Оксана Карпюк

НОВА УКРАЇНСЬКА ШКОЛА:

# МЕТОДИКА НАВЧАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ

**у 1-2 класах закладів загальної середньої освіти на засадах компетентнісного підходу**

Оксана Карпюк

Навчально-методичний посібник

# Нова українська школа: методика навчання англійської мови у 1-2 класах закладів загальної середньої освіти на засадах компетентнісного підходу

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Навчально-методичний посібник призначений для вчителів англійської мови, які працюють у першій ланці початкової школи — 1-2 класах. Основне його завдання — це підтримка учителя в рамках реформування загальної середньої освіти Нової української школи, що передбачає підвищення кваліфікації. Посібник висвітлює теоретичні і практичні основи роботи з дітьми 6-7 років, особливості засвоєння іноземної мови з огляду на рівень психофізіологічного розвитку, знайомить із всесвітньо відомими концепціями психології дитячого розвитку та методики навчання англійської мови як іноземної. Видання також містить цікаві ідеї та практичний матеріал для використання у навчальному процесі.

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# INTRODUCTION

## *Who is this book for?*

The shelves of the staffroom may be full of published resource books and they may have access to folders of materials created by colleagues. Internet search engines provide links to thousands of websites offering instant lesson plans and ideas. The sheer amount of available material can be overwhelming, and finding a tip can be time-consuming. The aim of this book is to bring a collection of resources together in one place for faster reference.

This book is for teachers working with six- to seven- year-olds who are learning English as a foreign language. The book is also for those studying to become teachers of very young learners who are looking for ideas and activities to engage their future pupils in meaningful and imaginative ways. If you have previously taught English to older learners, you might like to develop your understanding of very young learners and find out about some of the important principles behind teaching this age group.

The educational needs of these learners are different from those of older children, and our aim is to encourage teachers to reflect on these needs and understand more fully the role they play when educating the whole child. We feel that providing quality language tuition is about creating naturally meaningful experiences that encourage very young children to view themselves positively and become enthusiastic about learning the new language.

We hope that in this book you can find teaching ideas, activities, some helpful tips and supplementary resources.

## *Getting started*

The more we learn about neuroscience, the clearer it becomes that the human brain now develops much sooner than we had believed. Early stimulation can be highly effective. The spread of technology means many more young children can be exposed to English at an earlier age.

Children have a less complicated view of the world than older children and adults, but this fact does not imply that teaching children is simple or straightforward. On the contrary, the teacher of children needs to be highly skilled to reach into children's worlds and lead them to develop their understandings towards more formal, more extensive and differently organised

concepts. Primary teachers need to understand how children make sense of the world and how they learn; they need skills of analysing learning tasks and of using language to teach new ideas to groups and classes of children.

Teaching a foreign language to children needs all the skills of the good primary teacher in managing children and keeping them on task, plus knowledge of the language, of language teaching, and of language learning. Primary English teachers need to have adequate proficiency in the language to provide comprehensible input and natural exposure to the target language.

"The central characteristics of *foreign language learning* lie in the *amount and type of exposure* to the language: there will be very little experience of the language outside the classroom, and encounters with the language will be through several hours of teaching in a school week" (Cameron, 2001: 11). In the case of a global language like English, however, even very young children will encounter the language in use on video, TV, computers and film. What they might not be exposed to is 'street' use, i.e. people using the language for everyday life purposes all around them, as might happen in a second language immersion context such as learning French or English in Canada, or an additional language context. In foreign language teaching, there is an onus on the teacher to provide exposure to the language and to provide opportunities for learning through classroom activities.

The world we live in is changing rapidly. Our children are growing up in a time of globalisation in which our world is growing increasingly interconnected every day. The twenty-first century requires a new set of skills to keep up with our fast-paced, technology-driven world.

Today, learning has become a lifelong process. Given the rapidly changing nature of our world, people of all ages must constantly learn and relearn what they need to know. What they learned yesterday may no longer be valid in tomorrow's world. One of the twenty-first-century skill that has been identified by many countries as imperative for their young learners is **proficiency in English**. When teaching English as an international language, it is important to contextualise language instruction and incorporate real-life situations into the classroom that are relevant to children. This is impossible without addressing various twenty-first century skills which are necessary for life in our modern world.

In *21st Century Skills: Learning for Life in Our Times,* Trilling and Fadel (2009) created a list referred to as the "7Cs Skills" (p. 176):

- Critical thinking and problem-solving
- Creativity and innovation
- Collaboration, teamwork, and leadership
- Cross-cultural understanding
- Communications, information, and media literacy
- Computing and ICT literacy
- Career and learning self-reliance

It is important that opportunities are created in the classroom for children to be exposed to natural language and to interact with each other. In order to create these ideal conditions for learning, teachers need to be equipped with methodological skills and knowledge and to be competent in English. Teachers' confidence and willingness to use the language naturally in the classroom are key components of success.

**Learning to learn** is also one of the most important objectives for all learning and teaching contexts for all ages. In our fast moving world, it is simply impossible for learners to acquire all the knowledge and skills they need while they are at school. It is the school's responsibility to teach learners how to learn, i.e. to equip them with strategies that they can use outside school. This process needs to start as early as possible, preferably at the beginning of schooling. Rapid developments in information technology have meant that independent learning opportunities are becoming available all the time through the internet.

*Learning to learn* is also closely related to the so-called '21st-century skills' mentioned above. Various aspects of learning to learn can be introduced into the day-to-day practice of any language classroom without changing many of the usual classroom practices.

In *Assessment and Teaching of 21st Century Skills,* Binkley et al. (2012), also outlined the high-priority twenty-first-century skills, which are similar to "7Cs Skills" but conceptualised in a different way, breaking down the skills into four categories: ways of thinking, ways of working, tools for working and living in the world.

**Ways of Thinking**

1 Creativity and innovation
2 Critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making
3 Learning to learn, metacognition

**Ways of Working**

4 Communication
5 Collaboration (teamwork)

**Tools for Working**

6 Information literacy
7 ICT literacy

**Living in the World**

8 Citizenship — local and global
9 Life and career
10 Personal and social responsibility — including cultural awareness and competence

These ten high-priority skills are organised in a way that can be helpful for teachers when integrating twenty-first-century skills into their curriculum.

To enable children to learn English a teacher should remember that his/her learners need quality, planned English input (and repetition of this input) if they are to pick up English to their full potential. This potential is often underestimated in comparison to that of children who learn languages outside the classroom effectively, rarely making mistakes. A child does not find learning language difficult like an adult.

Throughout the language learning process, the 'feel-good' factor is vital for motivation and new learning. Children live in the present and their well-being can change from lesson to lesson. Teachers need to tune in to their emotional state at the beginning of each lesson and adapt to it. Sometimes, if children are moving into a new developmental stage, teachers need to adapt quickly to satisfy their eager curiosity to absorb new information and ideas.

***Holistic learning*** for young children of 6 to 7 is innate, rapid and continuous following recognisable, common developmental patterns.

A child of this age is an **unconscious self-educator** and likes to be treated with patience and understanding.

# Part I
# FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

## 1 Development and Learning

In order to find the right approach for teaching young learners English, it is important to explore the following:

- characteristics of young learners
- how children learn
- how children learn language

Young learners are generally considered to be children attending primary school, which means that they are between six and twelve years old. Very young learners, on the other hand, are considered to be children attending nursery school, which means that they fall into a 3-5-year-old age group. When planning your lessons, remember that there are significant differences between younger young learners (6-7-year-olds) and older young learners (8-12-year-olds).

Here is a list of 5 important characteristics for you to consider about 6-7-year-olds (younger young learners).

▶ Egocentric

The younger a young learner is, the more egocentric they are likely to be. Thus, when teaching younger young learners, remember to reserve a few minutes in each lesson for an activity which will allow the children to share things about themselves with you and to feel that your sole focus is on them. Also, remember to raise the children's awareness of the importance of group dynamics and how to work with others and respect each other's feelings.

▶ Pre-logical thinking

Young learners in general, but particularly younger young learners, have serious difficulty in thinking logically and abstractly. This means that younger young learners will not be able to do two abstract tasks simultaneously, such as sorting out a list of words according to two categories. Thus, remember to plan concrete learning experiences with immediate goals in your lessons. Begin by asking them to sort the words in terms of the first category. Once they have finished that task, ask them

to sort the words according to the second category. Make new vocabulary more meaningful by teaching it using binary opposites.

- Emotion-driven

  Younger young learners are very emotion-driven, as they have limited abstract logical reasoning skills. This means that you will have to appeal to their emotions rather than their thinking skills. Include activities like songs, games and stories, which will open the children's 'learning gates' to learning. Avoid doing any type of language awareness work, such as formally teaching grammar, as this age group is still not able to take on anything abstract.

- Need for Repetition

  Younger young learners love repetition. This not only makes them feel safe, but also helps them remember and learn. However, they can get bored easily. Try introducing a novelty factor for every repetition exercise. This means tweaking the activity so that it's slightly different from the way they did it previously. For example, in a drilling exercise, you might get them to repeat the words first in a princess voice and then in a silly parrot voice.

- Limited writing skills

  Don't forget that younger young learners are not yet able to read and write in their first language, never mind in English. Thus, rather than presenting them with too many writing tasks, invest in oral learning and TPR (Total Physical Response) activities involving plenty of movement, which get the children to practise their pronunciation and have fun.

By the age of 6, young children are familiar with most of the structures of their first language, although they are still absorbing new words and phrases. During preschool children may have been introduced to different forms of spoken English or they may start an English programme during the first years of lower primary school. In all cases they innately expect to reuse their language-learning strategies to absorb spoken English through listening to it, as they take part in meaningful, playful activities. To young children learning language is not a task — it is not instructed, even if it is adult-led. Young children have not yet developed the cognitive maturity to understand and use English taught as an abstract, grammar-based subject. Most of them cannot yet recognise the difference between a verb and a noun in their first language!

* * *

On the other hand, from about the age of 6 or 7, children start to become less egocentric and show more individuality and temperament than in preschool period. They like to take responsibility for coping with their freedom and are capable of thinking critically to make choices. Some parents who have a controlling bond over their children may not be aware of — or want to acknowledge — their child's growing maturity, and they might smoother their growth by not listening to them, by answering questions for them, and by constantly referring to their past interests and abilities instead of focusing on the present and the future.

Many physical and emotional changes take place around the age of 6 and 7, and teachers need to be aware of these in order to empathise and keep children motivated. Let's consider some important points that should be taken by a primary teacher of English.

## *Physical well-being*

The way young children walk and hold themselves around the age of 6 or 7 demonstrates that they now feel more confident and grown-up. About this age there are important physical changes in their bodies that can affect their feeling of well-being, sapping their energy and making focusing and learning language more difficult. Teachers need to be conscious of these changes and show empathy (for example, they should avoid asking a child to perform in front of others when the loss of a front tooth affects pronunciation). Children can be critical of each other, especially when showing empathy to others has not yet been discussed in class.

Differences between the physical needs and interests of boys and girls are increasing at this lower-primary age and becoming more obvious. All children need to move around regularly to maintain concentration, but teachers often find that boys, in particular, need a lot of opportunities to release energy! This needs to be kept in mind when planning lessons. Many boys also have passionate interests in superheroes, comic book characters, adventure stories, cars, science, space and sporting celebrities. To keep boys motivated teachers need to feed these interests.

Some boys complain that they don't feel good in the English classroom and don't like learning English. Some complain that the atmosphere is too feminine and many of the activities are too 'girlie'. They are not comfortable when there are too few male role models to copy, or too few opportunities to

hear a male voice speaking English — other than the boys in the class.

Physical differences between boys and girls also influence their language learning strategies. Some of the ongoing physical changes that can affect learning are:

- body size (sudden changes of height and muscle development)
- muscular control of new growth areas, especially hand control
- hand-eye coordination for reading and handwriting
- growth of mouth cavity (the sound-box area)
- loss of first teeth and new growth of adult teeth and molars, affecting pronunciation
- hearing difficulties caused by growth of adult teeth.

## *Emotional well-being*

Children's strategies for self-management are developing and teachers will find that children's ability to balance these strategies can vary from day to day, depending on their emotional well-being.

Daniel Goleman (2009) outlines the main developing strategies involved in emotional intelligence:

- self-monitoring and self-reflecting
- self-managing emotions (self-focusing, self-motivating, management of stress, excitement, sadness, happiness)
- empathy (understanding and caring for others)
- social interrelations with others (inspiring, collaborating, sharing)

***How children learn*** is an important point for consideration because it is based on the works of major educational theorists who have set the foundation for current approaches for teaching young learners. It will go a step beyond the characteristics of young learners described earlier, which are easily witnessed even by an untrained observer.

Let's explain how children learn and process new information.

Confucius said, "I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand." This is particularly true for young learners, who are just beginning to make sense of the world around them. Piaget (1970) emphasised that children are active learners and thinkers. Children construct knowledge from interacting with the physical environment in developmental stages. Students in primary school can be found in Piaget's *Preoperational and Concrete Operational Stages*. Younger learners (6-7 years old) who are in the Preoperational

Stage are extremely egocentric and highly imaginative, although they are starting to distinguish between fantasy and reality compared to younger children in this stage. As young learners reach the Concrete Operational Stage (7-11 years old), they are able to think more logically but are still grounded in concrete objects and what is happening here and now.

BRIEF REVIEW OF PIAGET'S STAGES
OF COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

**Sensorimotor Stage:**

Children **...**

- are 0-2 years old
- show intelligence through physical interactions and experience
- have limited use of symbols and language

**Preoperational Stage:**

Children **...**

- are 2-7 years old
- show intelligence through strides they make in language development
- are extremely egocentric and have difficulty seeing things from another's perspective
- develop memory and imagination
- do not think logically

**Concrete Operational Stage:**

Children **...**

- are 7-11 years old
- show intelligence through logical and organised thought related to concrete objects
- are less egocentric but still have a tendency to relate new ideas to themselves and their immediate surroundings
- can reverse their thinking through reasoning

**Formal Operational Stage:**

Children **...**

- are 11 years old and older
- show intelligence through logical use of symbols related to abstract concepts
- can hypothesise and use deductive reasoning

According to Piaget (1970), children learn through their own individual actions and exploration. For example, a young child does not learn the meaning of a door by listening to a definition of a door and having someone explain the function of a door. Children learn what a door is by opening and closing the door repeatedly. They may slam the door and laugh or cry as they learn that the door separates two rooms.

Teachers should keep in mind the fact that **children learn by doing and interacting with their environment.** Creating opportunities for children to learn by doing and to learn by interacting with their environment is extremely important in the young learner classroom. Teachers can bring in realia for students to interact with. For example, if the lesson is about different fruit and vegetables, the teachers can bring in those fruit and vegetables for students to taste. If the lesson is about animals, the teacher can have students bring in their stuffed animal toys or even take a trip to the zoo. Or if students are learning about nature, the teacher could take the students outside to a local park or a nearby forest, depending on what is available in the local environment, in order to allow students to interact with real-life objects connected to the language they are learning.

Equally important is an understanding of *how children learn through social interaction*. Teachers should bear in their minds that **children need support and scaffolding by the teacher**. Vygotsky (1962) found that children construct knowledge from other people, more specifically through interaction with adults or more competent peers. Adults work actively with children in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which by definition is the difference between the child's capacity to solve problems on her/his own and her/his capacity to solve them with assistance or "scaffolding." The adult's role is very important in a child's learning process (Bruner, 1983; Vygotsky, 1962). In the classroom, the younger the learner, the more important the teacher's role is in scaffolding the learning process. Like Vygotsky, Bruner focused on the importance of language in a child's cognitive development. Bruner carefully studied how parents provided effective scaffolding. Cameron (2001, p. 8) outlines in a concise manner what Bruner's studies found as effective scaffolding techniques used by parents to support a child's learning:

- They made the child interested in the task.
- They simplified the task, often breaking it down into smaller steps.

- They kept the child on track towards completing the task by reminding the child what the goal was.
- They pointed out what was important to do or showed the child other ways of doing parts of the tasks.
- They demonstrated an idealised version of the task.
- They controlled the child's frustration during the task.

We can apply these ***scaffolding principles*** to devise an effective approach for teaching young learners. Below are suggestions for teachers of young learners using the scaffolding techniques listed above.

### *Create interest in the task!*

First, before a teacher creates interest in the task, she/he should choose tasks for young learners that cater to their sense of fun, curiosity, and imagination. It is a battle for teachers to try to create interest in a task that is not relevant or enjoyable for their learners. Therefore, teachers should know their learners in depth and should first consider learners' preferred topics or activities. As we discovered in the section on characteristics of young learners, the following activities can engage learners and keep them interested: TPR, songs, rhymes, chants, stories, videos, games, dramas, and role-plays. In addition, tasks that encourage creativity and imagination or those that allow students to express themselves in relation to their lives, families, and friends usually work well. Also, tasks that entail talking or cooperating with their peers can create interest since they love socialising. Teachers can spark students' attention through the use of brightly coloured visuals and use of audiovisual aids. Most of all, the teacher's own attitude can create interest in the task for children. If you are enthusiastic and passionate about the topic and activities, your students will be, too.

### *Simplify the task!*

Teachers must prepare their lessons by examining every task they will give to students very carefully and consider their level of English language proficiency and cognitive development. Then the teacher needs to break the task down into smaller steps in order to simplify it for children. Sometimes the steps that work for most learners may not work for every learner; therefore, teachers should be ready to break down the task into yet smaller or different steps.

### *Keep children on task!*

Part of a teacher's challenge when teaching young learners is to keep them "on task" by reminding them of the purpose or goal. If there is no real purpose for the activity, then you will have a difficult time keeping students engaged. Therefore, creating tasks that are not just interesting but also have a purpose or goal is very important when teaching children. Having a reason to use English to accomplish a task will make students focus less on learning and more on using the language to communicate something real. For example, if the goal of the activity is to make a valentine for a classmate using an acrostic poem about her/him, which needs to be ready tomorrow, the activity has a real purpose for the students. The goal is to finish the activity by the next day, which is February 14th or Valentine's Day. This is a fun way to introduce a holiday from a foreign culture while encouraging a real communicative act, which is expressing something nice to a friend.

### *Model the task, including different ways to do it!*

Always remember to model the task and show students what your expectations are. Particularly with language learning, if students are not given proper models to follow, it is not reasonable to expect them to perform at the desired level. For example, when students are first learning to write, teachers can model the product they expect. In addition to giving clear models, it is important to consider that students learn in different ways; therefore, your modeling should reflect what you know about your learners and the various ways they can accomplish a particular task. This means considering and incorporating different ***learning styles*** and ***multiple intelligences*** (Gardner, 1983, 1999) into instruction to help students who learn differently to learn successfully.

GARDNER'S MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES

There are eight widely accepted intelligences that were defined by Howard Gardner (1999).

- **Spatial-visual** (picture smart): Children may think in pictures and images and show special abilities in drawing. They may learn through visuals and organise ideas spatially through graphic organisers.

- **Bodily-kinesthetic** (body smart): Children may learn through gestures and manipulatives and enjoy activities that involve movement, dancing, running, jumping, and touching.
- **Musical** (music smart): Children may learn through auditory rhythms and melodies and enjoy singing, chanting, tapping rhythms, and listening activities.
- **Linguistic** (word smart): Children tend to think in words and enjoy reading, writing, discussions, and dialogues. They also have the ability to figure out grammatical patterns.
- **Logical-mathematical** (number smart): Children do not just show a propensity towards maths but also tend to be more analytical. They learn through reasoning and enjoy puzzles and experiments.
- **Interpersonal** (people smart): Children like interacting with people and show the ability to relate to others. They enjoy discussing and socialising with their peers and cooperative activities.
- **Intrapersonal** (self smart): Children have a tendency to be self-reflective and like to work alone. They may be more in touch with their emotions, feelings, and abilities.
- **Naturalistic** (nature smart): Children have an affinity towards nature, including the environment, plants, and animals. They may enjoy activities that take place outdoors in nature.

Young learners belong to an age group which is generally very motivated and eager to learn. They come to school with a big smile on their face and high expectations for your time together, and they love treating you with their special drawings and gifts. Here are 10 tips to get you thinking about how best to approach teaching 6 to 7 olds and how to cater for their basic learning needs.

### *Work with their energy!*

Children are very energetic. Their energy often lasts the whole day. Don't fight this. Use it in your favour to get them actively playing and learning in your classroom. Make sure that you plan various energetic activities for every lesson, for example, playing a game, singing a song or doing a drama activity.

### *Respect their attention span!*

When planning your lesson, bear in mind that a child's focused attention span is believed to be between 5 and 8 minutes. Thus, make sure that you introduce a new activity approximately every 8 minutes. So if you are teaching a 45-minute lesson, for example, plan five to six different activities for that lesson.

### *Use stirrers and settlers!*

When choosing activities for your lesson, remember to mix and match *stirrers* and *settlers*. Stirrers get children working and playing with each other actively; settlers give children individual quiet time and the opportunity to assimilate the language they have just been exposed to. Follow a stirrer with a settler to get the children to calm down and to help you avoid behaviour problems and classroom management issues. There will be more tips on classroom management and ideas for stirrers and settlers in this book.

### *Use their imaginations!*

Children are eager to learn, and they are very imaginative by nature. Remember to capitalise on their strong imaginations and natural creativity to help them learn language. When doing a language activity, ask a question or two that will help children tap into their imaginations. These questions will help children acquire language in context while developing their imaginations and creativity in a stress-free environment.

### *Let them play!*

Children love to play. Playing helps them develop social skills and learn more about the world around them. Make sure that in each lesson you have at least one playful activity which helps them acquire language in context in a natural and fun way.

### *Work on social skills and emotional intelligence!*

Children are generally quite self-centred. This means that you need to help them develop essential social skills. Remember to present children with learning opportunities and activities which require them to practise and use your target social skills.

### *Negotiate clear rules!*

Children need clear rules and boundaries in order to feel safe in the classroom. Chat with them about the target behaviour that you both need to keep in mind in order to be able to play and learn together. Then choose five rules which target that behaviour. When a rule has become automatic, you can substitute it with another rule that you want the children to work on. For more ideas, see the section entitled 'In the Primary Classroom'.

### *Praise children!*

Always focus on the successes and appropriate behaviour that happen in class, rather than on the less positive things. When you see good behaviour, reward it by saying something like, *'Class, did you notice how Sashko put his hand up and waited for his turn? Wow, Sashko! What a star! Now what did you want to say?'* Sashko will feel proud of himself and the class will realise that if they want to get your attention, this is the type of behaviour they have to replicate.

### *Introduce routines!*

Routines are important because they give children the opportunity to excel, and they give the teacher the chance to see the children behaving well in class. Remember that a routine may be the only activity that a child gets right in a particular lesson. Choose your routines wisely: start and end lessons with a routine like a lively 'hello' song or chant to demonstrate to them that learning English is both achievable and fun.

### *Challenge children!*

Remember to make learning challenging and exciting. Make sure that the activities themselves are not as basic as the simple language they are learning. To stave off boredom, introduce activities that challenge them at a cognitive level, even if they require simple language. The language will be easy, but the level of thinking will keep them motivated, focused and on track.

# 2 Enabling 6-7 Olds' Learning a Foreign Language

As the teacher's role is to provide a selection of enabling opportunities in which to acquire English, the atmosphere and teaching style in English lessons may be different from content-based lessons like Maths or Science. Some parents feel that since their children are now in compulsory education with a timetable divided into major subjects, instruction should now be more formal and should begin to resemble secondary school methods. Their reaction when their child refers to 'playing' in the English lesson can be of annoyance and they may openly criticise the teacher for not 'teaching', saying something like *I did not send my child to primary school to play! Play is for break time. I expect my child to learn English.*

In a child's mind, the physical activity of play is like adults' work — children are intrinsically motivated to physically try out things, to find out how they work. ***Play is the highest form of learning and helps children to apply what they learn in an integrated way.***

Play is learning through doing: taking part in shared activities with a supportive adult or older child whose language the child can absorb unconsciously. A division between play and work only exists in the minds of adults who think in terms of formal teaching and instruction. For young children the two are blurred until the age of 6, when children begin to become aware of actually 'learning'. Any distinction made by children might arise from external symbols of a formal approach (such as sitting at a desk or using a textbook) but not from the *content* of an activity. Even if the content is more formal (such as a spelling test), playful use of voice and language by the teacher can make children feel that the experience is fun and they may even describe it to others as playing a game.

Language needs action as an accompaniment or the situation has no meaning for the children (Krashen, 1981). ***Motivation is vital for all learning, whether it involves new or familiar content.*** Through the playful approach teachers can motivate and remotivate — although remotivation should be monitored as it can have a negative effect if overused.

Once children know how to play a game well, they often act as home play tutors to their family when playing games in their own language or English. Much to the delight and amusement of parents, their children naturally insert the games at home.

Teachers need to continually observe, assess and record children's type and level of play and be ready to add guidance and add further challenge where needed. Where play is repetitive and at a low level of cognition, the teacher needs to get involved by sensitively interacting with new language or a relevant new object. This will stimulate interest and also scaffold a child's next level of cognition.

Where teachers are not sensitive to children's low-level satisfaction and achievement in an activity or game, children can lose interest and can easily become bored or frustrated, saying *I don't want to play. I don't like this.* Interest should always be restimulated before the end of the lesson, since a lack of volition can easily spread to attitudes at home and carry on to the next lesson. Loss of interest can also foster parents' belief that English lessons are nothing but play and that their child needs more formal instruction.

***Young children need repetition***. Children, without adult help or intervention, repeat games or activities until they gain ownership and control over them. This can most easily be seen in the playground during break time where — either by themselves, in pairs or in a small group — children play the same game with the same rules over and over again. Children need opportunities to experience repetition like this in the English classroom and also at home if they are to gain ownership and control. Frequent chances to repeat activities are needed so that children have the opportunity to repeat patterns — which is crucial for learning.

Let's look at three important aspects of how children learn in order to show *how to approach teaching children a foreign language*. These are the following:

- Children need an enabling language learning environment.
- Children learn language through lots of meaningful exposure and practice.
- Children do not learn language through explicit grammatical explanations.

**Children need an enabling language learning environment**

Success in foreign language learning also depends on the characteristics of the classroom environment. Children may use similar processes to acquire a first or native language and a foreign language.

Children are highly motivated to learn and use the language because it enables them to meet immediate needs and respond to their surroundings. For example, when a child is hungry and wants milk, she/he will learn the word for milk in order to ask for it. In contrast, the foreign language classroom environment tends to have the opposite characteristics — that is, the language used and presented is artificial because it is not based in real life. Traditional foreign language classes tend to focus heavily on form and isolated structures rather than a meaningful context in which the message is more important than form. If the language used is not in context and not meaningful to young learners, then it will be difficult to motivate them to participate and learn. Children will be motivated if there is a real purpose or reason to use the language, just like the child learning to use the word "milk" because she/he is hungry. Therefore, teachers should engage learners in purposeful activities that are appropriate for them and that mirror first language acquisition, like storytelling, singing, chanting, talking with each other socially, letter writing, e-mailing, reading recipes, and watching plays, TV shows and films.

**Children learn language through lots of meaningful exposure and practice**

In their own language environment, children are surrounded by their native language. It is being spoken and used in various contexts all around the child. This constant source of meaningful exposure to language in authentic contexts helps children acquire language naturally and quickly. However, when learning English as a foreign language, usually the only place and time learners can hear or use English is the classroom. Most English classes in first and second years of primary school meet 2-3 hours per week for 35-45 minutes per class relatively. Because this is not much time per week of exposure to English, ***the challenge of the English***

***primary teacher is to create an English-speaking classroom environment and use English as much as possible during the 35-45 minutes she/he has the students.*** To create an optimal environment for learning English, the input in the classroom needs to be comprehensible and just above the students' current level of English (Krashen, 1981). Teachers can support comprehension of input by using lots of visuals, realia, gestures, and caregiver speech. Caregiver speech refers to the adjustment of language done by a child's caregiver, which for first language acquisition is the parent or grandparent. Teachers can also use caregiver speech to help make language input in the classroom more comprehensible, such as a slower rate of speech, using shorter and simpler sentences, and repeating or rephrasing utterances.

