrectly and can’t move

the ball at all. Team B answers correctly and moves left one step closer to their goal. If Team A were to keep answering incorrectly and Team B correctly, then Team B will continue moving left to eventually score a goal. When a team scores, the ball moves back to the center, and the team that did not score last starts. The team with the most goals wins.

Adverbial Charades (adapted from The Internet TESL Journal)

Each student is given a card with a familiar adverb on it--i.e. quickly, angrily, loudly, happily. One at a time each student acts out the adverb for the other students to guess.

Pass the Bomb (ESL Games Pass the Bomb) (commercial game Pass the Bomb, Junior Edition)

The commercial game comes with a little battery powered bomb and a pack of illustrated cards which show different situations or locations (*on the dining table, in the bathroom, at the beach, etc.*)

Take a card at random, for example, *in a suitcase* and show it to the students. Give them a few moments to digest the theme and then press the little red button on the bottom of the bomb. The bomb will start ticking.

Pass the ticking time-bomb to the first student who has to say a word connected to the subject, for example, *sun cream*, he/she then passes the bomb as quickly as possible to the next student in the circle who must say a different word connected to the theme, etc.

After a gap of between 20 and 120 seconds the bomb goes ‘off’ with an explosive sound effect. The person holding the bomb when it explodes gets the card which is in play and the game restarts with the next person and a new card.

The winner is the person with the fewest cards after the final round.

Use the junior edition, with pictures. The standard version uses cards showing letters which must be used to make valid words, great fun with native speakers, but a little challenging for all but the most advanced classes.

Variation: Make your own cards with situations and locations. Set a timer.

Memory Game (adapted from ESL Games Memory Game)

This is an old time memory game that can be used for reviewing *there is* and *there is / are / was / were* and for introducing a bit of useful vocabulary around common household objects.

You will need: a tray, a tea towel and about 15 different, common household objects (some in multiples). For example, a battery, a lightbulb, some coins, 2 teaspoons, a lighter, a tea bag, a fork, an eraser, some rubber bands, a coaster etc. The collection of objects must be able to fit together on the tray and be hidden under the tea towel.

Produce the tray with the objects covered up by the tea towel. Ask students to come and stand round the tray and tell them that they will have one minute to try and remember as many items as they can. Then they must return to their desks and write down as many objects as they can remember. If they don't know the English word for the object they can write it down in their own language or draw a picture.

Remove the tea towel for one minute and then send students back to their desks and give them two minutes to write their lists.

Tell the students how many objects they should have on their list (15), see if together with their neighbor they can remember all 15 objects.

Finally go round the class asking each student to name one of the objects from the tray using *there is* or *there are*. Remove the objects from the tray as you go along, putting everything back in your bag.

Towards the end of the class, get students to see how many of the objects they still can remember by asking them what items were on the tray. Students this time replying with *there was* and *there were*.

Variation: Show students the tray. With students turned away or eyes closed, remove just one or two objects. Students try to remember what was removed.

Word Search Variations (SimpleESL)

In addition to listing the words to be found in a word search, list statements that are missing the word. The words might follow a pattern, such as all being adverbs, or a structure, such as 'Do you mind if ...'

See <http://simpleesl.com/do-you-mind-if-esl-puzzle-english-word-search-activity/> for an example.

Have some of the words from the word search make a sentence. For an example see <http://simpleesl.com/environment-esl-worksheet-printable-english-word-search-puzzle/ei-2/>

Idiom Bingo

Put a slang word or idiom in each box. Read/state the meaning of the idiom. The student marks the correct idiom.

Tic-Tac-Toe

Students must pronounce a word, answer a question, use a word in a sentence, provide the plural or past tense of a word to place the X or O.

Scavenger Hunt (ESL Games Scavenger Hunt)

This can be played inside or outside. If the students have digital cameras available, they might take pictures of items rather than collecting them. If cameras are not available student might write where they saw an item.

Give pairs or teams of students a list of 10 to 20 items which must be found. Set a time limit of about thirty minutes, then meet to compare answers.

