

all levels

A1-C2



5-10 MIN

CIRCLE OF FIVES

This game is good for building the energy of the student group by getting everyone moving. It can take a bit of confidence for students to step up to the challenge the game presents, so it's helpful to have a volunteer to model participation if no one initially wants to come forward. The game generally builds students' confidence and gives them a sense of satisfaction when they manage to complete the challenge.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Get students to stand in a circle - as small as possible.
2. Call out a category. It's nice to have a mix of categories that relate to a theme you've been studying in class (e.g. jobs, members of a family) and categories that don't require much language knowledge for lower level students (e.g. cities in Europe, footballers).
3. Somebody (it can be anybody) jumps into the centre of the circle.

VOLUNTEER'S ROLE

The volunteer acts as an enthusiastic participant. They don't need to know the game in advance to do this - the teacher can always ask them to have a go at naming five items in a category if no one else wants to go first. And if they can't think of five, that doesn't matter either - the teacher can always ask the students to shout out suggestions and it may make it less intimidating for the students who go next!

4. They then have to name five items in the category e.g. pizza, spaghetti, bread, apples, burger for 'type of food'. After each item they name, those on the outside of the circle say in unison 'one' 'two' 'three' etc. until they've counted up to five.
5. Then the circle claps the person in the middle who returns to the circle and a new category is suggested. Categories can be decided by the teacher or suggested by students or volunteer(s).

all levels

A1-C2



5-10 MIN

↕
Space needed to
move arround!

THE SUN SHINES ON ME

This is an energising game that can be used with students of all levels, as long as their mobility allows them to stand up and sit down from chairs.

It is useful as an activity with a group of students who don't know each other well and a chance for students to get to know each other, the teacher and the volunteer(s) as well.

Use your judgement on how long to continue the game.

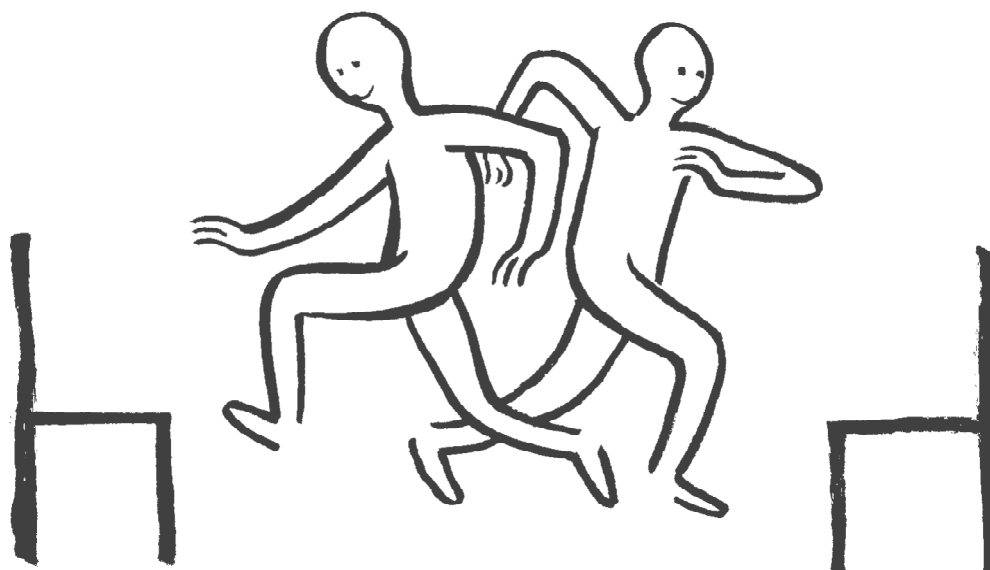
INSTRUCTIONS

1. Get students and your volunteer to sit in a circle.
2. Stand in the middle of the circle and say 'the sun shines on you if...' then finish the sentence e.g. '... you're wearing black shoes'; '...you walked here today' etc.

VOLUNTEER'S ROLE

The volunteer here simply supports the activity by being an enthusiastic participant. There's no preparation needed.

3. All the group members who this applies to then have to stand up from their chairs and swap places. At this point, sit down in one of the spare chairs. The person left standing in the middle of circle without a chair then has to think up a category using the phrase 'the sun shines on you if...'
4. Once this has happened a few times, introduce extra rules: you can't sit in the chair next to you and you can't sit back down in the same chair.



all levels

A1-C2



5-10 MIN

1-2-3

This is a fun activity that can be used to energise a group who has been doing something static or concentrated.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Get students to stand (if they're able) or sit opposite a partner. If there are odd numbers the volunteer can pair up with someone. It's also useful to use them to model the activity. If you have more than one volunteer, get volunteers to pair with students (not with one another).
2. Get a volunteer to model the activity with you for students. Stand opposite the volunteer and take turns to count up to three, repeating this a few times.
Teacher: One
Volunteer: Two
Teacher: Three
Volunteer: One
Teacher: Two...
3. Get students to do this in pairs for a minute or so.
4. Once students have got into a rhythm and got the hang of the alternate counting, get their attention again.