In addition to giving lots of meaningful, comprehensible input, it is important to give students plenty of chances to practise using English in class. This means giving them the opportunity to produce meaningful and comprehensible output (Swain, 1985). Without enough opportunities to produce output, students will not be able to test their hypotheses about how English works.

**Children do not learn language through explicit grammatical explanations!**

Grammatical structures are the building blocks of language, but the approach to teaching grammar should match the way students learn. The approach to teaching grammar should be "learning-centred," which Cameron (2003: 110) describes as "... meaningful and interesting, require active participation from learners, and will work with how children learn and what they are capable of learning". With language this means that learners need to experience the language through lots of exposure. They will not learn through grammatical explanations; rather, they will gain an understanding of the grammar implicitly through repetition and recycling of the language in different contexts. As Pinter (2006) and Cameron (2003) emphasise, this approach to teaching young learners encourages them to "notice" the grammar rather than being taught the structures explicitly. Pinter explains that teachers should give plenty of meaning-focused input that will help young learners notice grammar.

When the teacher focuses students' attention on a different way to express how they are and feel, she/he is getting students to notice the grammatical constructions and use them correctly.

As Cameron (2003: 107)) wrote, "children see the foreign language 'from the inside' and try to find meaning in how the language is used in action, in interaction, and with intention, rather than 'from the outside' as a system and form". "In action" means learning by doing; "in interaction" means learning through social activities; and "with intention" means the activities have a real purpose to use the language. Therefore, teachers should expose children to language in authentic and meaningful contexts and use repetition and recycling in order to improve young learners' ability to understand the new language structures and use them correctly.

# 3 Teacher-Child Relationships

Without understanding the whole child it can be difficult to tune in to his or her needs.The English teacher needs to know something of the use of languages and the type of English-language interest in the child's home.

By primary school a child's relationship with the English teacher has developed from that of a protective aunty-like figure in the preschool years to one of a caring teacher built on mutual respect. As primary school pupils, children feel more grown-up and more in control of themselves, ready to take responsibility. They now want to be independent and show they can make things happen, although they still need support and guidance from adults. Getting the balance right in the period between preschool and upper primary is essential. The lower-primary years are an important bridge between the two, in which children need adult help to confidently develop over time their own self-learning strategies as they mature holistically. In helping the children, the teacher is not just thinking of teaching English, but also of adapting English input to the holistically-maturing children's needs.

The teacher's main roles are the following:

**Motivator:** using the playful approach to stimulate and restimulate positive interest in activities and formal literacy.

**Modeller:** using teacher-talk to aid understanding of emotional, social and classroom behaviour as well as modelling new activities.

**Mediator:** introducing new challenges including tutor-talks to explain formal literacy.

**Manager:** planning lessons, guided by the hidden syllabus and assessment but also following children's interests; indicating revision needs.

**Monitor:** assessing children within lessons and weekly to check progress and the need to revisit learning (this includes the summing-up sessions at the end of each lesson in which achievements and future plans are discussed).

Children need to be motivated if they are to continue to self-educate at their own pace and find meaning through self-discovery. They now understand new concepts, with adults mediating less and less, but need to be stimulated to use

their self-language-learning strategies to acquire, understand and eventually use a wider range of spoken English.

To motivate we need to arouse curiosity in children. Curiosity is aroused by seeing something new, or something different from what they expected. This arouses their interest to find out more about it. Children have an internal need for consistency, and they look for things to fit into their cognitive map of understanding. When something does not fit in, it causes tension or 'cognitive dissonance', which innately drives them to find out more so they can resolve the inconsistency and fit the new information into their thinking. During this process children are focusing, exploring and learning at a deep level. Highly curious people show openness to new ideas, as well as an innate drive to examine and learn, and therefore expand their own cognitive map. *I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious* (Einstein).

Motivation and 'emotional literacy' are closely linked, and together help to create the 'feel-good' factor which is vital for self-learning. Goleman (2009) talks about emotional literacy as being the ability to experience and manage emotions positively, as well as recognise emotions in others and show empathy. If children of this age are not yet emotionally literate, it can be difficult to motivate them — and if they are not motivated, little or no self-acquisition of English can occur.

A child with little emotional literacy still finds the activities involving working in pairs, groups, leading difficult. Young children want and need to feel liked by other children in the class if they are to feel good.

Motivation can be thought of as 'intrinsic', where children motivate *themselves,* and 'extrinsic' where motivation comes from the *outside* (with the teacher igniting it by setting the scene for an enabling activity).

To start to manage their emotions, children need to:

- feel physically secure and safe within the classroom
- feel the teacher understands and recognises their emotions
- know the classroom routine so they can predict the next activity
- know some basic English to talk about their emotions
- know how to read emotions in others (children and adults)

Children need to be able to describe their emotions and thoughts in English if they are to develop a sense of well-being. If they have no simple vocabulary of English to express their emotions and thoughts, they may hide

them or resort to talking about them in their own language. Words for feelings and thoughts can be picked up from teacher-talk — this can be in the form of teacher modelling, or from a planned game that introduces basic feelings in a context which children understand.

Children are constantly watching behaviour and learning how to show and handle their emotions through modelling and mirroring the teacher and other adults as well as other children close to them. Consider this example:


*Discussing feelings*

- The teacher introduces words for describing emotions by cutting out cardboard face shapes and sticking them onto short sticks. Each cardboard face shape has a different facial expression drawn on it: a sad face, a happy face, a surprised face, an angry face, etc.
- The teacher shows the faces and asks the children to say how each face feels.The children learn to say, *"He's happy."* or *"She's angry."* etc. They also learn to answer the question *"Are you happy?"* with *"Yes, I'm happy."* or *"No, I'm sad."*
- The teacher then plays a game with the children, calling out words to do with feelings and children have to choose the cardboard face that matches the word.

Good relationships with teachers and peers contribute to enjoyment. The teacher needs to include enabling activities in which children can work together. Children learn more from other children than from adults, since they are similar to themselves and easier to copy. However, they are constantly watching adults' behaviour and learning from it how to manage their emotions.

Children have to be reassured that talking about feelings is *normal* and acceptable in the English classroom. When thinking about the emotional development of children, teachers need to include activities that help them begin to balance their emotions, such as using co-reading picture books that can be discussed together as a class. Children need a rich language environment if they are to acquire language to their full potential and feel motivated. Motivation depends on the teacher's choice of structured enabling activities, appropriate to the interests and maturity of the children.

Teachers are children's role models; they are the main source of the children's input, guiding and tutoring them whilst sharing with them spoken and written language to meet their self-learning strategies, needs and levels.

Young children still want to please their teacher and their parents, too. They look for their approval as it gives them confidence and assurance that they are doing the right thing. Young children want to feel successful, and can now measure their own ability, contrasting it quite accurately with others in their class. They generally know the 'ranking' of children in their class and teachers may hear comments like *"Mariika is the best at English. Andriiko knows a lot of English words about food".* Teachers often try to disguise group levels by calling them different animal names or colours, but children usually work out which is the top group! Children talk about who is the best openly amongst themselves and often explain it to their parents, too.

***The teacher's main role is to enable the child to use and develop his or her self-acquisition language-learning strategies*** whilst also allowing autonomy to grow. The teacher's role expands as the use of English becomes more advanced; they become involved in delegating responsibilities, organising more complex activities and in the introduction of formal literacy.

Children may need short periods of silence for self-reflection, but long periods of silence when there is no opportunity to listen and learn any English from the teacher (their main source of English input in the classroom) are a waste of children's learning time. The use of different voices, intonation and language styles (descriptive, reported speech, etc.) is important as a teacher responds to changes within the classroom, or sees a need to remotivate. A sudden, whispered "*Listen, children. Let's think about ...*" can surprise and interest the class and quickly get their attention!

Once children have got used to picking up English, they appear to have refined how to use their self-language-learning strategies. Teachers should not underestimate children's ability to pick up English, and shouldn't let learning preconceptions limit the amount of input they've given the children. Children are innate language learners and always understand much more than they can say. If they feel overloaded, they know how to switch off and wait to be remotivated. ***The art of a skilled teacher is getting the right balance by providing structure whilst supporting autonomy.***

A young child expects a teacher to be:

- friendly
- reliable
- caring
- full of enthusiasm and positive energy
- a source of knowledge (or to know where to obtain information)
- an example of fair play in games (not accepting any form of cheating)
- just and fair in all personal comments and assessments
- respectful of any work in which effort and improvement have been made
- ready to co-share when a child or pair cannot manage alone

The teacher-child relationship continues to evolve as the child develops and as the teacher gradually changes from leader to sharer or co-partner, using language and management routines in cooperation with the child until he or she is ready to lead alone. The degree of teacher support changes to match the child's progress, well-being (physical and emotional) and desire to do things autonomously. Within a single lesson language support can range from teacher-initiated and teacher-led to shared support, to child-led and child-initiated.

Children have their own views on teachers and they openly tell parents who is their favourite teacher and why. A supportive relationship shows that the teacher values the children's ideas. It also encourages children to initiate sometimes, using phrases like *"I have an idea. Can I tell you?"* Children need to be confident that initiating is allowed in the English classroom.

It's also important to remember that children learn more from each other than from the teacher as, from a child's point of view, peers are easier to copy than an adult. ***Children learn strategies from watching each other, and are more likely to imitate what someone quite like them does rather than an adult.***

# 4 Cooperating with Parents

Teachers have to be aware of how parents describe their children, particularly parents' perceptions of their children's qualities and faults. Sometimes parents may say, in front of their children, *"She's very shy. He's not good at studying."* Even though some children 'perform' in front of their parents to please them, the teacher should not automatically accept the parents' description or the child's behaviour in this situation. Instead, teachers should find out for themselves — it could be that the child may want to act quite differently in the environment of the English lesson.

Although the lower-primary child is now more independent, the same basic triangle of influence and support (parent, teacher, child) remains important in English learning. New discoveries innately motivate children to try and express their thoughts, imagination and feelings with others in English. Discovering the world at this age is exciting, and both parents and teachers need to arouse curiosity and enable, as well as inspire, the desire to explore.

The importance of the parents' role in shepherding a child's acquisition of English, especially in the initial stages of a more formal approach, is often overlooked by teachers. Parents are usually children's native language teachers and obviously have a special bond with them, and children in turn want to please their parents and need their love. Parents know their children best and intuitively decode their feelings and needs, as well as their 'winding-up' tricks.

Many parents need help to tune in to their child's English learning as they are not always aware of how well children are capable of absorbing English or of a new educational research relevant to learning English as a foreign language. Teachers could consider preparing a presentation or written document explaining to parents:

- how their children will be taught
- how their children will be prepared for presentation of their work
- how they can best support their children

Teachers often forget that most parents lack confidence as they feel they are treading a new path that they may not understand. Many parents need encouragement and some may not even realise that any positive interest they show can help motivate their child.

Cooperation between teacher and parents is vital since any criticism of the teacher or teaching methods can quickly spread. Children talk amongst themselves, saying things like *"My mother says that the English teacher is…"*, which is then repeated to other parents. Young children are still very influenced by what their parents say. Even if criticism is not verbalised, children can still feel it from their parents' body language and attitudes.

The balance of the triangle of child, parent and teacher still remains important if the English learning environment is to be right for the child. By now English learning has spread beyond the teacher and classroom to other children and teachers at school. It may also have spread to the extended family and influenced wider aspects, like the family occasionally eating British food!

Regular assessment with photos, texts or even recordings can help children to feel that they have a role to play in the triangle. Parents can have a lot of influence (sometimes called 'parent power'). Most parents are very interested in their child's success, and a positive attitude from parents is important for achieving it. Parents want to help and can do so even if they have only basic English themselves — but they often lack confidence. They may say things like *"My pronunciation is not good. I can't get my 'r's' and 'l's' right."*

Teachers can guide parents, harnessing their 'power' to undertake supportive activities at home. This helps parents to tune in to their children. There can be joy in learning together as a family and surprises too when parents hear their 7-year-old son or daughter correct their pronunciation! Parents often relay their experience to the teacher who needs to remind parents that young children already have skills to critically compare the difference in English sounds... a remarkable linguistic achievement at the age of 7!

To attain a positive balance, the teacher needs to keep parents regularly informed of how and what he or she is teaching. The teacher also needs to be ready for regular feedback — good and bad — and any criticism needs to be dealt with immediately. Parents who are tuned in to their child have intimate current knowledge of him or her, not least because they see homework taking place and often participate in it. However, teachers need to decode whether a parent is interpreting their child through their own ideas or reporting the child's reactions accurately.

Parents are more knowledgeable about their own children than anyone else can ever be; they have a deeper emotional commitment to them and wider background of experience shared with them than can ever be achieved in institutions, which have the children for a comparatively few hours.

The confusion over the playful approach in English lessons is one of the many things that need explaining to parents if they are to understand how their child acquires formal literacy skills. Parents need to understand that their child needs space and time in order to find out that effort and perseverance get results. Even playing the same game over and over again with a parent until they win contributes to children's self-discovery and self-management!

The fact that parents keenly follow their child's progress is clearly good for the child. It is up to the teacher to harness this interest by explaining to parents ***how*** children are acquiring English in the classroom. Teachers also need to give parents confidence through useful suggestions for follow-up at home.

Parents need to be able to experience their child's progress. To do this, teachers need to include 'show-off' pieces, like rhymes, songs or jokes that can be enjoyed by the entire family. These quick, oral experiences convince parents of some progress.

Parents are also often involved in more formal spelling quizzes that show weekly progress. Where possible, picture books can be taken home for shared reading, or suggestions can be made for suitable English-speaking YouTube video clips to be watched and enjoyed together at home.

Parents have to develop an enabling attitude to using English by creating a 'talking English relationship'. In this relationship, the child wants to and enjoys talking in English to family members, often at a regularly scheduled time. The 'feel-good' factor is very important for all learning, and especially for learning a language since it involves dialoguing with someone older who is sensitive to you and what you say.

Learning and sharing English experiences in a family can be bonding. English phrases sometimes become private 'in-family' language over several generations, recalling experiences with deeper meaning.

Talking to their child face to face ***about*** English or ***in*** English can encourage and motivate both the parent and the child. This requires patience. Too often adults are rushed and do not give children time to reply, smothering

a child's English by finishing off sentences, talking for them and giving answers. This can demotivate. For example, when playing a game a parent might say, *"You've got a blue card. Put it there ..."* rather than *"What have you got? Shall we put it here or there?"*

How parents can bring English into the home? You can help them introducing new items.

- ✓ Make sure there is paper, pencils and coloured pens always available in a known place for writing, drawing or copying.
- ✓ Cut out photos from newspapers or download them from the internet. Add English headings to them.
- ✓ Have a special time when you sing songs or say rhymes children already know in English.
- ✓ Download songs in English so children can play them on a tablet or smartphone.
- ✓ Collect words written in English within the environment.
- ✓ Cook or buy some English food. Have an 'English-speaking meal' with dishes from the English-speaking world.
- ✓ Reuse and adopt English phrases from stories, songs or rhymes, making them into in-family language, such as *No, not now. In a few minutes. No problem. You can do it. Go ahead.*
- ✓ Watch selected YouTube videos in English together, making a commentary.
- ✓ Play board games together. Make up your own games inserting your in-family words, for example names of wild animals.
- ✓ Play games to decide who does something.
- ✓ Read stories, picture books, and information books together.
- ✓ Create a non-stress haven at home where children can freely play, browse, reflect and consolidate.

Parents need to see and hear progress as well as receive formal assessments. Formal assessments should, however, be regular — if possible, once a week or once every two weeks. They can be:

- visual (photos or samples of written work or handiwork)
- recorded (on tablets or smartphones)
- textual plus visual (such as email newsletters)

Special 'wow' moments when a child does something outstanding or, through effort, makes a significant leap forward need to be recorded in a

special way within the classroom and reported to the parents on that same day.

End-of-term or end-of-year performances are expected by many schools as well as parents. These can be a form of assessment, although for the teacher the preparation activities are often more important than the final productions. Associated activities include making tickets, programmes and posters and giving children opportunities to play different roles. A production or show can be an opportunity for children to learn a whole script by heart and even prompt each other effectively where necessary. For children a performance is also an opportunity to have their parent's total attention and interest, and this is stimulating and motivating for future learning.

Above all, care should be taken that assessing does not become too time-consuming and therefore take away from interactive sharing activities with the teacher or other children.

# 5 Teaching and Developing Skills

## 5.1 Listening and Speaking

When children start learning English at primary school, there is usually an emphasis on developing listening and speaking skills. Through listening to English, children are led naturally into speaking. From using single words and formulaic language, children gradually develop the ability to produce language and to interact with others in a more extended way.

### Listening

Listening is a receptive activity. For the younger age group listening is the most important skill because it is the main language acquisition tool. Older learners acquire language through reading as well, but younger children who are still learning their letters depend totally on listening for input. Listening is an important skill of its own too as learners need to be able to understand spoken language.

The more the children listen to English the faster they will learn to speak. That is why it is recommended that teachers use English in the classroom even if they think the children cannot understand it yet. It is surprising how children work out language even if they do not understand every single word. In fact, they might not quite yet understand every single word of their mother tongue, but they still understand the gist of what is being said and at the same time their brains are working nonstop to process new language. The teacher should help by using gestures, mime, drawing and pictures and it is necessary to be consistent in giving all instructions in English.

It is also important for children to be exposed to a correct speaker's accent. As children are very accepting and flexible at this age, they will not be shy to mimic the accent. This is where the listening materials on the audio are important, especially the songs. Children enjoy songs and they are eager to listen and join in. Action songs are perfect listening activities for this age group as they provide listening practice as well as opportunities for movement.

### Learning to listen

When learning to listen in English, children are actively engaged in constructing meaning and making sense of what they hear. To do this, they use not just language but their knowledge of the world and clues provided by the context, for example:

- their expectations about the intentions of the speaker
- predictions about what they will listen to
- the speaker's use of voice, mime and gesture
- the reason and purpose for which they are listening
- other features in the immediate environment which support their understanding, for example, flashcards, stories or course book illustrations, posters, real objects, puppets, sound effects on a CD, or the visual setting of a DVD

Essentially, young children need plenty of opportunities to listen to language embedded in engaging and meaningful contexts. Through listening, children become familiar with the sounds, rhythm and intonation of English. Listening also allows children to recognise, understand and respond to language non-verbally before they produce it themselves. Classroom talk as, for example, when you give instructions, organise and manage different classroom activities and give the children feedback, encouragement and praise is a major source of listening material for children. As far as possible, it is advisable to use English for this kind of classroom language. Through repetition and routines, you will build up an expanding repertoire of language that children understand and respond to as part of everyday communication in class.

In addition, you can use storytelling and drama, games, rhymes, chants and songs, arts and crafts to develop children's listening skills. Ideas for these are included in Part II of this book.

## *Developing listening skills*

In foreign language, as in their own language, children develop listening skills before speaking skills. It is enriching to expose them to language that is ahead of their productive competence, as long as their understanding is guided and supported, for example, through mime, illustrations and/or the activity they are asked to do. From the outset, it is important to use a variety of different spoken text types: instructions, rhymes, stories, songs, dialogues, conversations, descriptions. It is also important to build up confidence and show children that they can be successful listeners without necessarily understanding every word. The use of longer texts, such as stories, can also help develop children's extensive listening skills, where listening is motivated by pleasure rather than information.

## *Speaking*

Speaking is a productive activity as learners are producing language themselves, and for young learners it is the main output activity. In order to help young children express themselves in English they must be given as many language tools as possible.

Start by giving them simple chunks of language they can repeat and help them practise the language in different situations. Songs come in very handy here because they are a fun way to provide language to repeat and they build up vocabulary steadily. The children go through this input phase for some time, then they gradually gain the confidence to use their own words starting with single words and progressing to forming simple sentences on their own. Not all children will be able to respond to you from the beginning of the year. Some may need a silent period in which they acclimatise to the new experience and absorb the language around them without being required to produce it.

Then it is useful to provide children with speaking and acting out activities starting with guided practice of the target structures. These should not be difficult for them and should provide them with the simple language when they do not have to form full sentences. Some activities involve calling children to the front to sing or act. Choose children who are willing and eager to perform in front of the whole class. Furthermore, young children flourish with praise. It raises their confidence and gives them positive reinforcement. Therefore, always praise correct responses and avoid harshly criticising incorrect ones. You may simply say, *'That's OK. Try again.'*

It takes time to reach this stage though and it will vary from one child to another. The key to helping the children form their own sentences is to immerse them in the language as much as possible, then support their attempts to speak gradually until they are confident enough to use their own language.

***Listening is the key to speaking*** and the more the children are exposed to the language, the quicker they will start speaking. When the children start using English to express themselves, fluency is encouraged more than accuracy. If corrected too much, the young child might lose confidence and feel too intimidated to try again. ***Every attempt must be praised.***

Speaking is a complex skill and the difficulty for children learning a foreign language should not be underestimated. Although children are good at imitating and may acquire better pronunciation than older learners, they are still developing language and discourse skills in their first language.

## *Spoken interaction and spoken production*

Speaking skills can be broadly divided into two areas: spoken interaction and spoken production. Spoken interaction refers to the ability to ask and answer questions and handle exchanges with others, whereas spoken production refers to the ability to produce language, for example, in a rhyme, a description or an account, such as retelling a story. It is important to develop children's competence in both these areas in order to build up confidence and lay the foundations for future learning.

Initially children will benefit from activities which require lots of repetition and which help them to memorise vocabulary and chunks of language and acquire pronunciation in a natural way. Much of the language children produce in the early stages of learning will be single words or short formulaic utterances, for example, *"I'm fine."* Rather than explicitly correct language mistakes, it is best to respond to children's meaning and what they are trying to communicate. As you do this, you can remodel or recast what they say, e.g. *"Yes. You're right. The monkey's there!"*

6-year-olds may be reluctant to speak at first, and it is important to give them time to listen and absorb the sounds of English before participating actively. Insisting on participation is likely to be counterproductive. ***Do not push children to speak if they do not feel comfortable.***

The best strategy is usually to provide lots of opportunities for speaking activities in a very secure and non-threatening way, e.g. through choral repetition of action rhymes or choral counting games, and allow children to join in when they are ready. In order for children with only minimal linguistic competence to start learning to communicate in English, it is important to establish simple classroom routines from the outset. These include, for example, greetings and goodbyes at the beginning and end of lessons, asking for permission, e.g. to go to the toilet, sharpen pencils, get crayons, etc and classroom language.

*Frameworks for speaking activities*

Whatever the children's age, it is important to provide frameworks for speaking activities which encourage them to use English for real purposes which they can relate to, rather than simply practise language for its own sake. As children become increasingly capable of interacting with each other in pairs and groups, it is also important to ensure that speaking activities are designed to foster active listening, turn-taking and respect for other people's opinions. None of these can be taken for granted because children are still developing these skills and attitudes as part of their general educational and personal development. Speaking activities which are personalised and offer choice tend to increase children's willingness to participate. Such activities give them 'ownership' of language, thus helping to make learning more memorable. Whenever possible, it is beneficial to establish frameworks where children are motivated to speak and feel that they have something they want to say.

In order for a speaking activity to be successful, it is important to set clear goals and establish what the outcome(s) of the activity will be. It is also important to ensure that the language demands are within the children's current level of competence and to prepare for, model, rehearse and demonstrate the language children will need to use before they begin. It may also be appropriate to introduce explicit rules to ensure that the activity is done in English, rather than in pupils' first language, and to elicit and talk about the reasons for this.

Over time, through speaking activities which use different interaction patterns and provide opportunities for meaningful practice of a range of discourse types, children will develop confidence in their ability to produce English and to interact with others in class.

## *Pronunciation*

Through exposure to English in the form of classroom language, instructions, games, stories, dialogues, conversations, rhymes, chants and songs, children develop familiarity with the sounds, rhythm and intonation patterns of English and imitate these features in a natural way. It is important to provide lots of models and to build up children's confidence through the acceptance of approximate pronunciation. This gives them time to acquire good habits in an unforced way. In addition to an implicit, global approach to pronuncia-

tion, it is often appropriate to do activities designed to raise awareness of particular features of pronunciation that may be different from the children's own language.

## 5.2 Reading and Writing

Reading and writing are closely related, since the more children read, the better writers they are likely to become.

Although children may learn to click on a computer mouse before they learn to turn the pages of a book, reading is a vital skill, because many children are growing up in an increasingly print-dominated world. Reading competence in English is essential to pass exams and to succeed at secondary school and after it. Through learning to read in English, children develop positive attitudes, strong motivation and a sense of achievement. Reading also reinforces and extends what children learn orally. Reading in English provides an opportunity to build on and transfer skills from and to their own language.

Reading is a receptive activity. For older learners reading is a required skill of its own and also a means of acquiring language.

### *What is involved in reading*

Reading competence involves constructing meaning and making sense of written text. It requires complex interaction of knowledge and skills at multiple levels. These include, for example, the recognition of shapes of letters of the alphabet, grapho-phonemic correspondences and the direction of text. They also include sight recognition of common, high frequency vocabulary and morphemes, the recognition of syntactic patterns and word order within sentences, and an understanding of the structure and organisation of texts. When children read in English, they need to learn to make use of visual, phonological and semantic cues in an integrated way and to relate these to their previous knowledge and experience of the world, the topic and the genre in order to construct coherent personal meaning. To become competent readers in English, children need practice in developing their knowledge and skills in all these areas.

For this age group we are still giving the children the basic tools to start reading so it is not yet an input activity for them, i.e. it is not a way for children

to acquire language. ***In order to start reading, the children need to learn to decode the word and link it to a meaning.*** The first step is knowing the letters. The objective is for the children to practise letter sounds and shapes in upper and lower case. For the children to start reading a word they need to practise each letter and immediately link it to the sound. This requires practice; ***we need the children to be completely familiar with letter sounds before asking them to try to read a word***.

## *Pronunciation and early literacy*

Teachers should provide a great opportunity to expose children to the varied sounds of English. It is important to develop phonological awareness, encouraging young learners to hear the qualities of different sounds and to practise the phonemes of the English language. These should be followed by activities which practise stress and intonation patterns: dialogues, stories, songs, chants and many games as well.

***Pronunciation and literacy are closely related,*** since ***phonological awareness*** is a major factor in learning to read and write in an alphabetic language such as English. The letters in the English alphabet can be pronounced in a number of ways, however, at this level we should help young learners to become familiar with the ***most common pronunciations of English letters,*** since recognising letter-sound relationships is an important step in learning to read and write.

It is important that children get used to saying the most common phonemes for the letters of the alphabet, rather than their letter names. This is to enable them to sound out the letters and blend sounds in order to read some words straight away. Learning these relationships helps children to remember and pronounce phonemes and combinations of phonemes which don't occur in their own language. Phonics also helps children develop their 'edging' skill — the ability to hear where one word ends and another begins.

## *How to approach teaching reading*

As a start, it is a good idea to ensure that the children's classroom is a literate, print-rich environment in English. This can include, for example, labelling classroom furniture, creating a weather and date chart, making a birthday calendar and making a chart of key instructions, e.g. *Listen, Read,*

*Draw,* with symbols to show what they mean. It can also include a display of pictures of famous people, story or course book characters with speech bubbles for key classroom language.

When we read, we activate two types of knowledge: what we know about making meaning (top-down processing) and what we know about language (bottom-up processing). With reading instruction, there is an ongoing debate about where to begin: should we focus first on helping children see the relationship between sounds and letters, beginning with decoding letters and words, and then move to larger units to focus on meaning (the approach used in phonics instruction)? Or should we begin with context and meaning, and then move to analysing and interpreting smaller segments of the language (the approach used in the whole language)? Clearly we need to do both.

When we are reading to children, we usually begin with context and meaning, relating what we read to the children's lives and knowledge. From there, we may explain particular words, have fun pronouncing some of them (for example, rhymes or animal sounds), and attend to the smaller units of a text. But we don't want to neglect practice in letter and word recognition. They play an important role in comprehending a text. Children need to understand sound-letter correlations (that the initial sound of *dog* and *doll* is the same and is represented by the letter "d," and that other words that begin with that letter, such as *desk,* are pronounced with the same initial sound), so that when they encounter another word that begins with that same letter they can decode it. But this is only useful if they know what a *dog,* or a *doll,* or a *desk* is. If children do not know how to decode and have not learned the regular sound-symbol correspondences in English, when confronted with a new word, they are likely to skip over it, and doing that many times renders a text meaningless. The solution is to include phonics, discussed below, but to do it in a meaningful context (not using nonsense words nor focusing on words out of context). Ideally, in any unit, students will have opportunities to practise using both bottom-up and top-down processing skills, in a balanced approach to reading.