The list of things to be found can be quite vague, or the list can be more specific.

Here are some items you could put on a list:

Vague list

- something old
- something smooth
- something shiny
- something beautiful
- something expensive
- something yellow
- something made in another country
- something tiny
- something that's alive
- something dangerous
- something horrible
- something you can eat
- something you also have at home
- something that smells bad / good
- something made of wood
- something damp

Specific list items

- a menu
- a truck
- a doorbell
- a garden ornament
- a flag
- a clock
- someone wearing a hat
- a man with a beard
- a spider web
- a poster for a forthcoming event
- a loaf of bread
- a vending machine
- someone wearing a uniform
- a rose

Number Bingo (adapted from ESL Games Number Bingo)

This is a game to help beginners get used to recognizing hearing and seeing numbers.

Give each student a bingo card. If there aren't enough different cards, you can use duplicates.

3	29	23
11	13	26
8	22	12

Explain that you are going to read out a number between 1 and 30 and that students should check whether the number is on their card. If it is, they should circle it. Explain that you will continue calling out numbers randomly until a student has crossed off all the numbers on his/her card. The student must then either jump up, stand up, or put their hand up and shout *Bingo!*

Variation:

Explain the meaning of plus and minus by doing a few simple sums on the board. Now start the game by reading randomly chosen sums from the bingo master card. Make sure to make a mark next to each sum, so you don't repeat yourself. Repeat each sum to give the students plenty of time to do the calculation and check their card. Go through the card until the first student shouts

bingo! You can then stop the game or continue to read out sums out until every student has finished or there are no numbers left.

Repeat the game once or twice, with one of the students (the previous winner?) playing the role of bingo caller.

Printable Bingo cards are available at:

<http://eslgames.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/bingocards1.pdf>

<http://eslgames.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/bingomastercard.pdf>

A 5 Minute Activity (iSL Collective)

List several questions. Students write three words that would answer the question.

The questions may or may not follow a theme.

A 5 Minute Activity #1

Write three words in each category! Name: _____ Score: _____

1	What can you use water for?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
2	What can you eat for dinner?	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3	Things that are naturally red!	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
4	Words that begin with sun-	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
5	Words that begin with sp-	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

https://en.islcollective.com/resources/printables/worksheets_doc_docx/a_5_minute_activity_1/world-general-knowledge/5727

A 5 Minute Activity Food

Write three words in each category! Name: _____ Score: _____

1	Food you can fry	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
2	Food you can drink	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
3	Food you can cut	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
4	Food you can deep freeze	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
5	Cereals	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

https://en.islcollective.com/resources/printables/worksheets_doc_docx/a_5_minute_activity_food/food-elementary-a1/39957

Resources

Print Resources

Berlin, Andrew. *50 Conversation Classes: 50 sets of conversation cards with an accompanying activity sheet containing vocabulary, idioms and grammar.* April 25, 2014

Berlin, Andrew. *50 Scatter Sheets: ESL activities to warm up the class, introduce a theme, activate vocabulary and improve fluency.* CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (June 22, 2013)

Kress, Jacqueline E. *The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists.* Jossey-Bass, 2008.

Seymour, David and Popova, Maria. *700 classroom activities.* Hueber, 2004.

Vernon, Shelly Ann. *ESL Classroom Activities for Teens and Adults: ESL games, fluency activities and grammar drills for EFL and ESL students, 3rd Edition.* CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, July 9, 2012.

On-Line Courses

Using Cultural Artifacts to Teach ESL, ProLiteracy Education Network
<http://www.proliteracyednet.org/>. (This course is no longer available at this site.)