As Cameron (2001: 151) explains, children need to develop both top-down and bottom-up processing: "The child who picks up a set of words that she recognises as whole words and uses this sight vocabulary to read a sim-

ple text needs also to develop knowledge of grapho-phonemic relationships with words to progress to more difficult texts. On the other hand, the child who has learnt the names and sounds of the letters and can read simple, regular words by 'sounding them out' needs also to recognise morphemes by sight and to draw on grammatical information at sentence level if progression is to be made." Asher (1998) also believes that differences in learning styles make it important to incorporate both approaches: auditory learners will find phonics more appropriate, while visual learners will prefer the whole word or look-say approach.

In balancing methods of teaching reading, at least the following two approaches should be considered for young learners:

- Phonics
- Whole language


Phonics is a bottom-up approach to processing a text. It focuses on the smallest unit of the text: the letters. It teaches children the relationships between sounds and letters, how a particular sound is symbolised in print, and how to "sound out" a word, given those sound-symbol relationships. It usually begins with individual sounds (such as /l/ or /s/ in initial position) or short words that rhyme or share a common sound (for example, *cat, rat, hat* or *can, ran, man).*

The goal is to help children decode written language, using the sound-symbol relationships they have learned, either in isolation or from other words. So, for example, when children see the word *bat,* they can recognise the letters of the alphabet and understand the way sounds are represented in writing. They can also refer back to words they have learned that are written with similar patterns. In this way they can be successful at decoding, since that is key to early reading success (Beck, 2006).

*Phonemic awareness activities*

Before focusing on letter-sound relationships through phonics, children need practice in discriminating English sounds what is referred to as phonemic awareness. This involves, for example, separating the spoken word *big* into three distinct phonemes, /b/, /i/, and /g/. Phonemic awareness training helps children to understand the rules of English and, over time, helps build reading fluency.


The following are some activities to help young learners to become aware of English phonemes. Learners should listen and:

- identify the first sound in a word (/b/ in *boy*)
- identify the last sound in a word (/t/ in *kite*)
- identify the common sound in a series of words (/i:/ in *see, me, tree*)
- identify the word that doesn't rhyme *(dog, fog, leg)*
- change one sound for another in the beginning (*cat* to *hat),* middle *(cat* to *cut),* and end of words *(cat* to *can)* to create new words
- blend separate sounds into a word
- delete a sound (*sat* to *at*)
- blend initial consonant clusters (/st/ in *stop*)
- identify final consonant blends (/st/ in *first*)

***Phonemic awareness activities*** can be fun. There are some examples below.


- *Going on a Rhyme Hunt:* looking for objects in the class that rhyme.
- *Playing Match Mates:* giving picture cards to each child and then having the children find a picture that begins or ends with the same sound or rhymes with the word they have.
- *Playing Odd Man Out:* posting pictures of objects that begin or end with the same sound or have the same medial sound, as well as some that do not. Children find the pictures of things that don't share a sound. This can be done in pairs or small groups.
- *Playing Bouncing Ball:* toss a ball to a student after saying a definite word. The student has to think of a word that begins with the same sound. When students can think of no new words, begin another sequence with another. This can also be done with words that end with the same sound or rhyme.
- *Playing Rhyming Words Walkabout:* arrange students in a circle. Have them to listen for rhyming words. When they hear two words that rhyme, they take one step forward. When they hear two that do not rhyme, they step back or stand at the same place (Adapted from Kauffman, 2007).

*Phonics activities*

Phonics activities can also be fun. Some of the activities used for phonemic awareness can be adapted for phonics by including the written word.


For example:

- *Odd Man Out* could be played with a set of picture cards with words written on them. Children find the word that does not belong because of a difference in the initial, medial, or final sound.

Other engaging activities include:

- *Singing or chanting* familiar songs, chants, or rhymes while you point to words in the song or chant displayed on chart paper, the board, or from a flashcard. Afterwards, have children come to the board and point to rhyming words or create new verses with new rhyming words.
- Creating *fill-in-the-blank* activities with clues:

  *The horse lives on a _____ __. (farm)*

  */ _arm*
- *Playing Bag-It*: matching letter or word cards with pictures displayed in the class. One way to make this fun is to write the letters for a picture on the outside of a small paper bag. Children find the picture that matches the letters and put the picture in the bag. (Note that this also keeps the activity manageable, as the pictures are then stored in their appropriate bag.)
- *Playing Hang-Up*: hang a picture card on a clothes hanger with a clothespin. Students have to find a letter that matches the picture (such as the initial sound) and hang it on the same clothes hanger, but facing the other way. Display these in the class.

Young learners will benefit from systematic, explicit instruction in sound-symbol correspondences in English. However, to be meaningful, phonics instruction should focus on words that children have already learned orally within a meaningful context, not in isolation. Otherwise, children may get the idea that reading is “sounding out” words, even if they don’t understand their meaning. The same is true of the names of the letters. Teach them as they fit into the context and content of the lesson.

## WHOLE LANGUAGE

A whole language approach begins with meaning and then uses language in context for further word or language study. It involves top-down processing, in which children bring their knowledge of the world, their experiences with oral language and texts, and their knowledge of the written language to constructing comprehension of written texts, using four types of clues:

- ✓ *Grapho-phonemic clues:* referring to expected sound-symbol correspondences
- ✓ *Semantic clues:* referring to what word(s) would be expected, based on the meaning
- ✓ *Syntactic clues:* referring to the part of speech that would be expected in a given place in the sentence

In early literacy, the whole language approach might begin with a focus on common words (sight words) that the children have already heard and said, perhaps in a story or song or even in popular media, in what is often referred to as a *sight-word* or *look-say* approach.

Sight words are taught because they are meaningful to the children and can then be used in a variety of activities. The words and chunks (collocations such as *have fun, take a bath,* or *catch a ball*) can be written on individual flashcards and then matched with pictures, objects, actions, or held up and used with repeating refrains or songs. They may be posted alphabetically on a word wall, where they can be called upon to help with reading in writing. Learning sight vocabulary helps children to see the connection between meaning and visual representation. Over time, children build up a large vocabulary of high frequency words.

Teachers using a whole language approach to reading may take their learners through the following sequence of reading activities which are complemented by a similar sequence of writing activities (to be discussed).

| Stage of a Lesson | Activity |
|---|---|
| Presentation | *Reading aloud* |
| Controlled practice | *Shared reading* |
| Guided practice | *Guided reading* |
| Independent activity | *Independent reading* |

While there are no definitive conclusions from research on how reading in a foreign language should be taught to children, by providing opportunities to develop skills at the letter, word, sentence and text level, creating frameworks for children to read for meaning in purposeful ways, modelling your own enthusiasm and the processes and strategies involved, encouraging personal, divergent responses, and raising reading awareness of genres and strategies, as and when appropriate, children will develop into increasingly competent readers by the end of primary school.

## *From reading to writing*

Reading provides a scaffold for learning to write and it is frequently appropriate to teach reading and writing in an integrated way, both in the initial stages and when children have more developed skills.

*Initial writing*

In the initial stages of learning to write, young children need to develop hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills, and the effort and concentration which goes into forming letters and words is a challenge in itself.

***Handwriting*** is a lifetime skill, so it is important to start from the beginning with correct hand movement habits that will lead on to writing a 'good hand'. The important role of handwriting in holistic development, and especially brain development, should not be disregarded. Neither should the support that handwriting contributes to consolidating early literacy skills. Although handwriting skills cannot be replaced by keyboard-writing activities on screen, these activities, if well chosen, can also complement holistic development and broaden learning.

Handwriting is a skill involving copying the Roman capital and small letters correctly and writing them legibly. Handwriting needs to be a tutored skill for young children if letters are to be formed in the correct way, enabling the handwriting to flow naturally onto cursive (joined-up) writing later on.

Handwriting follows on from learning to recognise letters and words, and most children can read written language before handwriting skills have been completely mastered.

Children learn soon to write in English, when presented with a structured programme of letter formation. This is because the basic concepts of what writing represents (encoding) have already been learned in Ukrainian (or other first language).

Secret languages and codes seem to fascinate young children and many seem interested in being able to write English, which they see as another type of 'cool' code. To be able to write in English also provides written 'proof' of progress for both children and parents. This visual and permanent sign of progression gives satisfaction that motivates. Establishing the correct routes and stroke orders in handwriting takes time and effort.

Many methodologists recommend to introduce handwriting with the small letters first, as most text we read consists mainly of small letters. Words written in small letters are easier to recognise than those written in capitals. Capitals are generally used to fill in forms, for emphasis in written text (for example, *STOP!),* or to attract attention to signs and notices. Apart from their own names, or initial capitals for sentence writing, children won't really need to use capitals much in the early stages of writing. If children are taught to write capital letters first, they naturally write their first words all in capitals.

As soon as children can recognise the small Roman letters, they are ready to begin learning how to write them. Learning to handwrite is rather like an apprenticeship.The adult demonstrates while the child looks. The child then does it alone, while the adult encourages and guides. Demonstrations can include making the movement of the letter shape using the index or middle finger on the palm of the other hand or by writing in the sand. This type of tactile demonstration should be done *before* writing on paper with a soft-leaded pencil so that children get the 'feel' of the movement made by the letter (for example, a backwards / anticlockwise circle, or a descending stroke — both of which may be new to children who write in a different script).

Teaching how to form the letters is important. Once children have learned how to make the letters 'the right way', these movements become second nature. It is important to go slowly. More practice in the early stages makes the later stages easier, as there is less need for focused remedial handwriting.

*'Practice makes perfect',* an old English proverb says. Meaningful opportunities to handwrite something each day or many times in a week develop the necessary muscular control and hand-eye coordination. Children can self-focus where to practise and they will self-assess their improvement. Any show of improvement is sufficient to self-motivate. It is through practice that the child develops the necessary movement skills. Not until the child has mastered the basic movements to make the letters does he or she begin, unconsciously, to insert his or her own creativity into handwriting.


*Handwriting practice*

Copying known text is an important, often misunderstood, step in learning to write. It enables the child to focus exclusively on improving handwriting skills, without the burden of having to decode or create text. Copying also helps to reinforce memorisation of how words are spelt.

Children often enjoy trying again and again to achieve a good piece of work. Teachers should ensure children are writing with the correct utensil (a soft pencil) and should allow children to rub out and self-correct letter shapes where they feel they can do better. Praise should be given for tenacity and effort!


*Copying known text:*

- ✓ is a basic step in holistic literacy development, providing focus on handwriting whilst giving broader experience in written language and spelling
- ✓ is useful reinforcement as children often recite the text to themselves word by word as they write
- ✓ enables a child to focus fully on his or her handwriting skills, since it involves only one task (copying)
- ✓ is useful for providing 'show-off' pieces of work that record progress in both handwriting and reading the known text
- ✓ can be followed by children adding their own creative design, pattern or picture to complete the experience

*Stimulating children to handwrite*

Sometimes it is necessary to encourage a child's desire to write, especially for boys who don't like to sit still for too long. Teachers should remember that once interest in a writing activity begins to wane, it is time to move on to something else. The activity can be completed in the next lesson or, if reasonable, finished off at home.

Extending an activity to the point of loss of interest can be counterproductive and put children off writing. Below are some simple ideas for stimulating an interest in handwriting:


*Writing letters to classmates*

- ✓ The teacher makes a postbox for the classroom from cardboard boxes, with a slit for posting letters.
- ✓ Children handwrite a simple message or greeting to a classmate on illustrated or coloured paper. The paper is folded and

the classmate's name is written on the outside. The 'letter' is then 'posted' in the classroom postbox.

✓ Before home time, a class 'post person' opens the postbox and delivers the letters. The teacher can add his or her own letters (with more advanced text) to ensure that all children receive a letter each week.


*Copying known rhymes onto cards*

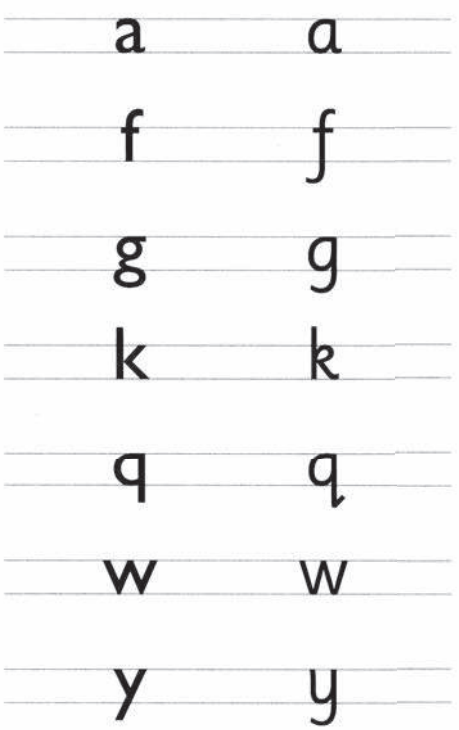
Children choose a known rhyme to copy onto a card, decorate it with pictures and then display in the classroom.


*Exhibiting work*

Children learn much from each other's work. In fact, often more is learned from other children's ideas of presentation, design and layout than from explanations given by the teacher or parent. Work done at home or during the lesson should be displayed in the classroom. If possible, it is a good idea to keep children's work over a period of a term or a year in a folder so that they and their parents can track the development in their writing skills.

*The style of handwriting*

Writing simple print versions of letters (without flicks) is easier to begin with. This is because simple, written print matches more closely the print they are learning to read (decode) and beginning to spell (encode). Once the children's ability to recognise and match print and handwritten letters is more developed, the transfer to cursive handwriting is quick since muscular control and hand-eye coordination has already been built up via learning to write simple print.




Ukrainian schoolchildren can

benefit from learning to write with 'tracks'. Consisting of three or four guidelines, tracks can help children get used to the relative size and proportions of capital and small letters. The tracks guide children on the general size of letters, as well as on how high or low to go above or below the line when writing ascending and descending letters. It is helpful to provide paper with tracks (3 or 4 guideline tracks) for a short period.

Once young children have sufficient experience, the number of guide lines can be reduced to two and then just one (the 'base line'). As children become fluent handwriters, they will use only the base line to develop their own size of writing.

Teachers should remember that children want to use their knowledge of how to write letters to form words as soon as possible.


*Introducing capital letters*

As soon as children know sufficient small letters to write words which they know orally, they should be encouraged to do so. The capital letters can then be introduced into writing naturally at the beginning of personal names and for the personal pronoun 'I'. As children get more advanced, capitals can be used in other situations, for example, at the beginning of sentences or for the names of towns, cities or countries.

*Spelling*

Through experience (especially reading aloud) some children appear to develop an innate instinct for how words look; they get a 'feel' for whether the spelling looks right or not. Adults quite often write a word in two different ways to confirm which looks to be the correct spelling. Some children start to use this strategy themselves as they develop their innate 'feel' for how words are spelt.


Visual recognition may be stimulated further by *'writing' the shapes of words on the palm* of the other hand using the two sensitive fingers (the index and middle finger). It is thought the more you write, the more remember, as memory is learned through the hand.


*The Spelling Quizz*

Regular spelling quizzes can be enjoyable if the approach is playful and the degree of difficulty is structured. Children enjoy listening to the 'music' and rhythm of words spelt out loud.

Quizzes need to be playfully presented and carefully graded. It is important to start with easy quizzes so that children know they can get all or most of the items right. Having self-confidence is very important.

Young children need to repeat and repeat what appears to adults a pointless activity. It is important not to rush children and not to introduce them to too many of the complexities of English spelling until they have a solid basis, as well as a range of self-learning strategies with which to proceed with confidence.

Quiz content can include words, phrases or short sentences.

*Spelling quiz management*

- Hold a quiz regularly once a week at a set time. Give several days of preparation time.
- Make a spelling book for each child, sticking in each week's printed list of words for reference.
- Model the word, phrase or short sentence, pronouncing clearly so children can hear the sounds.
- Allow children to self-correct, if possible, letting them keep secret from others how many they got right!
- Follow the same routine each time, leading up to sharing the 'teacher's role' with a child who dictates the spelling words.
- Where necessary, divide into groups to match learning abilities, taking care not to cause 'loss of face'.There can be surprises as some children can spell more easily than they can speak. Others can change their ability once they understand how to focus.


*Recognising patterns of 'onset and rime'*

In the initial stages of spelling in English, it is easier for young children to recognise patterns if words are divided simply into two clear sections: 'onset and rime'. Children have already initiated play with words with different onset and rime (for example, *d/ot, m/at, sl/at, h/at, fl/at)* when learning to read. This easy-to-understand method introduces an initial analysis of word patterns, which can lead on to more sophisticated encoding (synthetic phonics) as children become more mature and experienced users of English.

**Onset**

Onset consists of all the letters and phonemes (blends, diagraphs) *before* the first vowel: **b**/oat, **tr**/ain, **pl**/ay.

**Rime**

Rime continues from the first vowel to the *end* of the word. Through rime the patterns in words are clearly identified. Children can hear and see them more easily: t/***able***, st/***able;*** p/***air***, st/***air;*** b/***oat***, g/***oat***.

Children enjoy highlighting similar patterns in the same colour. This activity is more than simply colouring as it focuses learning strategies and increasing observation.

With practice, young children unconsciously constantly use analogies to match sounds to spelling patterns. Making analogies increases self-confidence as it shows progress and also gives them the feeling that they are in control of their learning.

Through spelling quizzes a structured scheme of known spelling patterns can be consolidated and, where necessary, revision can be introduced.

Teachers need to support children by:

- creating quick sessions to search, discover and widen their recognition of patterns
- providing groups of words with matching rimes but different onsets
- helping them find analogies
- explaining fun facts about words
- looking at the origins of words
- increasing vocabulary

Teachers should only include known words for new spellings. They can include words which:

- have matching rimes: *small, fall, wall*
- appear in simple phrases: *a sunny day, a good way*
- appear in short sentences: *My red bag is there*


***How to use a 'look-cover-write-check' spelling sheet***

Teachers can ask children to follow these steps:

**Look:** Look at the word in your book. Write the word in the air or on the palm of your free hand with your index and middle finger.

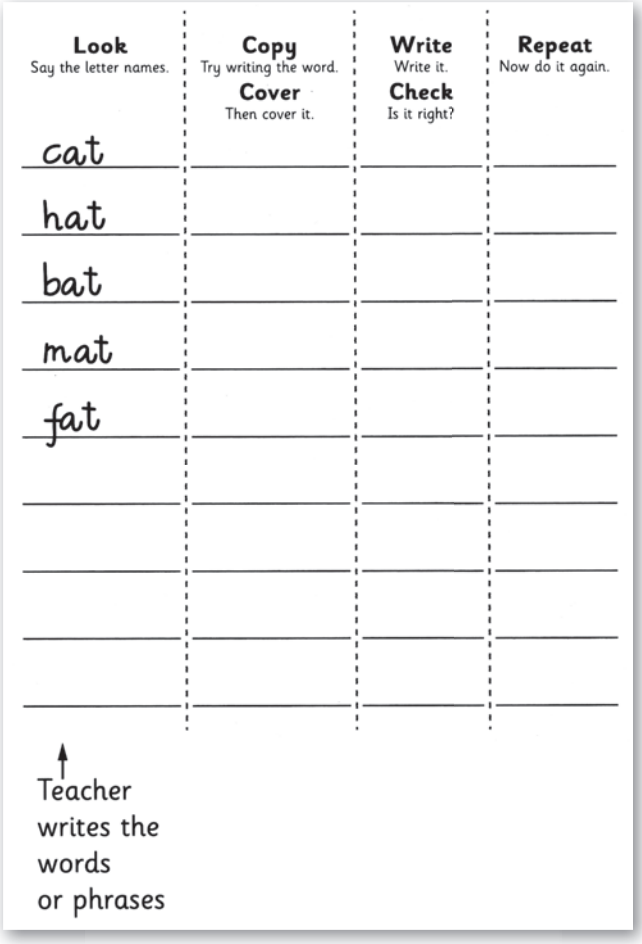
**Cover:** Cover the word in your book. Close your eyes and see the word in your mind.

**Write:** Open your eyes and write the word with your pencil.

**Check:** Uncover the word in your book and check. Do the spellings match?

**Repeat:** Do it again.

*Spelling Sheet*




The emphasis in initial writing is to support and consolidate oral/aural work, through, for example, reinforcing the understanding and spelling of familiar vocabulary items and sentence patterns.

It is very important to encourage children in their writing, tracing, copying, and drawing. Do not worry if children are unable to trace, write, draw or colour neatly. These skills will emerge during their primary years.

As children progress, they can be introduced to writing short texts, which may either be based on a model.

## 5.3 Vocabulary and Grammar

Vocabulary and grammar are closely interrelated in children's early language learning, both in their first or foreign language. Young children initially learn chunks of language, which combine vocabulary and grammatical patterns, in a holistic, unanalysed way. As they grow older, they develop the ability to relate vocabulary to networks of meanings and to notice and analyse language forms and functions more explicitly. Whether they are learning holistically when younger, or developing more conscious language awareness and powers of analysis as they grow older, it is vital to give children plenty of opportunities to memorise, practise, recycle and extend their vocabulary and grammar in meaningful contexts throughout the primary years.

New lexical units are usually introduced in relation to a certain topic. They can be presented in course books or with support from flashcards and audio recordings or with the help of video presentations of multimedia programme. Then they are practised with chants, songs, motivating classroom games and activities as well as interactive tasks from multimedia.

The children can be first exposed to the new grammatical structures alongside the key words in the dialogues or stories. They then move on to focused grammatical structure practice, which is reinforced with a range of spoken and on paper pre-writing activities.

### *Learning vocabulary*

Children often measure their own language learning progress in terms of 'how many words they know'. Learning vocabulary can be one of the most significant and satisfying outcomes in the first years of English lessons. It boosts children's confidence and self-esteem. It also lays the foundations for leading children into using grammatical structures, which initially present a greater learning challenge, in more extended and creative ways.

*Words and concepts*

Although initial vocabulary learning in a foreign language appears straightforward, with an apparent one-to-one correspondence between words and the objects or concepts that these refer to, it is in reality a very complex process, which develops gradually in a cyclical way over time.

As part of the process of learning vocabulary, children need to learn the form of the word, that is, the way the word sounds and is spelt, and the way it changes grammatically, e.g. when used in the plural. They also need to understand the meaning and the way that relates to other concepts and words, e.g. the way a word like *tiny* relates to other words to describe size, such as *big* and *small.* In addition to this, children need to be able to recall the word whenever they need it and, in the longer term, to gradually extend their understanding of its use. It will also be influenced by their own language background and their ongoing stage of cognitive, social and psychological development, where they are still in the process of acquiring concepts and vocabulary which they bring to their understanding of English in a continually evolving way.

*The importance of recycling*

Children often appear to learn vocabulary easily, 'like little sponges', as the saying goes. However, in the same way that sponges lose water, children also forget vocabulary very easily too unless they are given regular opportunities to use it, and to deepen and extend their understanding of how it relates and connects to other language they know. Given this, ***it is essential to recycle vocabulary regularly and systematically at all levels and ages in primary school.***

Through regular recycling, children can be given opportunities to meet the same vocabulary, embedded in different contexts, language and activity types, again and again. This not only improves their recall and develops memory processes, but also extends their understanding and associations of vocabulary in an ever expanding network of meanings and use. Through using vocabulary in a variety of social, experiential and personalized ways, children develop 'ownership' of language and this also leads to new learning.

In addition to the vocabulary activities in this section, there are many examples of other activity types, such as games, rhymes, songs, stories, drama, arts and crafts, which provide opportunities to recycle vocabulary in a range of meaningful and creative ways. These are described in different sections of this book.

*Vocabulary practice*

With younger children, it is most appropriate to teach concrete vocabulary items which relate to the 'here and now' of their immediate environment and personal experience. As children grow older, they gradually become able

to deal with more abstract concepts and vocabulary removed from their immediate surroundings. When practising vocabulary it is important to provide opportunities to help children.

Children also need to be encouraged to develop independent and individualised learning skills and strategies that will help them to enrich and extend their vocabulary, to organise and record vocabulary in systematic and logical ways, and to reflect on and evaluate their own learning in an increasingly autonomous way.

### *Learning grammar*

In order to lay the foundations for understanding and learning aspects of grammar, it is above all important to give children exposure to language in meaningful contexts which engage them in practising and using English for purposes which they can relate to and enjoy.

*Initial stages*

With young children, initial learning of grammatical patterns is implicit, based on formulaic sequences and unanalysed chunks of language met in the context of, e.g. lesson routines, songs, rhymes, stories and games. As a result of acquiring chunks of language, children develop a sense of achievement and become increasingly willing to participate in classroom activities in English. As they grow in confidence, they also begin to transfer chunks to new contexts and to use them creatively. Two examples of this are a child spontaneously transferring the chunk *Too much noise!* from the song 'The Wheels on the Bus' to the classroom, and a child asking *Can I go the colour please?* to request permission to colour a collectively produced mural, by using part of a chunk of classroom language for asking to go to the toilet. The holistic learning of language chunks plays an important role in fostering children's enthusiasm for learning English. It also provides them with a potentially rich, internal language resource as they grow older and are encouraged, or expected, to pay attention to grammatical features and apply more explicit analytical skills to the way they learn.

## *5.4 Learning to Learn*

Young children are self-educators if they are provided with enabling experiences. From about 5 years old, many children show signs of wanting to do things for themselves. Many of them already want to become independent,

saying things like *Let me try. I can do it*. They are active agents in their own learning and develop personal strategies to help them progress (including language-learning strategies, which — with adult help — they can reuse to acquire English).

By the age of 6, without being formally taught, children have managed to develop a range of self-learning strategies with which to learn many things. 'Learning to learn' involves knowing and being able to use these self-learning strategies effectively. Effective learning at this age forms the foundations for lifelong learning.

By the age of 7, many of the self-learning strategies for acquiring language are in place, since children are by now fluent their own language speakers. Children who already read and write in their own language have also acquired some self-learning strategies for coded their language literacy.

As teachers, we need to foster young children's ability to self-learn, helping them to work out how to transfer their self-language-learning strategies to absorb English successfully. By now, children will already have unconsciously transferred their strategies to pick up spoken English, but they need help to do the same when learning how to read and spell and later create written English.

Children need time to find out how to use their strategies to solve problems, self-manage and persevere to achieve progress.

To achieve it, there has to be volition, and for this children's inner drive needs to be ignited and continually stoked. To successfully 'orchestrate' self-learning, teachers also have to monitor progress and assess by summarising, recalling and talking over how things were done and what was achieved. Listening to each other's reflections, ideas and questions is important, because — apart from being able to tell everyone about what they are thinking — children learn from watching and imitating their peers.

What children learn is important, but developing and becoming aware of their self-learning (and self-language-learning) strategies is even more crucial if children are to become lifelong learners — including learners of English.

The young child is becoming aware of how he or she learns, and is able to talk about this. The child is beginning to 'think about thinking' (metacognition), and needs to be listened to as he or she unconsciously reuses, adapts and broadens his or her self-learning strategies to acquire English. This growing

awareness means that the child is developing strategies to self-assess and also assess the abilities of other children.

Teachers should always value children's answers and points of view as this increases self-esteem and confidence. Children also need to be given time to reflect and reply. Children need to feel valued; it gives them energy to persevere and develop their autonomy and ownership. It also helps them understand their identity within the family, school and beyond.

***How children learn is more important than what they learn.*** By showing children that we value their learning processes, we help them to reach confidently for opportunities to learn.

Young children come to English lessons wanting and expecting to quickly read and write in English like they do in their own language. For some, it is disappointing and frustrating that it takes time before they can express their thoughts and feelings in English. Emotional well-being underpins all development. Thus the teacher has to find a balance between motivation and the 'feel-good' factor, remembering that cognitive intelligence is stable, but emotional intelligence has to be learned with help. Emotional control and management develop with a child's maturity. If an intelligent young child is emotionally not at ease, very little learning will take place.

Motivation is vital for success in language learning. Being a learner is not always easy; it requires effort at all ages. When children are motivated, they build up self-confidence and self-esteem, which stimulates and in turn re-motivates. Motivation helps children resist other attractions and encourages them to focus.

Learning English is not only about acquiring knowledge. For children who have passed beyond the egocentric stage of development, feelings become more complex and involved, and ways of socialisation become wider and more profound. Other children's thoughts and words begin to influence a child's feelings. Without emotional and physical well-being, children find it difficult to develop the self-confidence to learn. Feeling positive underlies the attitudes and volition needed to persist with learning. Self-esteem, based on how others see us, is closely linked with motivation.

We can help children be more positive by the type of assessment we use with them, such as our choice of language when praising and encouraging.

# 6 Evaluating Success

Evaluation is an essential part of the language-learning process. This section aims to help you think about how to evaluate young learners while respecting their particular characteristics and needs and maintaining their natural curiosity to learn English.

Talking about the learning process is usually more important than the final product or outcome. However, teachers should remember that learning is a triangle which includes parents, and the product is often regarded as important proof of a child's achievement. Parents' positive reaction to a product can stimulate; children look for parents' approval and praise as it helps them confirm that what they are doing is right.

In talking about *success* teachers need to focus on *effort,* and how to achieve goals. Helping children verbalise their own effort and the learning process can be encouraged by using a type of scaffolding, where the teacher leads the interaction, introducing new language and thinking. The teacher might say, for example:

*Then what did you do? Oh, you joined it up.*
*Did you use a ruler and pencil? Why was it difficult?*
*Because of the pencil?*

It is better not to over-praise achievement, especially for an activity which may have been easy for the child. Instead, encourage the child to try something new and praise effort where there has been a particular challenge involved. The teacher might say "*A really good try, Taras. Now try again. You can make it even better!*"

When praising children, teachers need to show that they value individual learning processes. They need to create opportunities for children to take responsibility so that children can discover how challenge — and even difficulty — can be very motivating.

## *Assessment by adults*

Without listening, observing and assessing, teachers cannot extend children's learning strategies or meet their need for repetition. Teachers need to remember that:

- Children sometimes behave in a different way at school than they do

at home. They can also behave differently in English classes than they do in their own language classes.

- Parents may be surprised by their child's developing abilities in English, especially if they are not 'shown off' at home.
- Parents may label children saying (in front of the child) things like *He's shy. He's not good at* games. These labels can be incorrect as some children merely perform to conform to their parents' descriptions.
- Maturity at this young age partly depends on the local culture. This influences the type of enabling activities children will experience and the aspirations of the parents. This said, technology is bringing the world into homes and changing children's experiences. Even if the screen experience is not interactive, many young children have developed self-learning strategies to pick up some English, for example from dialogues. However, they are not always sure of the meaning or when and how to use it in real life.
- Teachers might think of themselves as being employed to follow a set syllabus, but they also need to be tuned in to children's use of self-learning strategies, as well as their interests and levels of development. Without this tuning-in, a teacher cannot be a successful co-dialoguer — and children need interaction to pick up ideas and language. At the lower-primary age it is easy to recognise a child's physical milestones, but for successful learning to take place teachers need to be constantly assessing a child's emotional and social maturity, as well as his or her innate desire for knowledge and autonomy (which is intrinsically linked to the use of self-learning strategies).
- Teachers need evidence from regular ongoing assessments to show that children are acquiring knowledge (content) and the language to talk about that and how they learn. By this age children are ready to discuss and summarise what they are doing and how they have performed, comparing their achievements with previous attempts and the work of others.

Children and their parents need to be made aware that they are making progress as this stimulates and motivates them. With developing maturity children begin to regularly self-assess, as well as assessing the progress of others in the class. Teachers may hear children say, *'She is not very*

*good at drawing.'* In some cases their self-assessment might be incorrect and demotivating, especially when they perceive their peers' work to be of a higher standard. Teachers must work closely with children to check these self-assessments and to harness any disappointment, using it in a positive way to create self-motivation to do better next time. Above all, teachers need to respect children's desire to develop autonomy. The skilled teacher's task is to balance the provision of stimuli with the support of autonomy.

***Valid assessment** takes time and should include these elements:*

- Knowing a child well and regularly judging their degree of autonomy.
- Providing high-quality, regular one-to-one interaction.
- Recording a child's involvement, effort, persistence, self-satisfaction, positive mindset and 'feel-good factor'.
- Knowing a child's listening, understanding and speaking ability, as well as their level of confidence.
- Being aware of a child's ability to understand 'gist'.
- Engaging parents' support (especially the child's mother, who is usually — but not always — the main native language teacher).

Although any assessment cannot be completely accurate as every child knows more than they can express verbally, assessments are invaluable for planning repetition and for structuring the introduction of new material.

Quick assessments after each lesson — or even notes made during a lesson — help to identify the necessary next steps for a child's holistic learning and English progress. These kinds of ongoing quick assessments also help teachers to identify any guidance needed for effective planning and follow-up in the next few lessons.

Evaluation is an important tool. It helps us determine what has been learned, how effective learning has been and how we as teachers can best address our students' needs. Evaluation can be formative (done on an ongoing basis, to determine how well students are progressing) or summative (usually at the end of a year or a unit of work). Here are 9 ***evaluation techniques*** to help you obtain reliable information about the learning process:

### *Define clear learning objectives!*

Prepare the evaluation process by thinking carefully about what the children should master by the end of a particular topic that you are working on. For example, you might want them to be able to sing a song, act out a dialogue, learn 10 new words, read and understand a short story and pronounce 10 words correctly. Next, choose the various tasks and activities that will help the children reach the learning objectives that you have set.

### *Create objective success criteria!*

When defining success criteria, think about the various learning stages that a child will have to go through before he or she is able to successfully master those steps; then design your success criteria around these steps. Make sure that you focus on the various tasks that a child can manage rather than on what the child isn't able to do yet.

### *Observe the children in familiar learning contexts!*

Reduce the stress of evaluation by assessing the children in familiar teaching and learning contexts. Instead of setting aside a specific day for evaluation, assess the children as they do the various tasks you set in class.

### *Evaluate different interaction patterns!*

Remember that children have different individual ways of learning, but that they will need to develop teamwork skills to meet the demands of the workplace in the future. Thus, children should be evaluated in different interaction contexts such as when doing pairwork, when doing groupwork and when working individually.

### *Observe a few children every day!*

It is difficult to evaluate a whole class at once. Instead, focus on 3-5 different children in each lesson by observing them carefully and taking down detailed notes about their performance and progress. This will allow you to have detailed information about each child's progress by the end of the unit.

### *Use focused observation forms and checklists!*

Keep the evaluation process as objective as possible by creating objective evaluation forms for each unit you are teaching. Make sure that you focus on the children's progress by jotting down abbreviations like ***C*** (competent), ***N*** (non-competent) or ***W*** (working on) for each point. An alternative is to draw a forward slash (/) then a back slash (\) so that you make an X in each square, and finally colouring in the whole square so that you can use the same form throughout the unit you are working on.

### *Language portfolio!*

Language portfolios are an effective way of evaluating a child's progress over time. They involve getting the children to choose their best work (drawings, pieces of writing, examples of arts and crafts, examples of show and tell, small projects or even self-evaluation forms) to put in their portfolios. Remember that making portfolios is a time-consuming activity, so train the children to choose examples of their work, set time aside for giving feedback and reserve a space in the classroom for physically keeping the portfolios, as they can become very bulky as the year progresses.

### *Promote self-assessment!*

Introduce a culture of 'learning to learn' in your classroom by making self-assessment a regular part of learning. Remember that children will need to be trained to self-assess objectively, so invest time in teaching them what success looks like. Base self-assessment worksheets around 'can do' statements, for example, 'I can sing the *Body Song'*. Take time to think carefully about the language of your 'can do' statements. If they are in the learners' native language, children will easily be able to understand them. If they are in English, the language used will have to be simple and familiar for the children.

### *Evaluate linguistic and non-linguistic skills!*

Remember to evaluate the whole learner and not just the language learner. This means that you need to evaluate the four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) as well as things like social skills, thinking skills, teamwork skills and creativity.


*WAYS TO RECORD CHILDREN'S PROGRESS AND GIVE FEEDBACK*

Recording children's progress and giving feedback can be a tiring task. Here are some practical suggestions to help you make this task less onerous and to ensure that you have detailed information to share.

- **Progress charts**

  A great way to get a general picture of a class's overall achievement is to create a class progress chart, which allows you to see how well the class is doing and who is falling behind or speeding ahead. This knowledge will enable you to create extra tasks and challenges for children who need to be challenged at different levels. It also helps you maintain motivation and ensure that everyone is ready for the formal test. (See Appendix, p.126, for a sample classroom progress chart.)

- **Class observation charts**

  Evaluation is a continuous process, which means that you need an easy and effective way of recording a child's progress in class

every day. Classroom observation forms, which you can just tick, are a great tool for doing this. Create objectives forms to help you evaluate things like participation, homework, punctuality and behaviour. A useful trick is to record only the children who stand out for having done very well or very badly. You can use different colour pens or smiley faces to mark the difference. If the square next to a child's name is blank, then you automatically know that the child complied with the criteria being observed on a particular day. (See Appendix for a sample class observation chart, p.125.)

- **Behaviour charts**

  Behaviour is a key success factor in any classroom. Having a class behaviour chart and making it a class ritual to fill it out is fundamental to making children aware of how important behaviour is, and how it can influence their learning outcomes. Make sure you praise children who have made a conscious effort to improve their behaviour, even if they may not have managed to be perfect. In this way, you show the class that you notice and value the children's efforts. At the end of the week, take the time to analyse the class's behaviour for that week and to set behaviour objectives for the coming week. This procedure can also be done for weekly learning objectives. (See Appendix for a sample behaviour chart, p.127.)

- **Teacher journal**

  When you teach various classes every day, it is easy to confuse the things that happen in one class with what happens in the next. To avoid this, try keeping a small teacher journal. Reserve the last two minutes of your lesson for the children to pack up and clean the classroom. Use that time to write a quick note about anything or any child that stood out in class that day. This will allow you to have detailed and objective feedback to give to school authorities about every lesson.

- **Individual interviews and meetings**

  A personal and effective way of giving feedback is to set aside a few minutes for student interviews while the class is doing group-

work. Always remember to start by stressing two good things the child has managed to achieve or improve. Then suggest one thing for the child to work on, and finally, end on something that you think the child is particularly good at and should continue doing.

- **Term report**

  The objective of a term or semester report is to give the child and the child's family information about the child's progress. The report should focus on giving information on both linguistic and non-linguistic skills. You can involve the child and the child's family by including a section where they can write their feedback. For younger learners who can't read yet, try making picture reports with images instead of words.

- **Skills report**

  Skills reports help draw parents' attention to different skills that their children are working on. A time-saving alternative is to make a unit report which focuses on all the four skills. (See Appendix, p.128.)

- **Child-centred reports**

  An alternative to formal reports aimed at school authorities is child-centred reports, which show the children what they can already do in a light-hearted and visual way. A good example is a 'can do' garden with a flower for each thing that the child can do in the unit. An alternative is a language passport with a stamp for each different thing the child can do. Remember to focus on the whole learning experience when filling in these reports.

- **Digital contact**

  Many schools have digital systems in place to help parents follow their child's progress. If this is not the case at your school, try sending a simple general email to parents once every two weeks, informing them of what's going on in the classroom. Limit individual emails to urgent cases so that you aren't flooded with unnecessary work. To control the number of emails that you have to answer every day, tell

parents when your email checking hours are each week so that they have a clear idea of your online availability right from the start.

- **Parents' open day**
  Parents' days are a fantastic way of inviting parents into the classroom to discuss and celebrate their children's learning. Remember to give feedback in such a way that parents can feel proud of their child's achievements, however small. This is also a great opportunity to involve parents in setting their children's learning and behaviour plans, and making them accountable for them.

# Part II
# HELPING TIPS

## 1 In the Primary Classroom

### *Roles that teachers have in the young learner classroom*

As any teacher of young learners will tell you, you have to wear multiple hats to make sure that effective learning takes place in the classroom. Here are 10 roles that help you make a difference in the classroom and in your children's lives.

**1 A surrogate parent**

The teachers that we tend to remember as adults are not just the teachers who taught us lots of interesting facts and met all the job requirements, but those who also saw their pupils as people, and truly cared for them. Getting to know your students as well as you can and caring for them both in and out of lessons is an absolute must in the primary classroom.

**2 A 'teachertainer'**

It is no longer enough for teachers of young learners to be mere knowledge transmitters who teach the curriculum put together by an external entity. Teachers are expected to make learning engaging and fun. This means that many teachers see themselves as a mixture of teacher and entertainer — a 'teachertainer' — who makes a difference to the learning process.

**3 A values transmitter**

Children often spend more time at school than they do at home with their parents. Because of this, schools have taken on the role of teaching children basic values such as kindness, respect, sharing, being fair and polite, caring for the environment and respecting the world around them. Remember that in many cases, children will only hear about the importance of these values from you. So make sure that they find a way into your classroom and teaching.

**4 A conductor**

Primary school teachers are conductors in the classroom in the sense that they control learning for each child and prompt them to make new fun and exciting discoveries. Try to encourage children to make the right learning decisions, and only step in and help when it's absolutely necessary.

**5 An organiser**

Most children are very eager learners, but they are not autonomous enough to organise their own learning paths yet. Organise everything that happens in the classroom for them so that learning will become a logical and manageable process for everyone.

**6 A facilitator**

A primary teacher should plan lessons in a way that places the children at the centre of the learning process. This implies giving children strategies to become autonomous learners. See yourself as a walking resource, always ready to offer children the necessary language and tools to learn effectively.

**7 A mirror and a mentor**

Children watch our every move. They learn by the examples around them. This is why it is so important that, as primary teachers, we demonstrate the attitudes and reactions that we want our children to have in class. It is part of our role to accompany each child in his or her learning journey, and to act as a mentor who is able to challenge them at their level, thereby keeping their motivation to learn alive. Remember that children are curious by nature, so make sure you plan your lessons in such a way as to appeal to their natural curiosity.

**8 An assessor**

Great teachers are great assessors who are able to evaluate what children know and are already doing right. Rather than focusing on what children are doing wrong, try to focus on what they are doing right and what the next learning step is, ensuring that your feedback will make them want to come back into your classroom the next day.

**9 A social worker**

As teachers, we need to be aware that some of our children have complicated lives. Remember to be on the lookout for warning signs and, if necessary, to get help from professionals.

**10 A form filler**

There is a huge amount of paperwork that teachers need to fill in. As you fill in your learners' report cards, remember that the parent who is going to read it is eager to know how their child is learning, to find out what they need to do next and to hear at least one heartwarming thing about their son or daughter.

## *Things to avoid in the young learner classroom*

Good teachers teach children content, but great teachers know that they also have to teach with a heart. They know just how it is important to make children feel happy in the classroom and to 'open their learning gates'. Here are Some tips to help you avoid some basic problems in the young learner classroom.

***Avoid being too strict!***

Children need to feel safe and happy before they can learn. Being overly strict can 'shut their learning gates' for weeks. On the other hand, being their best friend can lead to loss of control. Try to establish clear rules for your classroom and to enforce them with a kind but firm hand.

***Avoid speaking down to children!***

In order for learning to take place in your classroom, you will need to manage behaviour. Instead of blaming children or demanding good behaviour, try explaining the reason why that particular kind of behaviour is important. Building a climate of mutual trust and respect is the first key to learning in any classroom.

***Avoid trying to control everything!***

Teachers need to manage and control what happens in the classroom without becoming control freaks. Remember that a lot of memorable learning happens when teachers take a step back and let the children experiment and

come up with creative solutions. Have the courage to let go and allow the children to sit in the driver's seat.

***Avoid taking things personally!***

As teachers, we tend to expect perfection in every lesson. When things go wrong, we quickly blame ourselves. While we do need to reflect on every lesson in order to maximise learning, we also need to remember that when children behave in a challenging manner, this doesn't necessarily mean that they don't like us or that we've done something wrong.

***Avoid correcting every mistake!***

We want our children to learn English successfully and efficiently. The problem is that they keep making mistakes. Correcting every mistake causes children to become hesitant and less inclined to join in. They then quickly realise that if they don't say anything, the teacher won't 'pick on' them in front of the class. So, treat mistakes as if they were salt and pepper. Too little correction makes learning bland, but too much spoils the enjoyment. Only correct a mistake if it interferes with communication. If it doesn't, jot it down and deal with it later.

***Avoid explaining grammar!***

Children are not yet capable of thinking abstractly. This means that they have trouble understanding grammar explanations. Rather than explaining grammar rules to children, teach them games or songs, which stay in their memory long after the lesson is over. Games and songs help them to pick up and practise the target language in a natural context while having fun.

***Avoid the negative; mirror the positive!***

As teachers, we often act as children's role models. Children mirror the things we do and say. Thus, make a point of demonstrating positive examples like keeping the classroom tidy (with the children's help). Remember to focus on why this is important and how it helps them learn better.

***Avoid having teacher's pets!***

It is natural to have more of an affinity with some children than with others. The secret is to make sure that this remains your secret. Make sure that you treat everyone the same. Remember how sad and frustrating it is to not be chosen because you aren't one of the teacher's favourites.

***Avoid changing things every day!***

Resist the temptation to be overly creative, changing things every day. Remember that children like and need routine. Constant change makes it difficult for them to be well behaved because they are not sure what is expected of them. Remember that success feeds motivation!

***Avoid doing or saying things only once!***

Children take time to learn and not every child is able to get things right after just one quick instruction. This means that before you ask children to do something for you, you need to demonstrate exactly what it is that you want them to do, rather than just telling them. Always invite two or three children to have a go at the task or activity in front of the class before you hand it over to the children.

## *Ways to establish an exciting and purposeful learning environment*

School can be something a child looks forward to or something they dread. To help ensure that the former is the case, here are some tips to help you make kids like school.

***Get to know the children!***

Children enjoy going to school when teachers meet both their academic and their emotional needs. This means that you need to find out more about your students. Begin by making an effort to speak to them both in and outside the classroom. By connecting with them, you will soon understand them and their needs, and this process is likely to reduce behaviour problems.

### *Let them get to know you as well as each other!*

Invest time in allowing the children to get to know you as a person, and as a teacher. Share any personal details that you are comfortable with them knowing about. This will help create a special bond of trust between you. Invite the children to do pairwork and groupwork activities. These encourage them to get to know each other and develop social skills, which will have an impact on their working lives.

### *Decorate the classroom!*

Make the classroom look attractive and friendly. Display the children's work for everyone to see how good they are at learning English. To give the children more exposure to language, put up word cards that label the various objects and images in the classroom. Once they know a particular set of words, substitute them with new word cards to continue challenging the children.

### *Involve the parents!*

Remember that the children's parents are just as concerned about their children as you are. Involve them in the learning process by inviting them to come into the classroom, to speak about their own hobbies, interests and jobs. Hold a meeting at the beginning of the year to explain what the children will be doing in the English classroom and why. When parents understand the goings-on of the classroom, they become assets in the children's learning process.

### *Create a time-out area!*

We all have our individual work rhythms and personalities, which can mean that some children finish a task before the rest of the class. Certain children may even reject an activity on a 'bad-behaviour day'. Rather than initiate a confrontation, try providing these children with an alternative learning experience or activity like reading a story quietly in the reading corner or completing a worksheet.

### *Create a friendly classroom environment!*

To create a friendly classroom environment, listen carefully to the children's opinions of the tasks and activities being done. You'll often find that they are able to come up with creative suggestions, which will help you engage them in class. Encourage them to respect each other's opinions by including and regularly referring back to a rule in the *Rules Poster* like: "In our class we always listen to each other with our ears and hearts."

### *Make learning relevant!*

Remember that we learn better when what we are learning is relevant to our experiences, interests, personalities and 'realities'. When the content is abstract and theoretical, children tend to rote-learn it and then forget it. Focus on language they need in order to speak about the things in their lives; for example, family, food, pets, likes and dislikes, school, toys and games.

### *Set targets and celebrate achieving them!*

Make successful learning objectives concrete for children by setting achievable objectives and targets. Negotiate three to five learning targets for the week with the children. Reward the class's hard work and effort by celebrating when they achieve each target. This could mean playing the class's favourite game or singing their favourite song at the end of that particular lesson, or even giving them a sweet as a special reward for their hard work.

### *Support children with special needs!*

Remember to adapt general targets and objectives for children with special learning needs. Involve them in the process of defining their personal targets rather than simply presenting them with pre-defined targets. In many cases, they will know what they are capable of achieving better than you do, and if you have created a meaningful relationship with them, they will be motivated to tap into their 'super learning powers' to please you. The results are often surprising and can set a great example for the class.

***Create attendance and punctuality awareness!***

Invest in promoting attendance and punctuality awareness. You can do this by being punctual for every lesson yourself, and by creating an attendance and punctuality chart, which a student fills in at the beginning of the lesson. Punctuality can then be objectively measured and rewarded.

## *Some ways to approach behaviour in the young learner classroom*

Behaviour is a tricky issue in every classroom as it can make or break any lesson. The secret to keeping things under control is to approach behaviour management calmly and logically in order to avoid getting into emotional wars. Here are 10 behaviour management secrets that you may want to try.

***Don't take behaviour personally!***

The first secret to managing behaviour is not to take it personally. Remember that the children are simply being children. Don't forget that they will tend to mirror the behaviour and reactions that you have in class, so make sure that you always provide them with a positive role model to follow. Similarly, when telling children why their behaviour is not appropriate, explain that you are not against them, but rather the inappropriate behaviour, which you cannot accept.

***Encourage the right choices!***

Always present behaviour management as a choice that the children can make and then hold them accountable for their choices by kindly explaining the situation, e.g. 'Anya, when you choose to behave like that, you also choose to leave the game. If you change the way you are behaving and respect turn-taking, you will also choose to continue playing the game with us. So, what do you choose to do?'

***Be consistent and coherent!***

Before you start the school year, take some time to think about the rules

and the type of behaviour that you find unacceptable. Then, calmly think about the consequences for less appropriate behaviour. Make sure that you discuss and agree upon different levels of consequences to match the severity and recurrence of inappropriate behaviour with the children: oral reprimand; time out; note home; class expulsion, visit to the headteacher's office, etc.

### *Make a Rules Poster!*

Involve the children in making a poster displaying 3-5 behaviour rules and make sure that they understand why each rule exists. Include rules related to topics like class noise, class materials, learning attitude, respect, etc. Once the behaviour for a rule is automatic, substitute that rule with another that still needs working on. Make sure that you follow a 'we' model when making rules, for example, 'When we want to participate, we always put our hands up'. Include general headings before each rule to aid understanding: Noise Volume; Participation; Asking for Permission; Respecting and Listening to Others; Books and Materials.

### *Establish a positive classroom environment!*

Get to know the children as individuals and not just as students. Learn their names as soon as you can by asking them to make personalised name cards. As you learn more about each child, you will slowly be able to earn their trust and have a personal and meaningful conversation with them.

### *Create a seating plan!*

Creating a seating plan for each class will have a double effect: first, it will help you manage the class noise level and second, it will help you identify the children and learn their names quickly and efficiently so that you can quickly get their attention and avoid undesirable behaviour.

### *Create routines!*

Routines are fundamental in any classroom as they show the children what you expect of them and make them feel safe. There are many routines

that you can choose from: routines for the beginning and end of a lesson, routines for going to the toilet, routines for packing up, etc.

***Keep the children busy, focused and on track!***

Get the children busy from the minute they arrive. Have instructions on the board for them to follow as they walk into class. Train them to read the instructions and get on with their work. Write visual reminders of all tasks on the board in case they get lost during the lesson so that they can avoid unnecessary interruptions.

***Keep moving!***

Avoid standing still in one place for too long. Instead, move around the classroom and use your physical presence to encourage the children to stay focused and on track throughout the entire lesson.

***Do positive reinforcements!***

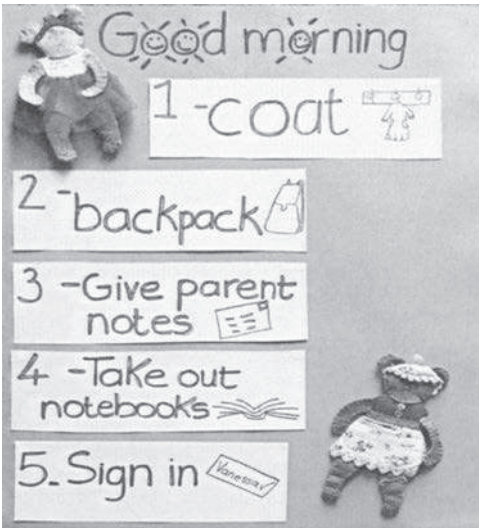
Instead of focusing on students who are misbehaving, shift your focus and pay most attention to the children who are behaving well, by saying things like, 'Class, look at Dmytryk! Look how neat his desk is and how his hand is up, waiting patiently for his turn!'

## *Useful routines for the young learner classroom*

Routines help us to avoid behaviour problems and save valuable teaching and learning time by encouraging the children to become autonomous. In addition, they make children feel safe and get them into learning mode. However, routines have to be taught and practised over and over again before they become automatic. Here is a list of 9 routines that you can introduce in your classroom.


**1 Getting the children into a learning frame of mind**

Get the children ready for learning before the lesson begins. Display a 'Good morning' chart outside your classroom to tell children what you want them to do as soon as they enter the classroom. Use topics and key words on




your chart to make sure that it's clear and easy to understand.

**2 Filling in classroom charts**

After the children have entered the classroom, taken off their coats and put their bags away, get them to fill in the attendance chart with their 'avatar'. To create these at the beginning of term, give each child a blank cardboard cut-out of a boy or girl to decorate and write their name on. Each day when they arrive, they put their avatar on the 'At school' section of the chart. Remember to get a helper to put all the avatars back in the 'At home' section at the end of every lesson. Another possibility is to get the children to fill in a calendar and weather chart. These charts are great for introducing language in a communicative context.

**3 Dealing with personal items**

Develop the children's sense of personal responsibility by teaching them how to take the initiative and look after their personal items. Hang up visual reminders in the classroom to remind them what their responsibilities are. Label the children's hooks or cubbyholes with name cards in alphabetical order.

**4 Singing a song**

A song can be a very effective tool to signal a change of activity to children. Try using a hello song to start your lesson, a tidy-up song to signal the end of an activity and a goodbye song to end your lesson.

**5 Choosing the teacher's helper for the day**

Implement a fair system to choose a teacher's helper each day. Get the children to decorate a peg with their name on it. Hang the pegs on a piece of string. The first peg on the string

is the teacher's helper. Once a child has been the teacher's helper, move the peg on the end of the string so that every child gets the chance to be a teacher's helper.

**6 Asking for permission**

Implement a system in which you reduce the learning time children waste every day asking you for permission to go to the toilet or sharpen their pencils. Make a bathroom pass card for the boys and another for the girls. Hang the passes up next to the door. A child can go to the toilet if there is a pass available. You can also make pencil-sharpening passes that are hung next to the bin.

**7 Getting the children's attention**

Avoid shouting to get the children's attention. Instead, use a silent gesture like folding your arms and waiting patiently for the children to notice you, or clapping out a rhythm which the children echo back to you. Another option is to use a chant which the children respond to.

**8 Forming groups**


Organising groups can be a time-consuming activity. Reduce time spent on this by preparing a groupwork poster, which you display on the door before the lesson begins. As the children walk into the classroom, they see which group they belong to and automatically join it. Remember to give each group a name or a colour to make it easily identifiable.

**9 Getting children's feedback**

End the lesson with a quick circle time discussion in which you get the children to think back over the activities they did during the lesson and to choose their favourite one. This feedback will help you plan your future lessons in a motivating and engaging way.

# Useful tips for planning a young learner lesson

When planning your lesson, remember to think about the characteristics of young learners and how you can cater for them. A good lesson presents young learners with activities that respect their short attention span and lets them play and have fun while learning. Here are 10 tips to have you planning engaging lessons that are fun for everyone.