On-Line Resources

7 ways to use flashcards in English language teaching
<http://teachers.onlineenglishexpert.com/7-ways-to-use-flashcards-in-english-language-teaching/>

188 Free Online Mad Libs, <http://www.madglibs.com/>

Assembling an ESL Teaching Toolbox
<http://www.proliteracyednet.org/articles.asp?mcid=2&rid=80>

Business English Resources <http://www.businessenglishresources.com/>
Business English Practice Exercises
<http://www.businessenglishresources.com/31-2/student-section/practice-exercises-new/>
Conversation Starters <http://www.businessenglishresources.com/conversation-starters/>
TEFL Warm Ups and Activities for Adults <http://www.businessenglishresources.com/31-2/teachers-section/warm-ups-english-class-dont-waste-time/>

Busy Teacher <http://busyteacher.org/>
How You Can Use A Whiteboard: 10 ESL Games
<http://busyteacher.org/5878-what-you-can-do-with-a-whiteboard-10-creative-esl.html>
Try These 6 Super ESL Games for Grammar Review
<http://busyteacher.org/14455-grammar-review-6-super-esl-games.html>

CAL Center for Applied Linguistics

<http://www.cal.org/adultspeak/index.html>

<http://www.cal.org/resource-center/briefs-digests/digests>

http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests.html

Education Place, Wacky Web Tales <http://www.eduplace.com/tales/>

English Teachers <http://teachers.onlineenglishexpert.com/>

What's Missing? <http://teachers.onlineenglishexpert.com/whats-missing-english-vocabulary-game/>

ESL games for adult learners <http://eslgames.com/>

A to Z Word Race <http://eslgames.com/a-to-z-race>

Categories <http://eslgames.com/categories/>

Comparing Adjectives <http://eslgames.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/comparative-adjectives-venn-cars-people-Google-Docs.pdf>

Find someone who ... <http://eslgames.com/find-someone-who/>

Jeopardy <http://eslgames.com/esl-jeopardy/>

Memory Game <http://eslgames.com/kims+game/>

No-prep warm up activities <http://eslgames.com/no-prep-warm-up-activities/>

<http://eslgames.com/no-prep-warmers-part-2/>

Number Bingo <http://eslgames.com/number-bingo/>

Pass the Bomb <http://eslgames.com/pass-the-bomb/>

Pit Pat Putt: A Pronunciation Game <http://eslgames.com/pronunciation+game/>

Phrasal Verb Match Up <http://eslgames.com/phrasal-verb-match-up/>

Snap (to be) <http://eslgames.com/webapps/snap/>

Scavenger Hunt <http://eslgames.com/scavenger-hunt/>

Stand up if you've ever... <http://eslgames.com/present+perfect+game/>

The Recipe Game <http://eslgames.com/recipe-game/>

Word Mazes <http://eslgames.com/word+mazes/>

Instructional Activities for Building Oral English Proficiency: Thematic Unit on Employment

<http://www.cal.org/adultspeak/pdfs/InstructionalActivityPacketBEmployment.pdf>

The Internet TESL Journal for Teachers of English as a Second Language, <http://iteslj.org/>

Activities <http://a4esl.org/>

Games & Activities for the ESL/EFL Classroom, <http://iteslj.org/games/>

Intonation Fun, <http://iteslj.org/games/9918.html>

Listening Exercise (Song Puzzle), <http://iteslj.org/games/9927.html>

Pronunciation Bingo, <http://iteslj.org/games/9931.html>

iSL Collective <https://en.islcollective.com>

5 Minute Activities

https://en.islcollective.com/resources/search_result?Tags=5+minute+activity&searchworksheet=GO&type=Printables

Listening and Speaking Activities for Adult ESL Learners, Jane C. Miller, Colorado Department of Education, Adult Education & Family Literacy, Regional Assessment Trainings, 2010, <http://www.cal.org/adultspeak/pdfs/instructional-activity-packet.pdf>.

List of gestures (Wikipedia), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_gestures

Lyrics.com, <http://www.lyrics.com/>

Lyrster, <http://www.lyrster.com/>

Quizlet <https://quizlet.com/>

Simple ESL English 4 Teachers <http://simpleesl.com/>

Skills Workshop <http://www.skillsworkshop.org/>

Dice matrix games file:///C:/Users/COLLE_~1/AppData/Local/Temp/e1e3matrixdicegames.pdf