## Include an opening routine

Routines make children feel safe by letting them know what is expected of them and how they can please you. Start your lesson with a routine to guarantee that every child begins your lesson on a positive footing. One possibility is to use a lively hello song that gets the children in a good English-learning frame of mind and sets the tone for your lesson. There are many great songs on YouTube that you can choose from. An alternative is to use a chant.

## Plan a revision activity

Children need lots of revision to remember the language that they learn. To help them revise and practise language while having fun, start your lesson playing a game or singing a song that revises the language that they learned in the previous lesson.

## Choose learning objectives for your lesson

Before you begin planning the tasks and activities for your lesson, take a step back and look at the bigger picture. Which general learning objectives do you want to work on in that particular lesson? Do you want to develop children's self-study skills, their thinking skills, their intercultural knowledge or their imagination and creativity? This will help you choose the best language tasks and activities for your lesson. Remember to keep things within the children's capabilities.

## Determine the language and skills content of your lesson

Once you have decided on your learning objectives, ask yourself the following questions: (1) which skills and language do I want to teach them today: reading, writing, listening or speaking? and (2) do I want to teach new words or a new language function? Once you have determined the language

and skills content of your lesson, choose tasks and activities which help the children to achieve that aim.

## *Include activities that change the pace of the lesson*

As you choose activities for your lesson, make sure that you include a few stirrers and settlers to manage the children's energy levels throughout the lesson. Remember to change activities approximately every 5-8 minutes in order to cater for children's limited attention spans.

## *Limit your creativity*

Teachers are often creative by nature, but be careful not to be too creative, as children may feel threatened by too much change in a lesson. When you choose tasks and activities for your lesson, remember to repeat task types and activity types. When they are doing a familiar task or activity, children have the opportunity to focus on and acquire new language. In this way, learning English is safe and achievable for everyone.

## *Plan for success*

Learning a language is difficult. To keep your children motivated, make them feel like they are succeeding and progressing in every lesson. Plan to include at least one confidence-boosting familiar activity in every lesson, one at which you know the children will succeed. This will give you the opportunity to praise and reward their success!

## *Follow a PPP (Presentation, Practice, Production) model*

One way to structure your lesson is to follow a PPP model of learning. Start off by presenting new language to the children. Then choose a controlled activity such as a drill, which helps the children practise the language in a safe context. As the language becomes automatic, allow them to start experimenting and playing with that language. A 45-minute lesson plan may be structured as follows:

1 lesson routine and revision activity: 10 minutes
2 presentation of new language in context: 10 minutes
3 controlled practice activities: 15 minutes
4 a freer practice activity: 5 minutes
5 closing routine and self-evaluation: 5 minutes

## *Plan for variety*

Your students won't always respond in the same way to different activities, so try to vary the lesson to suit everyone. For example, include a song or a chant, a flashcard activity and games with lots of movement so students aren't always in their seats.

## *Plan student-centred lessons*

Centre your lesson around your students. Let them speak and play with English in class. Remember that they should be the stars of the lesson and not you. Teachers should be guiders and facilitators of learning rather than dictators who dominate the majority of the lesson time.

# *Activities for your first lesson*

The way that you begin your first lesson is very important and will set the tone for the rest of the year. Because first impressions really do count, make sure that you create a positive impact on your students. Here are 10 activities that will help you do that.


**1 'Simon says' getting-to-know-you game**

A simple way to start the year while allowing the children to have fun and get to know each other is by playing 'Simon says'. Organise the children in two rows on opposite ends of the room so that they can all see each other. Stand in the middle and give instructions like 'Simon says hop on one foot if your favourite colour is green.' After a while, try to catch children out by leaving out the 'Simon says' part of the instruction. If a child follows the instruction, he or she is 'out'. An easy follow-up activity is to count and record the children's answers/reactions on the board and get them to make a class fact file about themselves to display in the classroom.

**2 Ball game**

For a fun way to learn each other's names, stand the children in a circle. Start off by getting a child to introduce him herself (e.g. *'Hi, I'm Oksana'*), and to pass the ball to the child on the right. The second student repeats the first student's name, and adds his or her own name (e.g. *'She's Oksana and I'm Ivanko'*). Start a new chain after about eight names, as it be-

comes too cognitively challenging for children to remember more than that. Once everyone has said their name, throw a ball to a child and say that child's name. The child who catches the ball continues the game. To make the game more challenging, introduce a speed factor.

**3 'Find someone who ...' bingo game**

Prepare a bingo card with a short 'Find someone who ...' instruction for each square, for example, *'Find someone who has got a pet'*. Make sure that you include an instruction which you think only applies to you so that you encourage the children to interact with you from the very beginning. Hand out the cards to the children. Encourage the children to mingle and speak to each other to find a different name to write in each square. When they have a vertical or horizontal line, they should shout out, 'Bingo!' Follow up the activity with a chat about the things they have discovered about each other.

**4 Spin the bottle**

Get the children to sit in a circle with a bottle in the middle. Fill it with a small amount of sand to give it some weight. Spin the bottle. When it stops, establish which student it is pointing to. Find out their name and ask them a simple question such as *'What's your favourite colour?'* Continue the game by inviting that child to spin the bottle and ask the next question.

**5 Something you don't know about me**

Give each student a slip of paper. On it, they write their name and something about themselves that nobody knows yet (for example, a place they have been to or something they like doing). Collect and mix the slips of paper. Then choose one of the slips. Pick three students, one of whom must be the child who wrote the fact you have chosen. The three children stand outside the classroom and read the slip. They prepare their 'claim' to the secret. When they come back in, the class should ask each of the three children three questions to discover who the true owner of the fact is.

**6 Snowball fight**

Give each child a sheet of recycled paper. They write their

names and five things about themselves on it and scrunch it up into a paper snowball. Divide the class into two teams and organise them so that they are standing facing each other at opposite ends of the classroom. When you shout 'Snowball fight!', the children throw their snowballs at each other. Each child picks up or catches a snowball and goes up to the originator. The 'finder' of the snowball presents their new friend to the class with the information they have discovered.

**7 Find your sticker friend**

A variation of the activity above is to give each child a sticker as they walk into class. Make sure that you have enough matching pairs of stickers for all your students. Play some music and get the children to find their matching 'sticker friend'. Have prompts on the board to help the children interview and present their partner to the class.

**8 My special box**

Bring a cardboard box into class containing objects and photos that mean something to you. Show the children one item at a time and answer any questions the children may have. Follow the activity up by getting the children to make special boxes of their own, which they can present in a show-and-tell session.

**9 'This is me' worksheet**

This is a great activity for children who don't know how to write yet. Give the children a worksheet entitled *'This is me!'* The children write their name and draw some of their favourite things on it. Put up the children's pictures in an exhibition corner and encourage the children to visit each other's profiles.

**10 Make a 'class rules' poster**

Classroom management starts on day one. Involve the children in the goings-on of the class by getting them to think about how they would like to work and learn together. Start with a discussion about what the behaviour rules should be for both the teacher and the student so that learning English is fun for everyone. Then create a poster with five rules that everyone agrees on, which the children can help you make and decorate.

# *Thoughts on instructions*

Instructions can make or break a lesson. If children understand what you want them to do, they will be able to meet your expectations and the lesson will run smoothly. However, if instructions are confusing, chaos and confusion may ensue, requiring a lot of your time and effort to get things back under control. To get some ideas on how to give effective instructions, have a look at the tips below.

### *Plan instructions!*

Instructions are fundamental in the classroom, so spend time carefully planning the instructions that you give. As you plan the activities for your lesson, think of and plan the corresponding instructions that you will need for a particular activity. This may initially appear time-consuming, but it will save you and the children a lot of stress in the classroom.

### *Keep instructions short and simple!*

Keep your instructions short, simple and to the point. Remember that children have a short attention span and are eager to get going on a task. So, if your instructions are long and complicated, they are likely to switch off or forget everything that you have said, even before they start doing anything.

### *Word instructions positively!*

Make sure that your instructions tell the children what you want them to do rather than what you don't want them to do. They should be in the affirmative form. For example, instead of saying, *'Don't shout!'*, try saying, *'Speak quietly.'*

### *Sequence instructions!*

Give instructions in a sequenced manner. Follow a 1-2-3 approach to giving instructions: First open your books, then read the story, and finally do Exercise 1. Write this on the board in three steps, numbered 1, 2 and 3, so that the children can go back to the instructions if they forget them as they become immersed in the activity.

### *Repeat instructions!*

Make sure you give instructions more than once. Children have different learning rhythms and language levels, which will mean that they don't all understand you at the same time. Some children may need to hear an instruction several times before they understand what you want them to do.

### *Demonstrate instructions!*

Remember that young learners still have a very basic command of English. To avoid misunderstandings, give children instructions while demonstrating exactly what you want them to do. Think of yourself as a mirror, constantly reflecting what you want the children to do.

### *Check understanding!*

Once you have given an instruction, take the time to check whether the children have understood. Don't limit yourself to asking, *'Do you understand?'* The natural answer to this question tends to be *'Yes'*. Try getting the children to repeat the instruction back to you like a parrot or in a parrot voice. This will allow them to have fun and stay on track at the same time.

### *Give instructions in English!*

Avoid using the children's native language to give instructions. Instructions are a natural and communicative opportunity for children to pick up and learn new language. Remember that children need as much exposure to English as they can get.

### *Make instructions visual!*

Children respond well to visual stimuli. This means that they tend to remember what they see rather than what they hear or are told to do. Make cards with an instruction and an illustrative image on each. Show the children these cards as you give them the instructions.

***Give instructions on a need-to-know basis!***

Avoid bombarding children with a long list of instructions. By the time you get to the end, they will probably have forgotten what you wanted them to do first. Instead, give them instructions for a particular activity on a need-to-know basis. This means that the children are given time to complete each task before being given the next instruction.

## *Ways to start and end lessons*

The way you start and end a lesson is important. At the beginning of the lesson, you need to warm the children up for what they are about to learn, and at the end, you need to give them 'closure' on what they have learned. The first four activities are warmers to help you start your lessons effectively. Activities 5-8 are coolers; these will help you bring your lesson to a close.


- **Meet and greet at the door**

  Treat the children like guests that are visiting your home and meet and greet them at the classroom door. This will help you bond with the children and show them that you care about them. You can also end your lesson by saying goodbye to each child at the door. When you do this, try saying something positive about what each child has done in that particular lesson, for example, 'Maria, I really liked the way you pronounced 'teacher' today! What a star you are!' Make sure that the feedback you give is genuine.

- **Define learning objectives**

  Start your lesson by giving the children a learning map of what is going to happen in that lesson. Define and discuss 3-5 learning objectives with the children for that lesson, for example, 'Today we are going to learn eight new words about farm animals. We are also going to learn how to say these words properly in English. Then we are going to write a sentence about our favourite farm animal and illustrate it.' Write these objectives in the top right-hand corner of the board. Come back to them throughout the lesson and tick them off as you achieve them. This will give the children a sense of progression of the lesson and allow them to see how well they are learning in your class.

- **Sing a familiar song or say a chant**

  You can signal to the children that your lesson has begun by singing a familiar song or getting them to say a routine chant. To make the activity more challenging, try getting the children to say it faster and faster each time or to repeat it using a different voice, for example, *'This time, let's say our chant in a happy voice.'* Good voices to use are ones showing different emotions such as happy, sad, hungry, tired, disappointed, or character voices, for example, a princess, a dragon, a witch or a monster.

- **Challenge of the day**

  Start your lesson by writing a riddle on the board for the children to solve. An example might be, *'What has got a face and two hands but no arms or legs?'* (Answer: a clock.) This will challenge children from the minute they walk through the door. As the children get better at solving these challenges, they can come up with their own for the class to solve next time.

- **Revision activity: quiz game**

  A fun way to end your lesson is to get the children to play a game that encourages them to remember and practise what they have learned. Jeopardy is a quiz game in which the children pick a box and answer a question in order to win the amount of money displayed on the box. The lower the value, the easier the question. The winner is the player/team with the most money at the end.

- **'What have you learned today?' discussion**

  Children love puppets. A fun way to end the lesson is to get the children to sit in a big circle and to encourage them to tell the class puppet what they can remember about that lesson. You can help them by referring back to the lesson objectives on the board. This is also a great way of finding out what your children enjoyed and getting feedback about your lesson.

- **Goodbye song**

  You can end your lesson with a routine that involves singing a familiar goodbye song, for example:

*Goodbye, Goodbye*
*It's time to go!*
*Hurry up, Hurry up,*
*It's time to tidy up!*
*Goodbye, Goodbye*
*See you soon!*
*Goodbye, Goodbye*
*See you soon!*

There are countless songs to choose from on YouTube. Remember to choose one that is simple and repetitive so that it's quick and easy to learn.

- **Awards ceremony**

  End on a high by having a short awards ceremony at the end of the lesson. You could give rewards for the hardest worker, the most helpful student or the neatest handwriting. The winner can wear a badge or be the teacher's helper in the next lesson.

## *Ways to use stirrers and settlers*

Children have a short attention span, so it's important to make sure that you monitor their energy in the classroom to prevent them from getting too excited or too bored. To keep them focused and on track, make sure that the activities you choose are short, and that you pace your lesson well by including various stirrers and settlers in your plan. Stirrers are activities that are designed to get children excited and allow them to use up their energy by getting them to move around. Settlers have the opposite effect. They are designed to get children to calm down after a stirrer and into a quieter frame of mind for the next activity. Below is a list of 9 stirrers and settlers that you can try out in your classroom.

### *Play a ball game!*

This is a stirrer in which the children play a game that helps them practise the target language and move around. A simple idea is to play a ball game. Introduce a vocabulary topic, e.g. clothes. The children stand in a circle and throw a ball to each other. The child who catches the ball has to say a word belonging to that particular word set, e.g. 'skirt'. To adapt the activity for weaker learners, allow them to repeat the words that they've heard.

### *Play a flashcard mingling game!*

Choose a topic. Distribute a set of flashcards or word cards related to that topic to the children. Each child then sticks their flashcard or word card on another child's back without that child seeing what is on it. The children then move around the room asking each other questions to guess who they are.

### *Conduct a survey!*

Invite the children to move around the room conducting a class survey relating to a topic that you are teaching, for example, 'What's your favourite food?' Then get the children to make a pie chart poster with their survey results.

### *Sing a song or chant!*

Start singing a song or chant that the children have already learned, for example, 'If you're happy and you know it'. Then sing it faster and faster to stir things up. The children will soon be out of breath and ready for your next activity.

### *Use a routine activity!*

This activity works well as a settler. Help the children to calm down by triggering a familiar routine that the children are used to. You could sing a song they already know or do a simple yoga breathing exercise.

### *Play sorting games!*

Try a categorising activity in which you give the class 12 random words they have already learned, which they have to organise into lexical sets. To begin with, give the children the lexical set categories to guide them. As they become used to this type of exercise, encourage them to come up with the categories themselves.

### *Read and draw!*

Read out a short, simple descriptive text and get the children to draw a picture of what they hear. Once they have drawn their pictures, follow up the activity by getting them to write one or two short sentences about their picture.

***Alternate your lesson activities with a story!***

Give the children some time out by reading them a story between activities. With larger classes, photocopy and enlarge the main images of the story and put them up on the board as you read.

***Plan for individual activity time!***

Remember that we all like a breather every now and then, so plan a quiet moment in every lesson when the children can stop and draw a picture or do a simple arts and crafts activity.

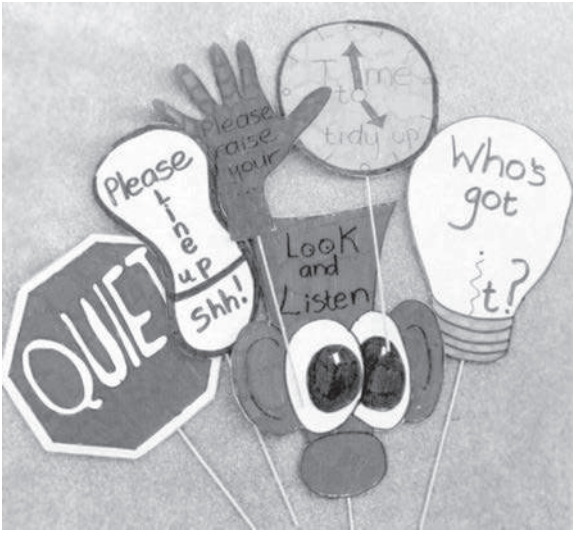
## 9 key resources for your teacher toolkit

As teachers, we have to be ready for anything that may happen during a lesson. This inevitably means that we need to be flexible and adapt our lesson plan, whenever necessary, to meet our students' needs. A well-equipped toolkit will help us do that. Here are 9 key resources to help you stock up.

Tip

**1 Flashcards/word cards, posters, realia**

Flashcards help to make learning visual, and make the meaning clear for learners. They also allow them to have fun and play games to drill new vocabulary. So make sure you have a complete set. You may also want to include a set of corresponding word cards and a few posters too. Don't forget to take along some poster tacks or magnets to put everything up on the board. An alternative to flashcards is realia, which is perfect for drama activities or games.



**2 'Classroom language' cards**

A set of 'classroom language' cards will also save you time and help avoid confusion in the classroom. They will help you give instructions in English and expose children to language in context, which they will soon pick up. The following signs are useful: 'Quiet', 'Time to clean up', 'Look and listen', 'Please raise your hand' and 'Please line up'.

**3 Noisemaker**

A noisemaker, like a tambourine or a bell, will help the children realise that you need them to focus and have their eyes on you. This will save you raising your voice.

**4 Puppets**

Puppets transport children to imaginary worlds. They also encourage shy children to speak up by giving them a 'crutch'. Additionally, they can be a classroom management tool by whispering secrets like 'I'm getting earache. It's too noisy!' to you. A set of finger puppets of the main characters in your course book will help the children practise speaking skills by role-playing the stories and dialogues they read.

**5 Arts and crafts materials**

Make sure that your teacher kit has lots of plain white and coloured paper, pens, crayons and markers, and perhaps some modelling clay for children to make their own learning materials or a bingo card to fill up those extra five minutes that you hadn't planned for.

**6 Mini-whiteboards**

A cheap set of mini-whiteboards is an invaluable tool in your teacher kit. Ideally, have one per child to play spelling games, 'Identify the flashcard' games, 'What's the odd word out?', etc., which help you see evidence of learning for each child.

**7 A games kit**

Children love games, so no teacher should be without a games kit. Make sure that you have a dice and some counters (at least one set per group) to play board games. It's also useful to have a big class copy of games that can be adapted to any unit you are teaching, for example, a set of bingo cards, a big noughts-and-crosses card or a giant Jeopardy board.

**8 Letter formation worksheets**

If you are teaching younger learners, this is a tool that will make your and their lives much easier. Remember to include a set of handwriting/letter formation worksheets for less advanced students and one for more advanced students. Although most course books have some handwriting letter formation practice, this is usually not enough to get every child to develop their writing skills to the point that they can write quickly and confidently.

**9 Teacher diary**

It is important to have a little something for yourself, too; something that will help you reflect on your teaching practice so that you can rise to the occasion and make a difference. This is why you need a teacher diary or blog to record the most important things that happen in class so that you can reflect on them calmly and critically afterwards. It is useful for you to write about what didn't go as well as you hoped, but it is just as important to write about what went well so that in future you can include activities in your lesson plan which appeal to the characteristics and needs of the children you are teaching.

# 2 Songs, Chants and Rhymes

Songs, chants and rhymes are an excellent way of developing children's speaking and pronunciation skills. This section will begin by analysing why teaching songs, chants and rhymes is so beneficial for young learners. The content of the section will provide you with tried-and-tested suggestions of songs, chants and activities to take into the young learner classroom that will simultaneously appeal to children's interests and needs, and help them learn and speak English naturally and in context. You will be focused on silly tongue twisters and fun rhymes that help you work on and improve the children's pronunciation skills without their realising that they are working hard. Two essential tools for a teacher of young learners are songs and chants which relate to the different topics that you are teaching. Songs and chants are also very versatile classroom management tools, which you can use as warmers, transition markers or coolers to meet your teaching objectives for a particular lesson.

## *9 reasons to use songs and chants in your classroom*

- **A regular rhythm**

  Songs and chants have a regular rhythm which is almost repetitive and intuitive. This is a fantastic way for you to work on teaching children pronunciation and intonation in English without boring them to sleep. Once children have learned the rhythm of a song, all they have to do is to slot in the language. This is a fun way of helping them distance themselves from first language influences.

- **Catchy**

  A good song or chant can stick in our ears and memories for a whole day. This means that when children learn a new song or chant, they will be picking up and practising language without even realising it.

- **Language in context**

  Songs and chants present children with a clear context in which they can use the language they are learning and encourage children to apply and use this language in other contexts.

- **Confidence-building**

  Songs and chants are a great way to get shy children to speak in class. Singing a song or saying a chant as a whole class allows shy students to join in a speaking activity without feeling exposed in front of the class. They are also presented with the opportunity of repeating the target language over and over until they have mastered it. This means that when you do ask them to sing or speak on their own, they will be able to do it well because of all the practice they have had. Consequently, their confidence and motivation will be enhanced.

- **Memory and concentration**

  We have already focused on the fact that songs and chants are repetitive and that they allow children to repeat the target language over and over until they are able to sing the song or say the chant on their own. This natural repetition allows children to develop their memory and concentration skills which will be essential language learning tools later on in the learning process.

- **Introducing and ending a topic**

  Because songs and chants are fun, they are a fantastic way of introducing or ending a topic. They can often be easily related to a story or any other activity that you are doing in class. Thus, songs and chants are a great way of complementing cours book activities.

- **Mixed abilities**

  We all teach in mixed-ability classrooms in which children have different levels and learning rhythms. Many children learn best when they see and hear the target language that we are teaching them; adding an element of movement is also important for a lot of younger learners. Songs have the added advantage of being available online, often with videos that we can use to motivate children to learn the target language.

- **Variety of skills**

  Another great reason to use songs and chants in the young learner language classroom is that they allow children to work on various skills in one activity. Children develop their listening skills

as they first hear and learn a particular song or chant. As they are learning it, they are automatically working on their speaking skills. You can easily develop writing skills by getting children to write a short sentence or text about the song or chant they have learnt.

- **Fun**

  Perhaps the most important reason to use songs and chants in the classroom is the fact that they are fun. Why not spend the last two minutes of a lesson listening to a song for pleasure?

## *10 songs for the young learners*

The songs that you use in the classroom need to meet various criteria in order to guarantee that children are having fun and learning language at the same time. A good song needs to be memorable and enjoyable, and should introduce enough target language for the level that you are teaching. Great songs also repeat and drill that target language to a good rhythm, which sticks in children's memories long after your lesson has finished. Here is a list of 10 all-time favourite songs for the young learner classroom. You can find the words in the Appendix, p.129 and make copies of them. To get to know the tunes, search for these songs on YouTube.


1 **Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes**

This is an active song that gets the children up and out of their seats. It's a perfect one to use when you are teaching the topic of the body, as it drills the following words: head, shoulders, knees, toes, eyes, ears, mouth, nose, feet, tummies, arms, chins, shins, hands, fingers, legs, lips and hips. The children touch each part of the body as they say the word. Speed up the pace as you sing each new verse.

2 **The Hokey Cokey**

This is another fun song to use when teaching words for parts of the body. Although it drills fewer vocabulary items (right arm, left arm, right leg, left leg and 'whole self'), it does teach children nice chunks of language and the concept of right and left, which they often find difficult. The children stand in a circle and do the actions that they are singing. When they have finished, they all jump into the circle at the same time.

**3 The Colours of the Rainbow**

Teach the children this song about colours to the tune of 'The Wheels on the Bus'. Substitute 'red and orange' with 'yellow, green and blue' and 'indigo and violet' the second and third time you sing it.

**4 If You're Happy and You Know It**

This is a wonderful action song for raising energy levels in the classroom and getting the children into a good mood. It also has the benefit of drilling language chunks relating to action verbs which are perfect for the children to do as they sing the song.

**5 Do You Like Broccoli Ice Cream?**

If you're looking for a fun song to teach words on the topic of food, you'll love this. It drills vocabulary such as broccoli, ice cream, doughnuts, juice, popcorn, pizza, bananas and soup, as well as the structures children need to talk about their likes and dislikes: 'Do you like ...?', 'Yes, I do' and 'No, I don't.' It also surprises children by joining words together that they wouldn't expect to find. Get the children to do a thumbs up and thumbs down action as they sing the song.

**6 The Wheels on the Bus**

If you want to prepare a little surprise for parents' day or the end-of-year party, try this song, which you can get the children to act out. From a language point of view, it helps children learn onomatopoeic sounds that are associated with words in English: wipers (swish), horn (beep), money (clink), baby (wah) and mummy (shush).

**7 Incy Wincy Spider**

This is a popular finger rhyme that has survived the test of time. It's a perfect song to use when teaching children about animals or the weather. Get the children to do the actions as they sing.

**8 Old Macdonald Had a Farm**

If you're looking for a fun onomatopoeic song to teach about animals and the sounds they make, try this. The song drills the following vocabulary: cow (moo), pig (oink), duck (quack), horse (neigh), lamb (baa) and chickens (cluck), and stays in the children's memories long after the lesson has ended. Get the children to imitate the animals as they sing the song.

**9 Five Little Monkeys**

Children love monkeys and their playful nature. This song allows the children to play as they sing and role-play the actions they are singing. It is also easy enough for children to sing to their parents in order to show them what they have been learning in class.

**10 The Alphabet Song**

An alphabet song helps you develop children's literacy skills. This one has been tried and tested in classrooms all over the world for years and can easily be turned into a chant. Get the children to make letter shapes with their fingers as they sing.

## *Some activities to do with songs and chants*

Getting children to learn a new song or chant involves far more than simply getting them to sing or say it a few times. Remember that before children can sing a song or say a chant, they need to learn the melody (in the case of the song) and the rhythm. Start by having them hum the melody and clap to the rhythm a few times. Then, slowly introduce the words and sing the song or say the chant several times. Turn down the volume to find out whether the children are ready to sing or say it on their own. Here is a list of 7 activities that you can do with songs and chants.

### *Guess the words!*

Before you actually start teaching children the song or chant, share the title with them and let them guess which key words will be in it. Write the words the children guess on the board. With younger learners, stick a flashcard next to each word card to help them identify the words. As they hear the chant, ask the children to stand up each time they hear one of the words on the board.

### *Hold up pictures!*

Hand out flashcards of the key words in the song or chant to the children at random. Ask these children to hold the flashcards in front of their chests

so that everyone can see them. Play the song or chant and ask the children with the flashcards to wave them in the air each time they hear the word on their flashcard. As a follow-up activity, ask the children to put the flashcards on the board in the order they hear them in the song/chant.

### *Point to the flashcard!*

Show the children flashcards of the key vocabulary in the song or chant. Then play a flashcard game of your choice with them. Once the children know the words, display the flashcards and corresponding word cards around the class. Ask the children to point to the flashcard as they hear the word in the song or chant.

### *Sing in sections!*

To learn a song or chant, the children will need to sing or say it several times. To prevent this from becoming boring, transform the drilling activity into a fun competition. Choose three children to be the jury. Divide the class into groups. Begin by teaching the whole class a small part of the song or chant. Then divide the class in two and repeat that part of the song or chant with each group. Next, get each group to perform their version to the rest of the class. When the last group has finished, invite the jury to vote for the best group. To speed up the process of grouping children, divide the class into a girls' and boys' team and see which group can sing the best.

### *Invent and mime actions!*

Once the children know the song, encourage them to take ownership of it by choosing actions that they can do while singing it. They practise the actions several times, then they sing the song and make the gestures together. Film the children and share the video with parents on the school webpage.

### *Sing faster!*

After the children have sung the song or said the chant a few times, they may start to get bored and lose interest. Keep them focused by introducing a cognitive challenge such as singing the song faster and faster each time. Have a competition to see who will invent a verse and role-play the song or

chant. A nice, challenging post-listening activity is to have the class invent the next verse of the song. This activity can be done as a whole class, in groups or in pairs, depending on the characteristics of the class. The children can then prepare a performance of the song to present to parents or to teach to other children in the school. Children often feel empowered when they are asked to teach younger children.

***Draw the song!***

Songs appeal to children because of repetitive melodies and the emotions they bring out. They can change our mood on a particular day and put a smile on our face. Make children aware of this by getting them to listen to a song and draw a picture of how it makes them feel. You can then develop writing skills by asking the children to write a sentence about their picture.

## *Fun rhymes to use in the young learner classroom*

Rhymes are an effective and motivating tool to use in the young learner classroom as they are very child-friendly and simple to use. They are short and simple, which means that children learn them unconsciously and effortlessly while playing with their voices to become aware of and practise English sounds. By getting children to add gestures to rhymes, you can aid the memorisation process and give children a sense of achievement as they learn a rhyme to share with others in English. Here is a list of 10 rhymes that you can use in your classroom. Rhymes 1-6 are traditional nursery rhymes, rhymes 7 and 8 are action rhymes, and the last two will help you with classroom management. You'll find the words of the first five rhymes in the Appendix, p.135 and you can learn the tunes by searching for these classic songs on YouTube.


1 **Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star**
This traditional nursery rhyme has five verses. Choose the number of verses that you want your class to learn according to their level of English.

2 **Humpty Dumpty**
This traditional rhyme can be used to introduce an Easter-egg-

making activity. The children can say the rhyme as they decorate their Easter eggs.

**3 Baa Baa Black Sheep**

This is a great rhyme to teach children while they are working on the topic of animals.

**4 Jack and Jill**

This traditional rhyme can be taught in conjunction with lessons about being helpful and obedient (doing chores) and being careful (avoiding accidents and what to do if they happen).

**5 Hickory Dickory Dock**

This traditional rhyme is a fun way to teach or revise the time. The original rhyme has 12 verses which you can teach your class depending on their language level.

**6 One, Two, Buckle My Shoe**

'One, Two, Buckle My Shoe' is an action rhyme which is great for teaching to children who are learning numbers. When the children say the rhyme, they show the numbers with their fingers and simulate the actions: One, two, buckle my shoe (pretend to buckle their shoes); three, four, open the door (pretend to open the door); five, six, pick up sticks (pretend to pick up sticks); seven, eight, lay them straight (pretend to lay them straight); nine, ten, a big fat hen (pretend to be a big hen).

**7 Bouncing ball rhyme**

In a bouncing ball rhyme, children bounce a ball and try to do the action as they say the rhyme.

*Number one, touch your tongue.*
*Number two, touch your shoe.*
*Number three, touch your knee.*

**8 Skipping rope rhymes**

Children love to play with skipping ropes. Getting them to say the following rhyme is a great way for you to practise numbers with your class. If you don't have lots of space in your classroom, take the children outside to learn this rhyme:

*Bread and butter, sugar and spice,*
*How many children think I'm nice?*

At this point the class counts the number of jumps that the child is able to jump.

**9 Jumping Jack**

This action rhyme can be used as a classroom management strategy to give children's energy levels a boost. The children stand up and act out the rhyme as they say it.

*Jumping Jack, jumping Jack,*
*Clap your hands, clap, clap, clap.*

**10 Counting rhymes**

Choosing a child to come up to the front of the class and volunteer can be tricky and even unfair in the eyes of some children. To avoid this situation, you can use a counting rhyme. Say the following rhyme and point to the children as you say the stressed syllables.

*Apples, peaches, pears and plums,*
*Tell me when your birthday comes!*

When you have finished saying the rhyme, the child who you pointed to on the last syllable answers the question by telling you which month their birthday is in. The children sitting either side of that child then say the names of the months in order, beginning with the month that child's birthday is in. The child who says, 'December' is the chosen one for your next activity.

# 3 Arts, Crafts and Games

Arts, crafts and games are a fantastic way of developing children's fine motor skills, and for teaching children grammar and vocabulary without their realising it.

This section will start by giving you 10 good reasons to take activities like these into your classroom. Following that, you will find plenty of concrete ideas for arts and crafts activities and games. All of these can be used to teach the most common topics on a young learner course and to develop the children's language skills in a communicative and engaging context.

## *10 reasons to use arts and crafts activities*

Arts and crafts activities can be a real asset in any young learner classroom. However, to be truly successful, these activities require careful planning and effective classroom management strategies. Remember that an arts and crafts activity has three fundamental stages: *before, during* and *after the activity*. All of these stages depend on specific instructions that you'll need to prepare beforehand. You'll also need to include a tidying-up stage to help the children develop responsibility skills and get the classroom back in order without too much fuss.

**1 Memorable**

Exposure to art, music and drama promotes increased brain activity. The more active the brain is, the more memorable a learning experience tends to be. You may find that children remember and speak about an arts and crafts activity that they did long ago as if it were yesterday.

**2 Variety**

Arts and crafts is another tool in your teacher toolkit that you can use to add variety to your teaching. Most children will love the opportunity to create an object while learning language and applying it to a concrete and meaningful context.

**3 Effective for language learning**

Remember that doing an arts and crafts activity is a process. This means that when they are doing the activity, the children will naturally be exposed to language, inevitably picking up the

words and expressions needed to make the object. This means that you can expose children to a lot of language in context throughout the whole process, and not just during the final presentation stage of the activity.

4 **A welcome break**

Arts and crafts are a great way to give children a change of pace from working with the course book and a more formal approach to learning. This type of activity allows children to learn without realising that they are working hard. It also allows them to work according to their own rhythm and pace, which naturally 'opens their learning gates' and raises motivation levels.

5 **A behaviour management technique**

An arts and crafts activity is a great classroom management and behaviour tool that you can use for calming children down after a more boisterous activity. Children will need to focus on what they are making. The class will tend to be calmer and easier to manage for a good 10 minutes!

6 **A wide range of skills**

Arts and crafts activities help children to develop and acquire a wide range of skills, as they learn to focus and work hard to create a final product. They learn to overcome various unexpected obstacles by applying problem-solving skills and being creative and adaptable — all essential skills in the information age. Not all children are artistic by nature: a child can excel at languages and maths, but have difficulties when it comes to drawing, cutting and creating things, depending on their natural talents and fine motor skills. Thus, children will need to communicate and work with others. As a teacher, your job is to ensure that they have enough language to do so in English.

7 **Fine motor skills**

While colouring in within the lines or cutting along the lines may be simple for some children, others, who may not have been to preschool or developed their fine motor skills, will need lots of practice in the young learner classroom. An engaging way of giving them this practice is by challenging them with arts and crafts activities.

**8 A way to experiment**

Arts and crafts activities allow children to experiment and make mistakes, which can end up producing surprising and pleasing results. Thus, in the arts and crafts classroom, mistakes are not necessarily seen as a negative but rather as an opportunity to explore something else or even start from scratch and try again. These are skills that will benefit the child's language-learning process later on.

**9 Fun**

It is undeniable that arts and crafts make life, and lessons in general, more exciting and interesting. Children prefer to do a fun arts and crafts activity rather than do a language drilling activity any day.

**10 A sense of achievement**

Arts and crafts challenge children to make something which they can then take back home to their loved ones. This is a perfect way for teachers to build children's self-esteem, self-discipline, cooperation and self-motivation.

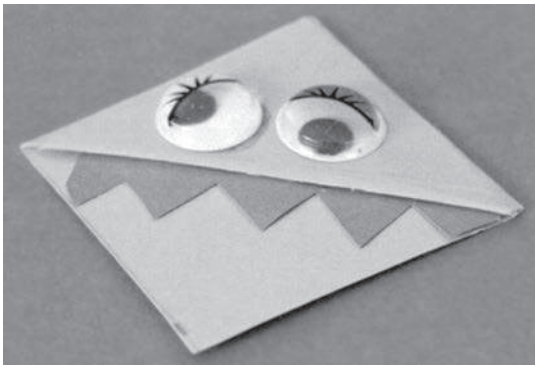
## *Some popular arts and crafts activities*

Arts and crafts activities are a great way to bring diversity into the primary classroom. However, not every arts and crafts activity is adequate for the young learner classroom. Before you choose an activity, make sure that it meets the following criteria: is it suited to your learners' age, gender, interests and skills? Does it respect time constraints, or is it too time-consuming? And finally, does the activity allow the children to pick up language in context and practise it, or is it limited to developing the children's artistic skills? Here is a list of 14 arts and crafts activities that respect these criteria.


**1 Decorated name card**

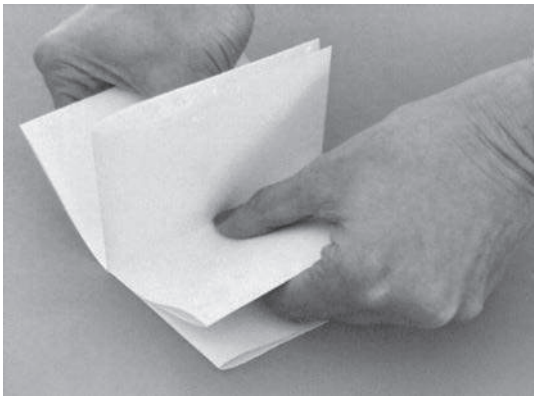
Start the year by doing an arts and crafts activity and getting to know your students better. Have them decorate a name card, making it unique to them. Information given on the back, or illustrated through the design, will help you find out more about each child and their skills and talents.

**2 Bookmark**



Good readers make good students. It's important to introduce a reading culture in the young learner classroom, so why not start by getting the children excited about the actual reading process? Children can make a personal reading bookmark or page marker that they can put in every book they read.

**3 Storybooks**



A fun and personalised arts and crafts project that you can do in class for any topic or storybook that you have read is to challenge the children to make their personal wordbook or storybook. Children can make a topic book or dictionary by writing and illustrating a word on that topic on each page.

**4 Paper plate masks**

Encourage children to participate in drama activities by getting them to make their own props. Paper plate masks are easy and fun to make, and help shyer children to feel less exposed in front of the class. You can make whole-face or half-face masks, and even Venetian-style masks — by gluing the mask onto a lolly stick.

**5 Puppets (finger puppets, paper bag puppets, lolly stick puppets)**

Puppets are a great tool for encouraging children to try and speak English in class. Like masks, they give children a crutch to lean on, but they also allow children to speak without being worried about the mistakes they are making. They are also very teacher-friendly

as they allow you to correct the mistakes without criticising the child: 'Oh dear, Mr Penguin must be very tired today. Mr Penguin, did you forget that we say I am hungry and not I are hungry? You need some rest and a big bear hug!' By giving children this type of feedback, you are correcting the character represented by the puppet and not the child behind it. See Appendix, p. 138 for instructions on how to make some simple finger puppets.

**6 Story dice**

A fun way of getting children to retell a story you have told them is to ask them to make a story dice of that story with an image of a particular part of the story or the name of a character in the story on each face (see Appendix, pp.139-140, for a dice template). The children roll their dice and see which scene or character from the story is uppermost. They then retell that particular part of the story or explain what happened to the character. Children have fun retelling the story and get to train their speaking skills without realising that they are repeating the same language over and over again. They also get great satisfaction from the fact that they are able to tell a story they heard in English.

**7 Weather wheel**

A good routine to start your lesson every day is to talk about the weather. To scaffold this language for children, make a weather wheel with them (see Appendix, p.142). For more advanced learners, you can add two outer circles: one for the days of the week (see Appendix, p.141) and the other for the months of the year.

**8 Clock**

To encourage children to practise asking and telling the time, get them to make a clock (see Appendix, p.143). Use the clock to do a pairwork activity in which the children take turns setting the clock and asking each other the time.

**9 Topic spinners**

Spinners are a very popular resource to have in any young learner classroom. They can be used to practise vocabulary, or as an alternative to dice when playing games. Like mobiles, they can be made for any topic (see Appendix, p.144). As the children get older, divide the spinner into more sections so that the children can practise more vocabulary. Get the children to draw a picture of a different word for the topic you have chosen in each section. Once the children have made the spinner, ask them to play a game by spinning the spinner and naming the image the spinner has landed on.

**10 Topic-related mini-flashcards**

Get the children to make mini vocabulary flashcards (see Appendix, p.145), which they can use to play a fun bingo game. The children place mini word cards face up on a bingo card. Slowly, say the words out loud. When a child hears a word that they have on their bingo card, they turn that word card face down. As soon as a child manages to form a vertical or horizontal line of turned-over cards, he or she shouts, 'Bingo!' and takes over from the teacher as the 'bingo caller'. Younger learners who cannot write yet can make mini picture flashcards; older learners can make word cards or even illustrated word cards.

**11 Topic wheel**

Topic wheels are a good way of getting children to practise vocabulary you have worked on for any topic. Divide the wheel in half and ask the children to draw pictures of the words you want them to practise on one side and the corresponding words on the other (see Appendix, pp. 146-147). The objective is for the children to spin the wheel and match each picture to the corresponding word.

**12 Word banners**

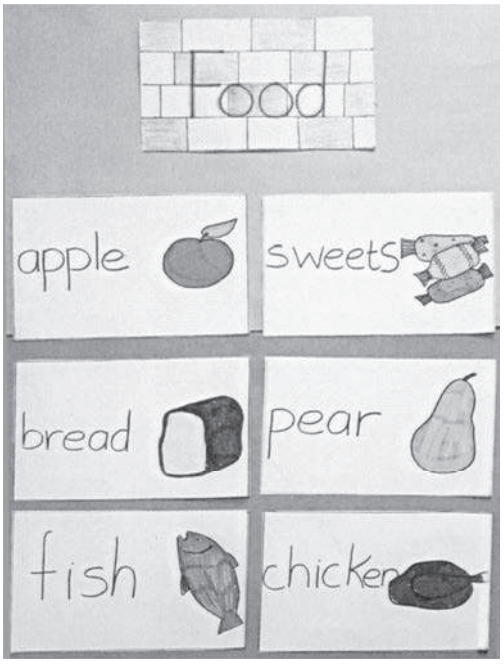
Help the children revise vocabulary they have been working on by making a topic word banner. Hand out a template to each child. Ask them to choose a word for any particular topic and write the word and decorate the banner with a picture relating to

that word. Then put all the children's banners together and make a class banner. You can get the children to repeat the words on the banner by making a banner chant for the children to repeat to a set rhythm.

**13 Crazy sentence-maker**

To help the children learn to make sentences in English, get them to make a crazy sentence-maker. Give the children three different coloured strips of cardboard on which they write parts of a sentence: on the first strip they write 8-10 subjects, on the second strip, 8-10 verbs, and on the last strip, 8-10 adverbs. Then let them play with their sentence-maker to create crazy sentences which they can repeat or write in their notebooks.

**14 Word-wall poster**




Get the children to make visual word walls about the topics they have been working on in class. Give each child a blank piece of paper or cardboard. Begin by brainstorming the words that children can remember about the topic they have been learning. Allocate one word to each child so that words are not repeated. Get each child to write and illustrate their allocated word on the blank paper and put it up on the wall chart to help children remember how to spell words correctly.

## *10 more good reasons to play games in class*

If you've ever played a game with children, you'll know that they are a fantastic way to engage children in the learning process.

**1 Play**

Young learners are naturally drawn to play. As toddlers and very young learners, children learn through play, both at home and at nursery school. Games allow children to experience play-learning again in the classroom. So, it is not surprising that children become more engaged when you announce that they are going to play a game in class.

**2 Competition**

Another good reason to introduce games in the classroom is that they appeal to children's characteristics. Children tend to be competitive by nature, and games have the power of encouraging children to speak English and work hard just so that they can win the game.

**3 A natural context**

Games are usually built around a context. As children are curious and imaginative by nature, they are easily drawn into this context. This means that games provide you with a natural context for children to practise and apply language that they have learned in class.

**4 Drilling practice**

Many games require the children to repeat a language structure or vocabulary again and again in order to play the game. This provides the children with lots of drilling practice. The children often don't even notice that they are doing this as they are so focused on the game itself. Another reason why games are useful for drilling language is that children really enjoy playing them, so they tend to ask you if they can play the same game several times or in another lesson.

**5 Memory skills**

Games are a great tool for developing children's memory skills, as children often have to play a game several times before they actually manage to win it. This means that games help children learn and remember new language. Pair-matching games are an ideal tool for training children's memories, as they force the child to remember where the card pairs are. Memory skills will later prove to be fundamental when the child reaches more advanced levels of the language.

**6 A revision exercise**

A great way to begin a lesson is to play a game that you played last lesson. Alternatively, play a game that gets children using the content that you looked at in the previous lesson in order to help them quickly revise what they learned.

**7 Play at home**

Another reason to invest valuable learning time in making and playing games in class is that children can then take them home to play with their families. This means that games allow children to take home the language they are learning in the classroom. They will often bring it back again as they give us feedback on what happened, who won, and what their families thought of the game.

**8 Cooperation**

Many games are built on the concept of cooperation. This means that no matter how good an individual student may be, they need to learn how to work with other team members in order to define a group strategy and win the game. Cooperation and teamwork skills will be an essential skill when children enter the workforce, and games allow us to train this skill from an early age.

**9 Social skills**

One of our main tasks as teachers is to teach the whole learner and not just the language learner. Games are an excellent tool for us to do this as they help us develop the children's social skills such as turn-taking. In addition, games help children realise that we all have different talents, which are essential to being the best and winning the game: a child may not be very good at English, but if they have a talent for drawing, they will be a valuable asset to the team when it comes to playing a game like Pictionary.

**10 Fun and engaging**

Perhaps the most important reason to play games in class is that they are fun and engaging by nature. As teachers, we should always remind children of how much fun learning is. Games are the perfect tool to do this as they allow us to prove to them just how enjoyable the learning process can be.

# *Vocabulary and grammar games*

Games appeal to children's competitive nature and give them a good reason to try hard at using language. Activities 1-5 are targeted at vocabulary and activities 6-10 are targeted at grammar. These games can be applied to almost any topic.


**1 Alphabet game**

Make a set of alphabet letter flashcards so that you have one for each child. Hand out the letter cards randomly. Play some music and encourage the children to dance and move around the room to the music. When the music stops, ask them to line up in alphabetical order as quickly as they can. Remember to alternate cards so that the children practise the whole alphabet.

**2 Back to the board game**

This activity is suitable for more advanced classes. Divide the class into two teams and choose one child from each team to stand in front of the class with their back to the board. Put a (different) flashcard on the board for each team. A member of each team rolls a dice. The team with the highest number starts. That team gives their player one clue to help them guess the word on their flashcard on the board. If the child guesses correctly, the team gets a point and the next child takes their place with a new flashcard until all the team members have had a go. If the child doesn't guess correctly, the other team takes a turn to give their own team member a clue. The group to guess the most words wins.

**3 Basketball game**

Divide the children into teams. Choose one child from each team to come to the front of the class. Place the waste paper bin against a wall and get the children to line up in front of it. Show the first group a flashcard. They consult and give their answer (i.e. identify the word from the picture on the flashcard). If they are right, their representative at the front of the class is allowed to have a shot at the basket with a paper/soft ball and win a point. Then it is the turn of the second group, and so on. The group with the highest score at the end wins.

**4 Catch**

The children sit in a circle. Introduce or review a set of vocabulary flashcards by placing them in a pile in the centre of the circle. Ask a child to go to the centre, take the first card from the pile and show it to everyone. The child goes back outside the circle and walks round it touching each child's head while randomly saying words from the vocabulary set. When the child says the 'magic' word, i.e. the word on the flashcard, the child whose head was touched must stand up and chase the first child round the circle, trying to catch him or her. If the first child gets back to the vacant space and sits down without being caught, the 'chaser' chooses the next flashcard and continues the game.

**5 Adverb action miming game**

This game is great for revising vocabulary that the children have already learned. Begin by choosing a topic that you want to work on, such as daily routines, and write an action on the board, such as 'brush your hair'. Then invite a child to choose an adverb flashcard from an opaque bag. The child then mimes the action according to the adverb word card and the other children try to guess the adverb.

**6 Simon says**

'Simon says' is the perfect game for practising the imperative and reviewing vocabulary relating to the body. Ask the children to stand up, and then give them an instruction, for example, *'Simon says touch your head.'* The children who do not carry out each instruction correctly sit down. After a while, speed up your instructions and add a twist to catch children out, simply saying, *'Touch your foot!'* (instead of preceding the instruction with 'Simon says'). Any child who carries out the instruction without 'Simon says' is out. When the children are ready, swap places with one of them who then becomes the caller. The last child left standing is the winner.

**7 Musical chairs**

Place 8-10 chairs in a circle in the centre of the room, each with a flashcard related to the language topic you have been working on, e.g. 'food'. Choose some children to sit on them. Invite the remaining children to sit in a circle on the floor around that circle. Play some music and ask the children to walk around the chairs and to

sit down on one when the music stops. Remove a chair and stop the music. One child will be left standing. The children who are sitting must say a sentence about their flashcard, for example, if it's a picture of an orange, they might say, *'I like oranges'* or *'Oranges are delicious'*. If the child is unable to produce a correct sentence about their flashcard, they are out, and the child who was left standing has a go. If the sentence is correct, he or she is allowed to sit again. Choose a new player from those sitting on the floor to join the game, and replace the players every now and again.

8 **Matching game**

Choose ten sentences and divide them into two. Make a sentence card for each part. Jumble all the parts together. Get the children to order the parts to make 10 sentences. This game can be played individually or in groups. Use flashcards to play it as a whole class.

9 **Jumbled sentence cards**

Choose a sentence and make a single-word flashcard for each word. Put all the flashcards in an opaque bag and jumble them up. Hand out the cards randomly to the children and invite the children with flashcards to come up to the front of the class and show everyone their flashcard. Challenge the children to form a sentence in 10 seconds. To involve the rest of the class, allow the students sitting down to give the players tips.

10 **Jump to the left and jump to the right!**

Get the children to stand up. Say a sentence. The children jump to the left if the sentence is correct and jump to the right if the sentence is incorrect. Children who jump the wrong way have to sit down. The last child left standing is the winner.

## *Flashcard games*

As a teacher of young learners, you may already know the value of flashcards. Flashcards help you teach new vocabulary by providing the children with a picture of the new vocabulary item so that children can quickly understand their meaning. They also allow you to do a multitude of activities while catering to young learners' needs. Here are 10 flashcard activities to get you using this versatile resource.


**1 Voice-drilling activity**

Children need to practise a word many times before they can remember it properly. However, this drilling process can become tedious. So why not add some interest by using the children's imaginations and voices? Challenge the children to repeat the target vocabulary using a different voice each time. All-time favourites are: a witch's voice, a princess's voice, a dragon's voice, a ghost's voice and a parrot's voice. (In the latter case, the children repeat each word at least twice in a squawky parrot tone.)

**2 Guessing game**

Remember that children need to be exposed to vocabulary before they can produce it themselves. A fun way of giving them this exposure is to play a guessing game. Present and drill the target vocabulary that you want the children to learn. Then practise it by playing a guessing game with them. Start by choosing a flashcard without looking at it. Show it to the children by holding it in front of you. Ask the children simple questions like 'Is it [adjective]?' and 'Is it a [noun]?' until you can guess which flashcard you have chosen. When the children are ready, encourage them to take your place.

**3 Missing card**

After you have presented, put up and drilled a set of flashcards on the board, test the children's aquisition of this vocabulary by removing one flashcard at a time and leaving an empty space. Begin with the first flashcard and continue removing them in order until there are no flashcards left on the board. The objective is for the children to try and remember the order of the words represented by the flashcards. To make the activity more cognitively challenging, remove the flashcards in a random order, rather than in the order that you presented and drilled them.

**4 Memory game**

A variation on the activity described above is to play a memory game as you present and drill a set of words. After drilling the words two or three times, turn the cards over, one at a time, until

the children can see only the back of the flashcards. To make the activity less cognitively challenging, turn the flashcards over in the order they are on the board.

**5 Show quickly and hide**

After you have presented and drilled your target vocabulary, choose a flashcard of one of the words, without the children seeing it, and hide it behind your back. Then quickly move it to your left or right so that the children can catch a quick glimpse of it. Then hide it behind your back again and ask the children to name the flashcard.

**6 Reveal a tiny bit**

A variation of the activity above is to hide a flashcard by placing another flashcard turned over in front of it. Then, in slow motion, reveal a tiny detail or area of your flashcard, and ask the children to guess which flashcard it is. Continue revealing a small amount at a time until the children are able to correctly guess which flashcard it is and repeat the word.

**7 Point to**

After you have shown the children a flashcard and started drilling it, display it in a place where the children can easily see it in the room. Introduce all the target flashcards and display them round the room. Then play a 'point to' game by saying, for example, 'Point to the apple. Yes, that's right — the apple! Point to the apple.' To make the activity even more fun, associate another action to the pointing activity, for example, 'Stand on one leg and point to the ...'; 'Touch your toes and point to the ...'.

**8 Flashcard hide-and-seek**

Start by presenting and drilling your target vocabulary. Then, choose three helpers and three players. Ask the players to leave the room for a few seconds. Next, ask your helpers to hide the flashcards around the room. Invite the players back in and challenge them to find the flashcards. Involve the rest of the class by allowing them to guide the players, saying, 'Hot!' (if the players are standing near the flashcard), 'Boiling!' (if they are really close to finding it), 'Cold!' (if they are standing far away from the flashcard) and 'Freezing!' (if they are heading in the opposite direction).

**9 Go fish**

Organise the children in a circle. Place the flashcards that you have drilled in the centre face up so that everyone can see them. Choose a player. Ask that child to go to the centre and 'fish' (i.e. fetch) a particular flashcard. If the child chooses the correct flashcard, they get to choose the next player. This game can also be played as a group game.

**10 Fly swatter game**

Begin by presenting and drilling a vocabulary set. Then display the relevant cards on the board or on a wall in the classroom. Divide the children into two teams and choose a player from each team to stand at a set distance from the flashcards. Choose one representative for each group and give each one a plastic fly swatter. Say one word at a time. The quickest player to swat the corresponding flashcard earns a point. The winning team is the team with the highest score. To make the game even more challenging, speed up the rhythm at which you say the words. If you can't get hold of fly swatters, get the children to swat the flashcards with their hands.

# 4 Stories and Drama

Stories and drama are activities which naturally appeal to children's characteristics and imaginations. This section will look at how we can exploit these activities in the young learner English language classroom so that learning English becomes a creative and memorable classroom experience.

There are also practical activities that can be applied to any story and several classic and engaging story suggestions to teach common topics on most young learner language courses.

Stories and drama are activities which naturally complement each other, as drama provides children with the opportunity to react to a story in a multisensory way. This is motivating and appealing for them. In order to get optimal results in your classroom, choose stories and drama activities that you like, and that match the age and language level of your learners.

## *Reasons to use stories and drama in the English classroom*

- **Language in context**

  Stories and drama activities use a holistic approach to language learning. They encourage children to pick up chunks of language that are at or just above their language level. The language is always presented in a clear and meaningful context rather than as a list of words to memorise. The result is that they tend to remember them long after the lesson has ended.

- **Understanding the world**

  Through the characters in a story or a short role-playing activity, children are encouraged to develop an understanding of the world around them that is connected to their own life experiences. Thus, stories and drama activities are an excellent way of introducing and dealing with sensitive topics and issues in the classroom.

- **Imagination**

  Listening to stories and participating in drama activities transports children to different and magical worlds without their ever having to leave the classroom. Thus, these activities appeal to a

child's innate love of fantasy and play, which are valuable tools when it comes to developing their creativity.

- **Social and thinking skills**

  Social and thinking skills are sometimes referred to as the 4Cs: communication, collaboration, critical thinking and creativity. These skills are naturally developed in stories and drama activities. The activities also help children to develop basic thinking skills such as hypothesising, guessing and inferring meaning. Children are encouraged to work with, take turns with, relate to and respect others.

- **Memorable learning experiences**

  Stories and drama activities help develop interpersonal skills. They also encourage children to repeat the activity many times, developing memory and concentration in the process.

- **A springboard for learning**

  This type of activity is very flexible and a great springboard for learning, enabling you to use them to complement the topics and activities in your course book. Alternatively, you can organise learning in such a way that it derives from a central story or drama activity. Or you can bring them into your classroom every now and again, say, once a month or even just twice a term. Another advantage to using this type of activity is that you can follow it up with many varied activities.

- **Speaking and listening skills**

  Both stories and drama activities provide students with a multi-skilled approach to learning. While listening to a story or drama activity, children develop active listening skills. By participating in one of these activities, they take a step further and develop their speaking skills, too. It's not all that surprising that they remember these experiences long after they have ended and beg to do them again in class.

- **Awareness of other cultures**

  Stories in particular are a fantastic way of bringing a multicultural element into your classroom. They help make children more aware of and tolerant towards other cultures by helping them understand and respect cultural differences through the main characters in the story.

- **Sense of achievement**

  When children participate in a story or drama activity, they get to practise and apply the language they are learning or have learned in a natural and fun context. They are also given the opportunity to use it independently, which in itself is a motivating experience. The climax of this process is when they get to perform their drama activity, retelling the story they heard in a creative way, to a real audience, showing everyone how good they are at speaking English.

- **Magical and fun**

  Perhaps the most important reason of all to use stories and drama activities in your classroom is the fact that stories and drama are fun. Everyone, regardless of their age or interests, loves a good story. Letting go and participating in a drama activity is an equally motivating experience.

## *Some tips for making storytelling a memorable classroom experience*

A good storyteller can transform storytelling into a truly magical experience by bringing the story to life in our minds and hearts. Begin by deciding whether you want to tell the children a story without the book or whether you are going to read it to them. Both options will require some preparation. Here are a few tips to help you find the true storyteller in you.

### *Choose the story wisely!*

The success of your storytelling adventure begins with the story that you choose to tell. Make sure that the story you choose ticks the 'good story' criteria by asking yourself a few basic questions:

- Does it appeal to the children's tastes and interests?
- Is the story related to the children's personal experience? Will they be able to identify with it?
- Is the language level within or just above the children's language level?
- Does the story have enough repetitive language structures that the children can learn?
- Does the story transmit positive values to the children?
- How do I feel about telling this story?

***Prepare, prepare and prepare again!***

The secret to success in storytelling is the amount of time that you put into the preparation. Make sure that you know the story and that you are comfortable reading or telling it long before you go into the classroom. Use a visual storytelling plan or graphic organiser to help you visualise the story and remember it so that there are no hiccups when you tell it or read it to the children.

***Adapt the story for the children you are telling it to!***

Remember to adapt the story to the audience in front of you. Change and add any details that you know will appeal to your students' personalities and interests. They haven't read the story before and won't know what you have changed, but they will remember how the story you told them made them feel.

***Get children into a story mood before telling the story!***

Remember that a good story is more than just a mere activity. It is a complete classroom experience. This means that you need to get the children into a storytelling frame of mind. There are various techniques that you can try to do this: you could bring a story puppet to help you tell the story, or you could put on a funny story hat or coat just for story time.

***Have a different class arrangement for story time!***

Think about where the children will be when you tell them the story. A good option is to organise the class in a circle for story time. Remember to stand up and go round the circle with the book so that all the children can see the illustrations. For larger classes, organise the front of the classroom in a semicircle, amphitheatre style: some children sit on the floor in the first two rows, then there are one or two rows of children sitting on chairs, and finally there is a row of tables which the tallest children sit on.

***Pre-teach important vocabulary!***

Make sure that the children can follow the essential vocabulary in the story. Children need to know about 90% of the words in a story to understand it. This may require you to preteach any difficult vocabulary which you cannot explain through gestures.

***Use gestures and body language when telling the story!***

Make sure that you keep the children engaged. Once you know the story, remember to take time to plan the gestures and body language you'll use and the pauses you'll make while telling it. Remember that you will only be ready to tell the story when all this comes naturally to you.

***Use different voices for different characters!***

As a storyteller, your voice is your greatest ally. Remember to plan how you will use your voice. Think about pitch and volume, and the pace at which you speak. How will you express emotion in the story? Can you use different voices for all the various characters?

***Stand in different parts of the room!***

To help make the story more visually engaging for the children, try using the space in the classroom to your advantage. Choose an area of the classroom for each main character and stand in each character's area when they speak in the story. This will help learners follow the plot.

***Involve the learners as you tell the story!***

Involve the children in the actual storytelling process by stopping and asking them questions. Remember to give them time to think before you give them the answers. Another secret is to give the children actions to do while they are listening to the story: negotiate specific gestures for them to make at certain moments. You can also get them to repeat pre-agreed sounds, words or language chunks. Once you have finished telling the story, make sure that you personalise it by asking the children whether they liked it or not and why. Finish off by sharing your personal enthusiasm for the story with the children.

## *Story activities*

Stories are a fantastic way of exposing children to, and getting them to learn, new language in context. The activities that you associate with a story will help engage the children during the storytelling process and make the story meaningful for them. Here are 10 activities that you can apply to any

story. Activities 1-3 can be used as prestorytelling activities, and activities 4-10 are best used afterwards.


- **Guess what's in my box**
  Give the children a reason to listen to the story by appealing to their curiosity. Put a few objects related to the story in a box. Wrap the box in colourful wrapping paper and take it into class. Let the children touch and shake the box without opening it to guess what's inside. After a few guesses, invite different children to open it, take out an object and show it to the class. To reuse the box, make sure that the lid can open without the children having to tear the wrapping paper. Alternatively, let a child tear the wrapping paper as if it were a present. As the child shows the class an object, teach and drill any vocabulary that they don't know. Then tell them that they'll be hearing a story about the objects in the box and ask them to clap their hands or click their fingers each time one of the objects in the box is mentioned in the story.
- **Play a flashcard game**
  An alternative, which requires less preparation time compared with the activity above, is to take flashcards of the main target vocabulary in the story and to play a flashcard game with them before telling them the story.
- **Discuss the front and back covers of the book**
  Encourage the children to examine the front and back covers of the book before you start reading the story. Tell them the title of the story and ask them to predict what the story will be about. Encourage the children to develop their observation skills by focusing on details with narrative significance in the illustrations. This is also an opportunity to teach them words like front cover, back cover, blurb, author, illustrator and award.
- **Discuss story images**
  An alternative way of getting the children to predict the plot of a story is to scan one or two central images in the book and to show them to the children on paper or in a digital format. Encourage the children to describe what's happening in each image and to predict how that image relates to the rest of the story.

- **Doing comprehension exercises**
  After telling the children a story, always save time for an activity or two to check that they have understood it. For younger learners, check comprehension through simple speaking activities. You could try getting older children to order images or'characters according to the story, or to match pictures of the characters in the story to pictures of their actions. Alternatively, you could simply retell the story making a few mistakes and invite the children to correct you each time they hear one.
- **Sing a song or chant about the story**
  Some stories are based on a popular song or chant that you can teach the children before or after telling them the story. If the story you have chosen doesn't have a corresponding song or chant, why not invent one with the children?
- **Do an arts and crafts activity related to the story**
  A popular post-storytelling activity is to devise an arts and crafts activity related to the story. A simple yet effective choice for any story is to get the children to make finger puppets of the main characters using empty toilet roll tubes. They can then use their puppets to retell the story to younger students in the school, or share it with their families at home.
- **Role-play the story**
  If you want to try something more ambitious, invest in a cross-curricular activity and put on a short play of the story for the other classes in that year, or even the whole school.
- **Make a storybook**
  You can give children ownership of the story by challenging them to come up with an alternative ending to the story. Help children 'publish' their stories by making their own storybooks.
- **Organise a story exhibition**
  Organise a story exhibition and invite children to contribute by producing artwork (pictures, paintings and sculptures) or projects relating to the story. Invite the school community to visit the exhibition and to vote for the best piece of artwork or project, which will win a prize. Remember to have participation certificates for every participant.

# Observation Forms and Charts

Observation form for Unit _____

| Name | Asks relevant questions | Makes relevant comments | Follows directions | Works autonomously | Knows the meaning of target vocabulary | Recognises target vocabulary | Applies target vocabulary correctly | Spells target vocabulary correctly |
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# Classroom Progress chart

Unit : _____ Topic: _____

Target vocabulary for the unit:

| | Reading | | Writing | | Listening | | | Speaking | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Name | Read + understand a short text | Answer comprehension questions on the text | Write sentences with the target vocabulary | Write a short text about: ___ | Listen to and understand a short text | Answer comprehension questions on the listening | Understand instructions | Pronounce the target vocabulary correctly | Answer questions on the topic | Interact with others on the topic |
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# Class observation/behaviour chart

Draw a ☑ for positive behaviour or a ☒ according to the behaviour observed in each category for each student.

| Name | Talkative | Co-operative with : T | SS | Follows classroom rules | Concentrates | Participates in class | Appropriate social behaviour | Punctual | Brings classroom materials | Does homework |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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## Skills report

Name: _____ Class: _____

Level: _____ Term: _____

| Responsibility | | Organisation | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Is always responsible<br>2. Is usually responsible<br>3. Is rarely responsible | ☐<br>☐<br>☐ | 1. Is always organised<br>2. Is usually organised<br>3. Is rarely organised | ☐<br>☐<br>☐ |
| **Independent work** | | **Collaboration** | |
| 1. Usually works independently<br>2. Usually requires teacher's/a peer's help | ☐<br>☐ | 1. Always collaborates with others<br>2. Usually collaborates with others<br>3. Is not yet able to collaborate with others | ☐<br>☐<br>☐ |
| **General strengths** | | | |
| 1. Does neat and thorough work<br>2. Usually tries to do his/her best<br>3. Takes instructions well and instantly applies them<br>4. Is motivated and hardworking<br>5. _____ | | | ☐<br>☐<br>☐<br>☐<br>☐ |

## Main unit objectives for the skill

| | Outstanding | Satisfactory | Needs improving |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Listening: recognises and understands target vocabulary. | | | |
| 2. Speaking: uses target vocabulary correctly. | | | |
| 3. Reading: recognises and understands target vocabulary in short written texts. | | | |
| 4. Writing: spells and writes sentences/short texts with target vocabulary correctly | | | |
| 5._____ | | | |

| Specific skill strengths demonstrated | Areas to work on |
|---|---|
| 1 | 1 |
| 2 | 2 |

# Song Lyrics

Please check how to sing the tunes on YouTube.

## 1 Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes

1 Head and shoulders knees and toes
Knees and toes
Head and shoulders knees and toes
Knees and toes
And eyes and ears
And mouth and nose
Head and shoulders knees and toes
Knees and toes

2 Feet and tummies arms and chins
Arms and chins
Feet and tummies arms and chins
Arms and chins
And eyes and ears
And mouth and shins
Feet and tummies arms and chins
Arms and chins

3 Hands and fingers legs and lips
Legs and lips
Hands and fingers legs and lips
Legs and lips
And eyes and ears
And mouth and hips
Hands and fingers legs and lips
Legs and lips
*[Repeat first verse]*

## 2 The Hokey Cokey

1 You put your right arm in, your right arm out
In, out, in, out, You shake it all about.
You do the Hokey Cokey and you turn around
That's what it's all about!

[Chorus]
Woah, the Hokey Cokey,
Woah, the Hokey Cokey,
Woah, the Hokey Cokey,
Knees bent, arms stretched, rah rah rah!

2 You put your left arm in,
your left arm out
In, out, in, out, You shake
it all about.
You do the Hokey Cokey and you turn around
That's what it's all about!
[Chorus]

3 You put your right leg in, your right leg out
In, out, in, out, You shake it all about.
You do the Hokey Cokey and you turn around
That's what it's all about!
[Chorus]

4 You put your left leg in,
your left leg out
In, out, in, out,
You shake it all about.
You do the Hokey Cokey and you turn around
That's what it's all about!
All together now
[Chorus]

5 You put your whole self in,
your whole self out
In, out, in, out, You shake it all about.
You do the Hokey Cokey and you turn around
That's what it's all about!

**3 The Colours of the Rainbow**

The colours of the rainbow are red and orange, red and orange,
red and orange,
The colours of the rainbow are red and orange,

In the grey sky.
The colours of the rainbow are yellow, green and blue, ...
The colours of the rainbow are indigo and violet, ...

## 4 If You're Happy and You Know It

1 If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap-clap)
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap-clap)
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands, (clap-clap)

2 If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp-stomp)
If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp-stomp)
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it, stomp your feet, (stomp-stomp)

3 If you're happy and you know it, shout 'Hurray!' (hoo-ray!)
If you're happy and you know it, shout 'Hurray!' (hoo-ray!)
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it, shout 'Hurray!' (hoo-ray!)

4 If you're happy and you know it, do all three
(clap-clap, stomp-stomp, hoo-ray!)
If you're happy and you know it, do all three
(clap-clap, stomp-stomp, hoo-ray!)
If you're happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it
If you're happy and you know it, do all three
(clap-clap, stomp-stomp, hoo-ray!)

## 5 Do You Like Broccoli Ice Cream?

1 Do you like broccoli?
Yes, I do! (Yes gesture)
Do you like ice cream? (Pretend to lick an ice cream cone.)
Yes, I do! (Yes gesture.]
Do you like broccoli ice cream? (Make a 'yucky' face.)
No, I don't. Yucky! (No gesture.]

2 Do you like doughnuts? (Pretend to hold and eat a doughnut.)
Yes, I do!
Do you like juice? (Pretend to drink juice.)
Yes, I do!

Do you like doughnut juice?
No, I don't. Yucky!

3 Do you like popcorn? [Pretend to eat popcorn.]
Yes, I do!
Do you like pizza? [Pretend to hold a piece of pizza and eat it.]
Yes, I do!
Do you like popcorn pizza?
No, I don't. Yucky!

4 Do you like bananas? [Pretend to peel and eat a banana.]
Yes, I do!
Do you like soup? [Pretend to eat soup from a bowl with a spoon.]
Yes, I do!
Do you like banana soup?
No, I don't. Yuck!

## 6 The Wheels on the Bus

1 The wheels on the bus go round and round,
round and round,
round and round.
The wheels on the bus go round and round,
all through the town.

2 The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish;
swish, swish, swish;
swish, swish, swish.
The wipers on the bus go swish, swish, swish,
all through the town.

3 The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep;
beep, beep, beep;
beep, beep, beep.
The horn on the bus goes beep, beep, beep,
all through the town.

4 The money on the bus goes clink, clink,
clink; clink, clink, clink;
clink, clink, clink.
The money on the bus goes clink, clink, clink,
all through the town.

5 The driver on the bus says, ‘Move along please,
move along please, move along please.’
The driver on the bus says, ‘Move on back.’
all through the town.

6 The baby on the bus says, ‘Wah, wah, wah;
Wah, wah, wah;
Wah, wah, wah.’
The baby on the bus says ‘Wah, wah, wah.’
all through the town.

7 The mummy on the bus says, ‘Shush, shush, shush;
shush, shush, shush;
shush, shush, shush.’
The mummy on the bus says, ‘Shush, shush, shush.’
all through the town.

## 7 Incy Wincy Spider

Incy Wincy Spider, climbing up the spout
Down came the rain and washed the spider out
Out came the sun and dried up all the rain
Now Incy Wincy Spider went up the spout again!

## 8 Old Macdonald Had a Farm

1 Old Macdonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O
And on his farm he had a cow
E-I-E-I-O
With a moo-moo here
And a moo-moo there
Here a moo, there a moo
Everywhere a moo-moo
Old Macdonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O

2 Old Macdonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O
And on his farm he had a pig
E-I-E-I-O

With an oink-oink here
And an oink-oink there
Here an oink, there an oink
Everywhere an oink-oink
With a moo-moo here
And a moo-moo there
Here a moo, there a moo
Everywhere a moo-moo
Old Macdonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-O

3 ... And on his farm he had a duck
E-I-E-I-O
With a quack-quack here ...

4 ... Andd on his farm he had a horse
E-I-E-I-O
With a neigh-neigh here ...

5 ... And on his farm he had a lamb
E-I-E-I-O
With a baa-baa here ...

6 ... And on his farm he had some chickens
E-I-E-I-O
With a cluck-cluck here ...

7 Old Macdonald had a farm
E-I-E-I-OOOOOOO.

## 9 Five Little Monkeys

1 Five little monkeys jumping on the bed
One fell off and bumped his head
Mama called the doctor,
And the doctor said,
'No more monkeys jumping on the bed!'

2 Four little monkeys jumping on the bed ...

3 Three little monkeys jumping on the bed ...

4 Two little monkeys jumping on the bed ...

5 One little monkey jumping on the bed
One fell off and bumped his head
Mama called the doctor

And the doctor said,
'Put that monkey right to bed!'

**10 The Alphabet Song**

A-B-C-D-E-F-G
H-I-J-K-L-N-O-P
Q-R-S-T-U-V,
W-X-Y and Z
Now I know my ABCs
Next time, won't you sing with me?

# Fun Rhymes

**1 Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star**

1 Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!

2 When the blazing sun is gone,
When he nothing shines upon,
Then you show your little light,
Twinkle, twinkle, all the night.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!

3 Then the traveller in the dark,
Thanks you for your tiny spark,
He could not see which way to go,
If you did not twinkle so.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!

4 In the dark blue sky you keep,
And often through my curtains peep,
For you never shut your eye,
Till the sun is in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!

5 As your bright and tiny spark,
Lights the traveller in the dark,
Though I know not what you are,
Twinkle, twinkle, little star.
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are!

**2 Humpty Dumpty**

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall;
All the king's horses and all the king's men
Couldn't put Humpty together again.

**3 Baa Baa Black Sheep**

1 Baa, baa, black sheep, have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full!
One for the master, One for the dame,
And one for the little boy
Who lives down the lane.

2 Baa, baa, white sheep, have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir, three needles full.
One to mend a jumper,
One to mend a frock,
And one for the little girl
With holes in her sock.

3 Baa, baa, grey sheep, have you any wool?
Yes sir, yes sir, three bags full.
One for the kitten,
One for the cats,
And one for the owner
To knit some woolly hats.

4 Baa, baa, bare sheep, have you any wool?
No sir, no sir, no bags full.
None for the master,
None for the dame,
And none for the little boy
who lives down the lane.

## 4 Jack and Jill

1 Jack and Jill went up the hill
To fetch a pail of water.
Jack fell down and broke his crown,
And Jill came tumbling after.

2 Up Jack got, and home did trot,
As fast as he could caper,
He went to bed to mend his head,
With vinegar and brown paper.

## 5 Hickory Dickory Dock

1 Hickory Dickory Dock,
The mouse ran up the clock,
The clock struck one,
The mouse ran down! *Hickory Dickory Dock*.

2 Hickory Dickory Dock,
The bird looked at the clock,
The clock struck two,
Away she flew! *Hickory Dickory Dock.*

3 Hickory Dickory Dock,
The dog barked at the clock,
The clock struck three,
Fiddle de dee! *Hickory Dickory Dock*.

4 Hickory Dickory Dock,
The bear slept by the clock,
The clock struck four,
He ran out the door! *Hickory Dickory Dock.*

5 Hickory Dickory Dock,
The bee buzzed round the clock,
The clock struck five,
She went to her hive! *Hickory Dickory Dock.*

6 Hickory Dickory Dock,
The hen pecked at the clock,
The clock struck six,
Oh, fiddle-sticks,
Hickory Dickory Dock!

# Cut-outs and Templates

## Finger Puppets

**Materials needed:**

1 old rubber gloves
2 ribbon/wool for the hair
3 plastic eyes
4 permanent markers and glitter glue to decorate the puppets
5 bits of old fabric for the clothes
6 liquid glue to stick on the decorations

**Instructions:**

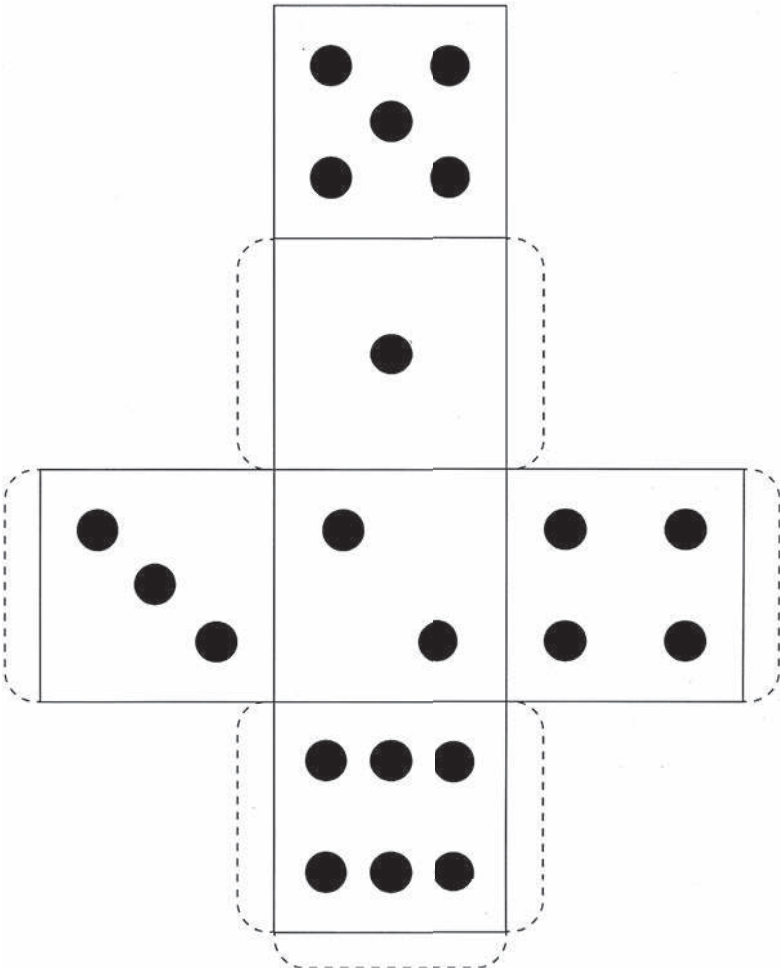
1 Take the rubber glove and cut the fingers at the base.
2 Make the hair and stick it on. Glue on the eyes and the clothes. Allow the glue to dry.
3 Draw the eyes and mouth with the glitter glue or permanent markers and allow to dry.
4 Decorate the clothes with the glitter glue.

# Dice Template

Step 1 Cut out the template along the dotted lines.

Step 2 Fold the template to form a cube.

Step 3 Glue the flaps and stick the edges of the dice together.



# Dice Template

## Adaptation for a story/house dice

**1** To make a story dice, use the blank dice template below and draw/stick an image of a main character/event of the story on each square of the dice. **Make sure that each square has only one image or word on it.**

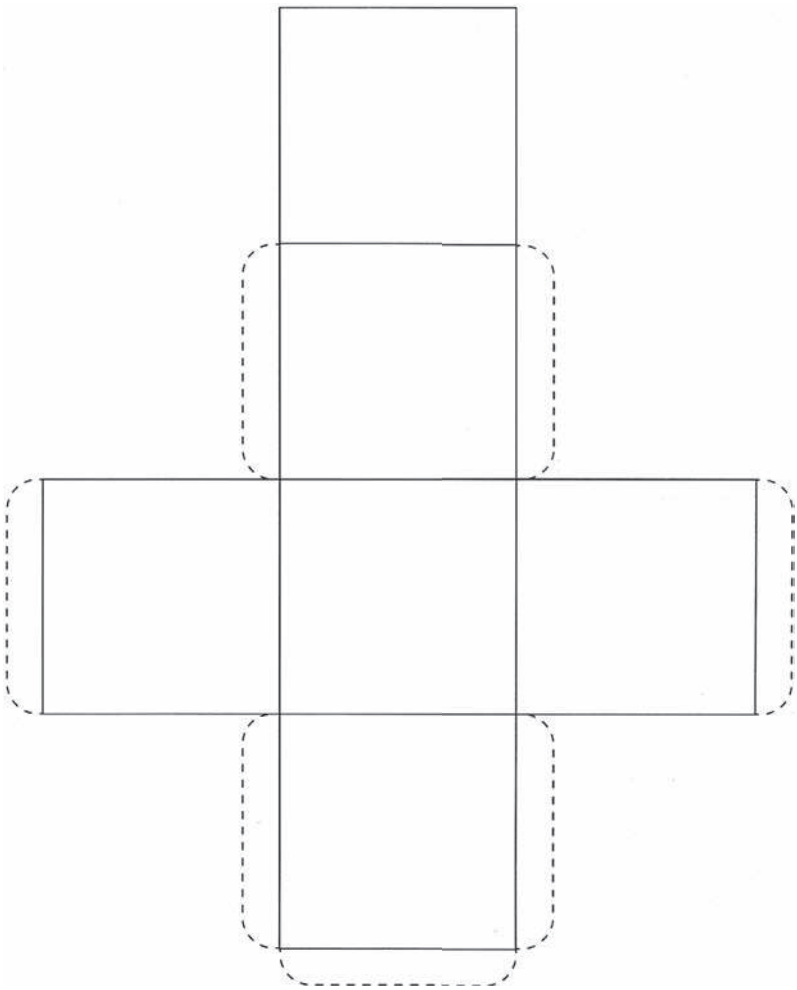
**2** The children roll the dice and have to:

**a** tell the story from the point of view of that character;

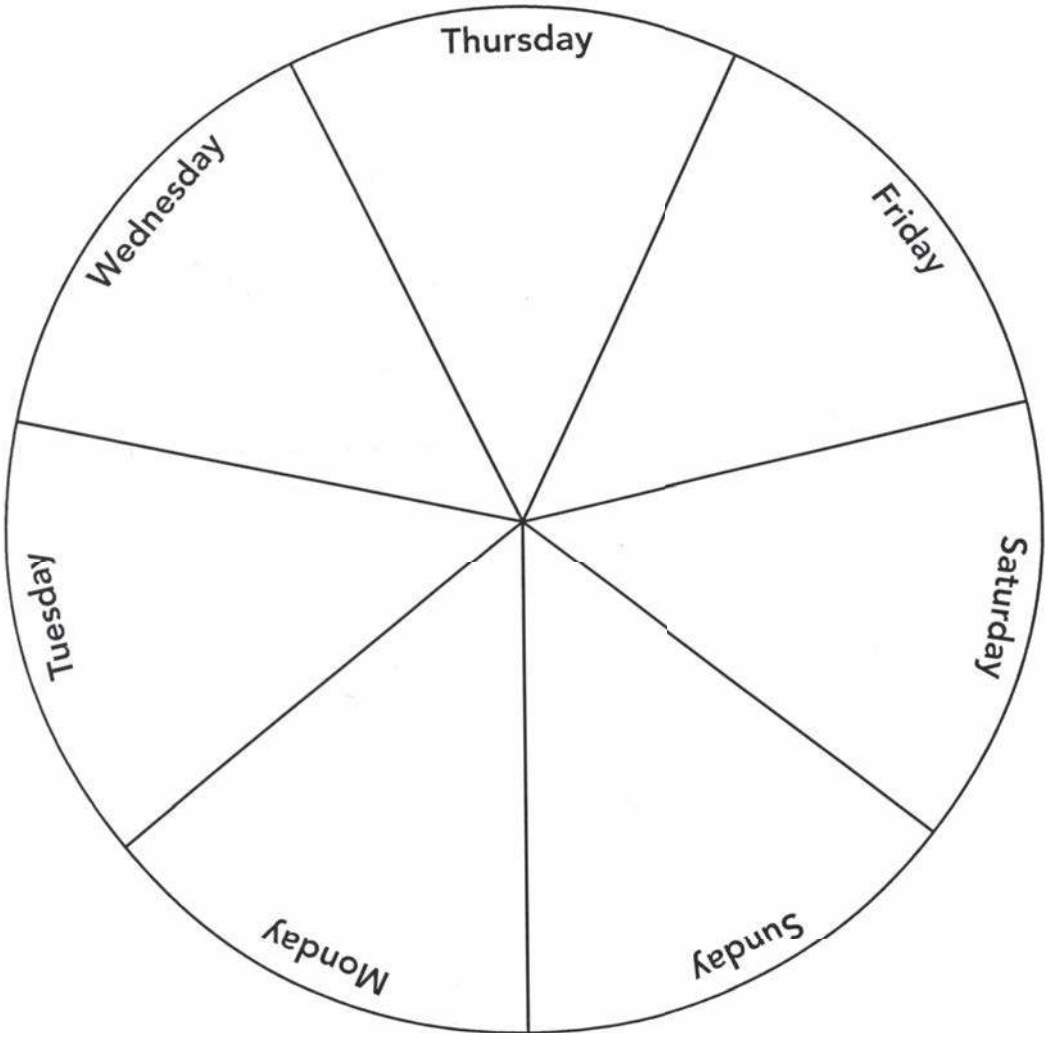
**b** say what happens to that character, or what happens in that event in the story;

**c** answer questions about that particular character/event;

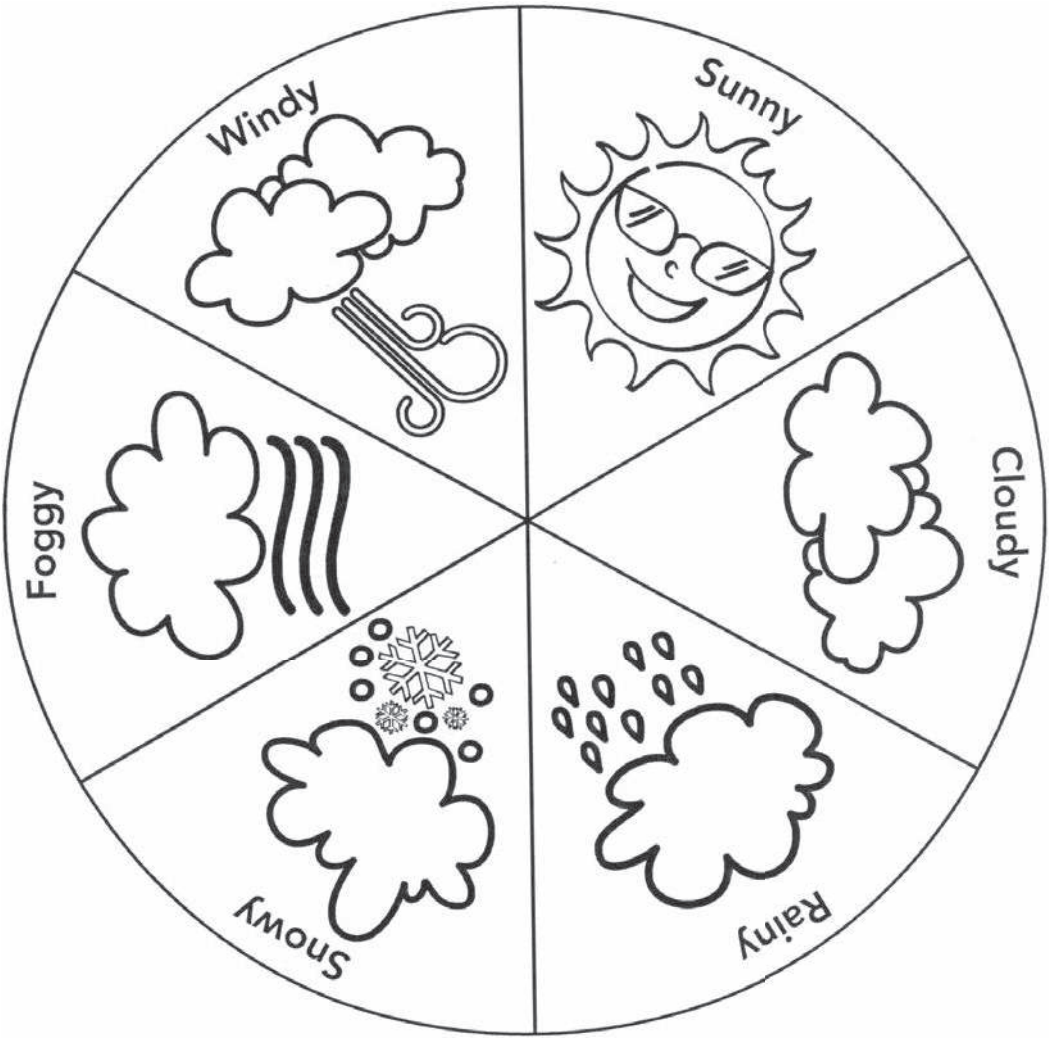
**d** write a key word from the story in each square.



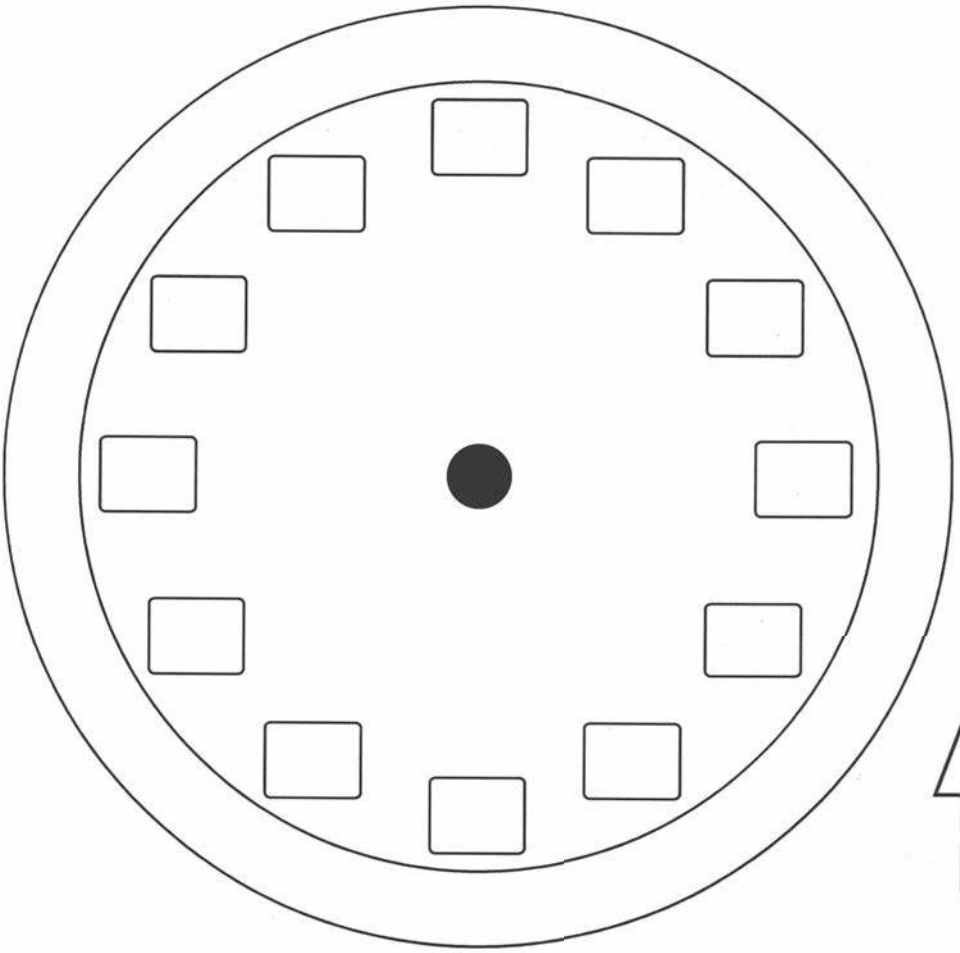
# Week Wheel



# Weather Wheel



# What Time Is It?



| | |
|---|---|
| What time is it? | It's (time). |
| What time is it? | It's (time). |
| What- time- is- it? | It's (time) today. |

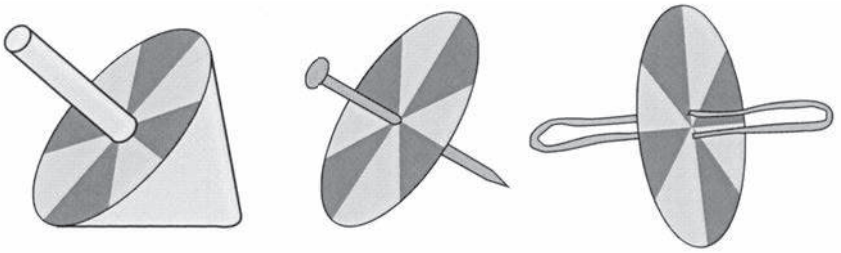
1 2 3 4 5 6

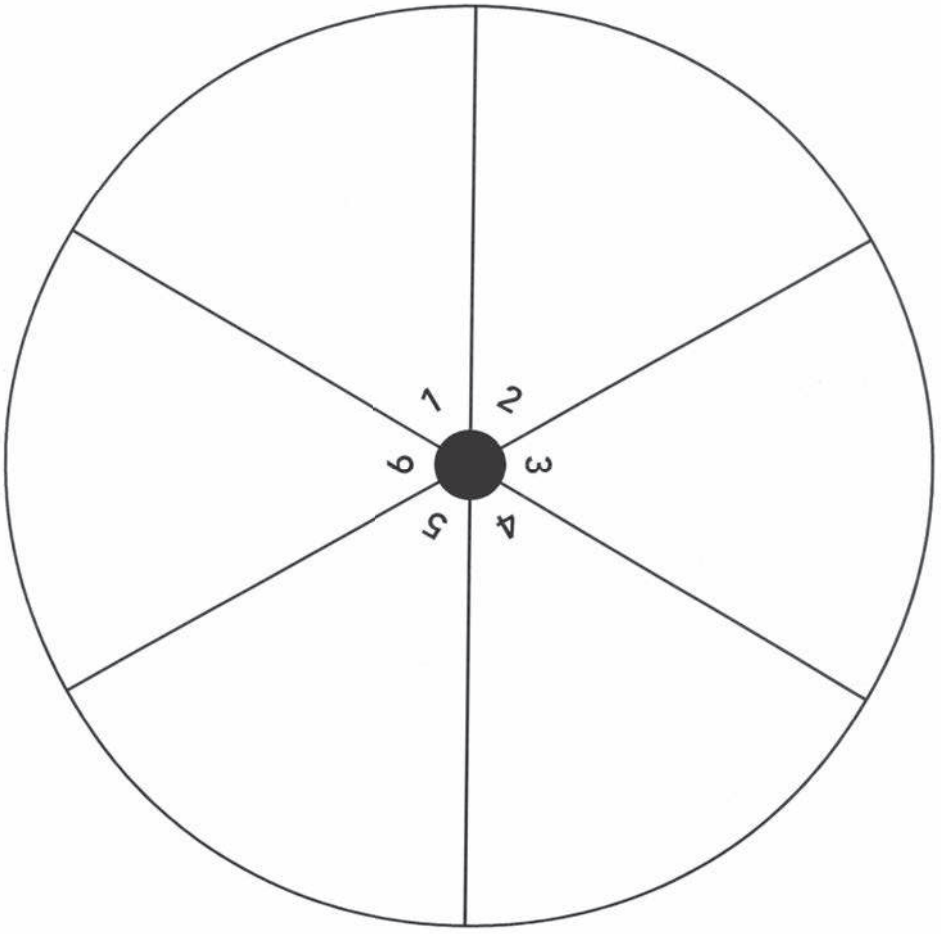
7 8 9 10 11 12

# Topic Spinner

Instructions:

1 Draw a picture or write a word in each section and colour it in.
2 Cut out the spinner.
3 Stick the spinner on a sheet of strong cardboard.
4 Punch the centre hole with a pencil. Spin the wheel and start to play.





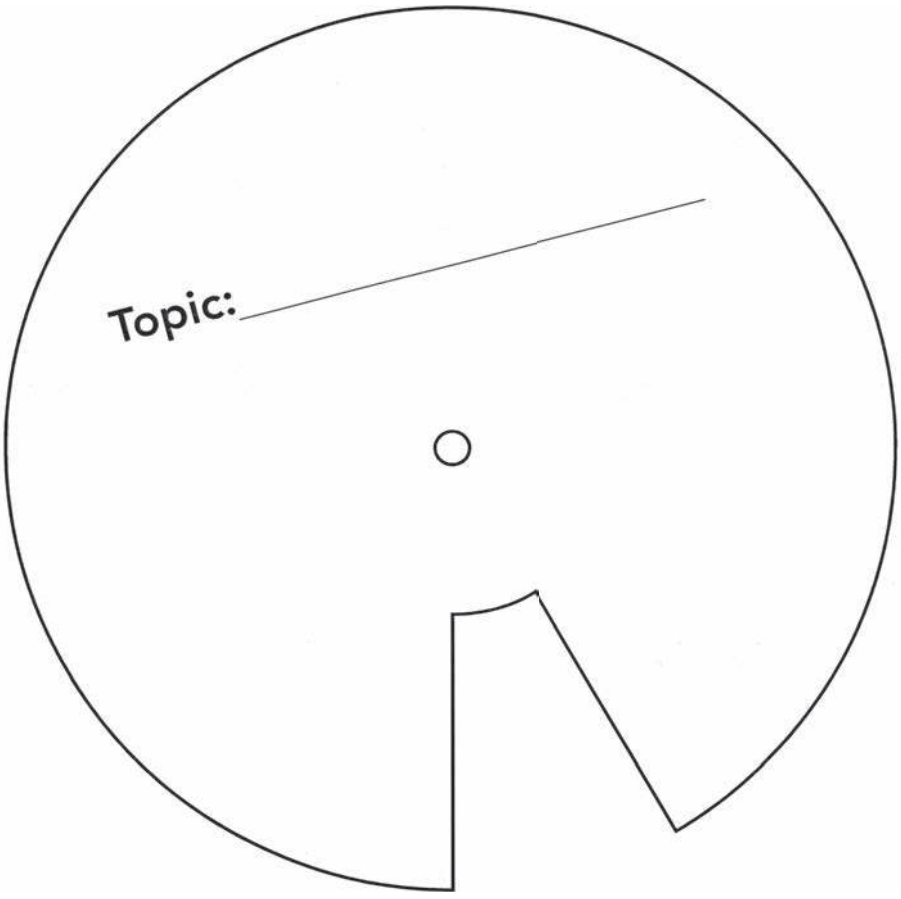
# Mini-Flashcard Template

# Topic Wheel

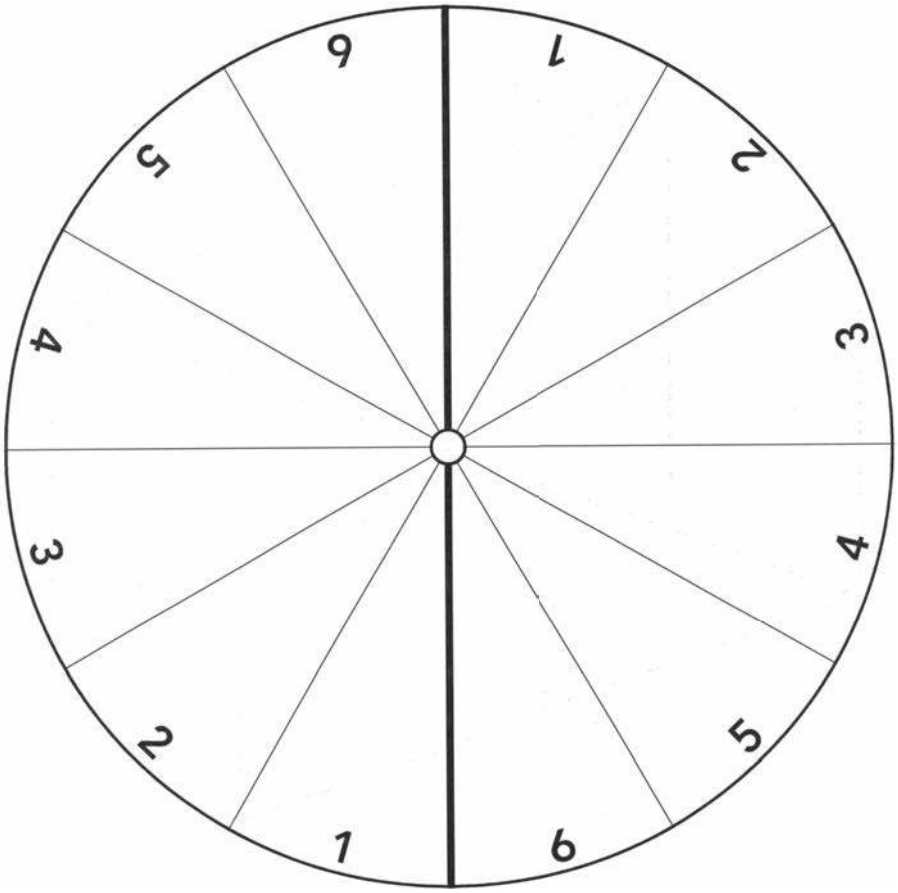
## Body wheel

**Instructions:**

1 Cut out both circles along the outer dark lines.
2 Take the circle with the notch cut out of it and write the topic of the vocabulary that you want to work on, e.g. 'The Body'.
3 Take the circle with the numbers on it and write a word for each number on the right side of the circle for the topic chosen, e.g. 1 arm, 2 head, etc. Draw a picture for each word on the other side of the circle in the corresponding number section.
4 Place the circle with the window on top of this circle and attach both circles with a brass fastener in the centre of the black circle.
5 The children test their vocabulary by looking at a picture and saying the word. Then they move the circle and check the word section to see whether they were right.



## Topic wheel



# Classroom Language
## (for the first-year students)

**1 Greeting and saying goodbye**

Hello.
Good morning.
Good afternoon.
Goodbye.

**2 Praise**

Good.
Very nice.
Well done.
That's lovely.
Much better.

**3 Instructions**

Look at the picture.
Look at the flashcard.
Look at the board.
Look at me.
Look at your partner.
Listen to the CD.
Listen to me.
Repeat after CD.
Repeat after me.
Point and say.
Point and name.
Listen and point.
Show me a cat.
Show me letter Bb.
Trace the letter.
Name the letter.
Say the sound.
Copy the word.
Say the word.
Read the words.

**4 Songs and chants**

Let's sing a song.
Let's say a chant/rhyme.
Clap your hands.
Stamp your feet.
Make a circle.
Do the actions.
All together.

**5 Stories**

Listen to a story.
Follow the pictures.
Listen and point to the pictures.
Listen and repeat.
Let's act out the story.
You are a doll/a robot, etc.

**6 Arts and crafts**

Take your pencils.
Colour the picture.
Fold here.
Cut here.
Let's make a mask.
Cut out the picture.
Stick the picture on the card.

## 7 Classroom management

Sit down, please.
Stand up, please.
Come here, please.
Open your book.
Close your workbook.
Take your copybook.
Work in pairs.
Hands up!
Have you got a pen?
Let's play a game.
Go to the board.
Take turns.
It's your turn.
Wait a moment. It isn't your turn.
One at a time.
Divide into 2 groups.
Go left.
Go right.
Shush/Sh!
Stop it (doing this).
Quiet, please.
Be quiet, please.

# Classroom Language
## (for the second-year students)

The following is a selection of useful phrases that you could introduce into your lessons to accustom your pupils to hearing and understanding English.

### Starting the lesson

Good morning (everyone).
Good afternoon (everyone).
Hello (everyone).
Who is away/absent today?
Let's start!

### Ending the lesson

That's all for now/for today.
Let's stop now.
OK. You can go now.
Put your books/things away.
See you on (day).
Have a nice weekend/holiday.
Goodbye.

### During the lesson

Get out your books.
Open your books at page (10).
Turn to page (10).
Look at task 1 on page (10).
Look at line 3/picture 3.
Let's say it together.
All together!
This row/group ...
Your turn.
Say it again (please).
The whole sentence, please.
Louder, please.
Now you ask.
Who knows the answer?
In English, please.
What's ... in English?
What is the (LI) for 'try'?
What is it in (LI)?
Collect the books, please.
Give me your homework, please.
Give everyone one of these.

### Reading

Can you read this/that?
Anna, you read Beth.
Who can read this sentence?
Go on, Stepan.
Say it after me.

### Writing

Write this/that in your ET books.
Copy this/that in your books.
Who wants to write that on the board?
How do you spell this/that?
What's missing here?
Is that right?

### Acting

Let's act that.
You are Joe.
Read Beth's part, Anna.

Who wants to be Emma?
You can be the reader, Stepan.
Come and stand here.

### Partners

You're Anna's partner.
Who's your partner?
Has everyone got a partner?
Work with your partner.
Sit back to back.
Don't show it to your partner.
Change places (with Anna).
Change your partner.

### Games

Are you ready?
Whose turn is it?
Take it in turns.
You're next.
Start now.
Guess!
It's time to stop.
Everyone stop now.
Have you finished?
Who has finished?

### General

Come here.
Go back to your place/desks.
Stand up (everyone).
Sit down.
Hands up/down.
Hurry up.
Quick.
Close the door, please.
Open the window, please.
Turn on/off the lights. Come in. Wait.
Just a minute.

### Keeping order

Quiet, please.
Stop talking/playing.
Sh!
Don't do that, please.
Stop that.
Don't be silly.
Give that to me, please.

### Praise and encouragement

Try again.
That's (much) better.
Good.
Fine.
Very good.
That's very nice.
It's all right, don't worry.

### Thanks and apologies

Thanks. Thank you. Sorry.
Sorry I'm late.
Sorry? (=not hearing)
I'm sorry, I don't understand.

### Pupils' language

Here are some useful phrases you can encourage your pupils to say in English:
Me!
What page/task is it?
What did you say?
I don't know.
I/We don't understand (this word).
I/We've finished. I/We haven't finished.
Shall I help him/her?
Can I go to the toilet, please?

# More Books about Teaching Young Learners

Here are 10 suggestions filled with great ideas that have been read by teachers around the world.

1 **Teaching Young Language Learners (2006) by Annamaria Pinter (Oxford University Press)**
This book is a comprehensive guide that combines research with classroom practice. It deals with a broad range of topics, such as children's learning and development, learning a first/second/third language at home and at school, primary ELT courses, teaching the four skills, learning to learn, materials evaluation and materials design.

2 **Children Learning English (2005) by Jayne Moon (Macmillan)**
This is a handbook filled with lots of practical teaching suggestions for teaching children that will get you thinking about your children's needs and how to cater for them.

3 **Teaching Languages to Young Learners (2001) by Lynne Cameron (Cambridge University Press)**
This book is about what happens in the classroom when children are learning a foreign language. It offers a theoretical framework to help you understand key issues relating to teaching young learners. It also gives advice on how to analyse and evaluate classroom activities, language use and language development, along with many practical examples taken directly from the classroom.

4 **Resource Books for Teachers series (various publications), series editor: Alan Maley (Oxford University Press)**
This series covers a wide range of areas that will be of interest to teachers of young learners. It provides practical guidance as well as ideas, activities, resources and photocopiable materials that you can use in class. Titles in the series include: *Young Learners* by Sarah Phillips, *Games for Children* by Gordon Lewis and Günther Bedson, *Grammar for Young Learners* by Gordon Lewis and Hans Mol, *Creating Chants and Songs* by Carolyn Graham, *Assessing Young Learners* by Sophie Ioannou-Georgiou and Pavlos Pavlou and *Arts and Crafts with Children* by Andrew Wright.

5 **Teaching Young Learners to Think: ELT Activities for Young Learners Aged 6-12 (2012) by Herbert Puchta and Marion Williams (Helbling)**
This book offers 80 ready-to-use photocopiable activities with accompanying teacher's notes. The activities themselves have been designed to promote and develop thinking skills and to develop children's language at the same time.

6 **Bringing Creative Teaching into the Young Learner Classroom (2010) by Lynne Cameron and Penny McKay (Oxford University Press)**
If you are an inexperienced teacher, then this is a book for you. It contains 150 useful ideas and strategies that you can use in class. Each idea also has a 'Why does this work?' section, which is particularly helpful.

7 **500 Activities for the Primary Classroom (2007) by Carol Read (Macmillan)**
This book is aimed at teachers of children aged 3-12. It is a resource that will supplement the course book, giving plenty of varied and practical ideas to help you deal with the question: 'What on earth am I going to do in class tomorrow?'

8 **English for Primary Teachers: A Handbook of Activities and Classroom Language (with audio CD) (2001) by Mary Slattery and Jane Willis (Oxford University Press)**
This book offers practical advice and teaching suggestions to make you a confident teacher of young learners. The CD gives you examples of classroom language from real classrooms.

9 **The Primary English Teacher's Guide (2002) by Jean Brewster, Gail Ellis and Denis Girard (Penguin Books)**
This book covers the most recent developments in language-learning theories and approaches. It contains practical ideas and suggestions on a broad range of topics such as how to select materials and plan lessons for young learners and how to teach culture in the young learner classroom, and a very useful section dedicated to record-keeping and the assessment of young learners.

10 **500+ Fabulous Month-by-Month Teaching Ideas: Instant Activities and Reproducibles for the Themes and Topics You Teach (2010, Scholastic)**
This book is full of practical ideas to teach children to think more deeply while learning English. It contains lots of easy-to-teach cross-curricular ideas and lessons that you can take into class to promote deeper thinking and learning. Scholastic also publishes the *Monthly Idea Book* series — one for each month — by Karen Sevaly, *40 Fabulous Social Studies Activities* by Catherine M. Tamblyn and *The Big Book of Quick & Easy Art Activities: More Than 75 Creative Activities With Curriculum Connections* by Linda Bentley.

# ELT Sites and Blogs

The internet has a wealth of information that can make our lives easier as teachers. The problem is finding the time to seek out the ideas that will really make a difference in your classroom. Here are 8 links that you may want to look into. Suggestions 1-5 are well-known sites that are used by teachers around the world. Suggestions 6-8 relate to blogs that will help put you in touch with other teachers and education specialists, who can have a huge impact on your teaching practices.

**1 British Council**

✓ TeachingEnglish: https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk.
This is a fantastic free site filled with ideas and free resources that you can take into class. It has lesson plans, school-subject-related suggestions, free webinars, ideas for teacher development and a wealth of tools that will help you put a smile on the children's faces.

✓ LearnEnglish Kids: https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org. This is a great site for children and their parents. It has free online games, songs, stories and activities that children can do while learning English.

**2 YLTSIG (IATEFL's Young Learners and Teenagers Special Interest Group)**

IATEFL has various special interest groups and this is the one to join if you're teaching young learners. This site, which you can find at https://yltsig.iatefl.org, will help you find out about important international events, publications and resources related to young learners.

**3 Magazines for children**

Both *National Geographic* and *Time Magazine* are known around the world for their quality. Both of their sites have sections that have been adapted for children. They contain engaging articles and videos to help develop children's literacy skills and general knowledge.

✓ National Geographic for Kids: https://kids.nationalgeographic.com
(a site with fun facts, videos, photos, quizzes and lots more).

✓ Time Magazine for Kids: https://www.timeforkids.com
(this site also has a classroom app and various printable worksheets).

**4 Resources**

The following sites will help you find plenty of ready-made resources to take into your classroom:

✓ **Worksheets and Resources:**

https://www.twinkl.co.uk
https://enchantedlearning.com
http://www.esl-galaxy.com/Kids.htm
https://www.eslkidstuff.com
https://www.onestopenglish.com

✓ **Arts and Crafts:**

https://dltk-kids.com

✓ **Answering Children's *Why* Questions:**

https://www.howstuffworks.com

**5 Publishers' sites**

You can find all sorts of ideas and free materials on the various publishers' sites, along with information about teacher development initiatives that they are holding.

- Oxford University Press' Teachers' Club:
  https://elt.oup.com/teachersclub
- Macmillan's Teaching Resources & Teachers' Corner:
  https://www.macmillanenglish.com
- Pearson's Teacher Resources:
  https://www.pearson.com/english/professional-development.html

**6 Sandie Mourão's picture book blog:**

https://picturebooksinelt.blogspot.com

If you're looking for a new story to read in class, then this blog is an absolute must. Here you can find story suggestions with a synopsis of each story and photos of the opening pages of the book to help you decide whether a particular storybook is suitable for your children. Sandie also has another blog with resources and tips for the young learner classroom that you might want to follow: http://sandiemourao.eu.

**7 Kylie Malinowska's blog:**

https://klokanomil.wordpress.com

This blog shares ideas to use when teaching very young learners and young learners, as well as a summary of online teacher training workshops that Kylie gives.

8 **Barbara Sakamoto's blog:**

https://www.teachingvillage.org

This is a great blog that is dedicated to teaching young learners. It's filled with interesting thoughts, ideas and links that will give you an idea or two to take into class the next day.

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Навчальне видання

*Карпюк Оксана Дмитрівна*

Навчально-методичний посібник

**Нова українська школа:**
**методика навчання англійської мови**
**у 1-2 класах закладів загальної середньої освіти**
**на засадах компетентнісного підходу**

*Рекомендовано Міністерством освіти і науки України*
Англійською та українською мовами

**Видано за рахунок державних коштів. Продаж заборонено.**

Редагування *Богдани Зіник*
Комп'ютерне верстання *Андрія Костишина*

Формат 70x100 1/16.
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