VOLUNTEER'S ROLE

The volunteer doesn't have to know this activity in advance, just be willing to let you demonstrate with them in front of the class. Pairing volunteers with students after the demonstration can help build rapport between them.

5. Ask students to decide who is A and who is B in their pair. new category is suggested. Categories can be decided by the teacher or suggested by students or volunteer(s).
6. Get As to put their hands up.
7. Get Bs to put their hands up.
8. Model the activity again with a volunteer. This time, replace the number 'one' with a gesture, movement or sound e.g. clap your hands as you count. Tell 'As' to start the counting with a gesture of their own.

9. Circulate to make sure everyone has understood instructions.
10. Get everyone's attention again. Tell Bs this time it's their turn to come up with a gesture, movement or sound to replace the number 'two'. Model this with the volunteer e.g.
Teacher: [claps hands]
Volunteer: [turns around on the spot]
Teacher: three

TIPS

- You could check with the volunteer that they're happy to demo.

all levels

A1-C2



5-10 MIN

*Space needed to
move around!*

GROUPS OF ...

This is a useful 'getting to know each other' activity. Involving the volunteer as a participant gives them a chance to build relationships with students by discovering things they have in common.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Get students up to stand or move away from their desks.
2. Ask students to form themselves into groups based on types of shoe. Participants negotiate the groups themselves - you don't give them categories.
3. Once groups are formed, get each group to announce to the rest of class what their category is e.g. sandals, shoes that are brown, lace up shoes etc.
4. Ask students to form into new groups based on another criteria e.g. language, pets, favourite music, hobbies, favourite food.
5. After two or three rounds, you could ask for suggestions from students as to what categories to try next.

TIPS

- It's useful if the volunteer takes a relatively back seat role in arranging and organising the groups but still shares about themselves - you could tell them this in advance if it seems necessary.

all levels

A1-C2



5-10 MIN

TRUE OR FALSE

This activity is a good 'getting to know each other' activity for a new group of students or when a new volunteer joins the class.

PREPARATION

Ask the volunteer in advance to prepare three statements of fact about themselves to present to the student.

Two statements should be true and one should be false - but it shouldn't be too obvious which one!

Tell the volunteer that this is a chance for students to get to know them better.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. The volunteer tells the students their three pre-prepared facts.
2. Students can then vote on which fact is false.
3. The volunteer reveals the truth.
4. Then ask students to do the same - write three facts about themselves, one of which is a lie.

VOLUNTEER'S ROLE

The volunteer models the exercise for students and also builds students' willingness to speak in front of the whole group by exposing themselves first.

5. Once students have prepared their facts, repeat the process: one student shares their statements with the class and everyone else (including the teacher and volunteer) vote on what they think is false.
6. After each student has revealed the truth, they can then nominate another student to go next.

TIPS

- Make sure the volunteer knows the purpose of this game: it's a chance for students to get to know them better.



all levels

A1-C2



5-10 MIN

Space needed to
move around!

PASS THE MIME

This is an energising and fun game. The pleasure in it isn't so much about who wins - it's more about the fun of (usually) watching the mime deteriorate and turn into something completely different! As such, don't emphasise who wins and loses too strongly.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Divide students or simply ask students to stand in two parallel lines. The students in both lines should be turned to form a queue and face in the same direction, towards the front of the room.
2. Tell students that they must stay standing in the line, facing the front of the room, until they feel a tap on their shoulder. Then they can turn around and will be shown a mime.
3. The game starts with the teacher or volunteer coming up with a mimed action e.g. brushing their hair, making a cake. They then tap the students at the back of each line on the back so they turn around. The teacher or volunteer shows these two students their mimed action (at the same time).

VOLUNTEER'S ROLE

It's useful having a volunteer for this game to balance out numbers. They can either take part as a participant or come up with the original mime while the teacher oversees proceedings.

4. The two participants at the back then turn around and tap the person in the line in front of them on the back and shows them the action they've been taught.
5. This process continues until the mime has been passed up the line all the way to students at the front.

6. The two students at the front then show everyone the mime they've been taught. The teacher or volunteer at the back shows the original mime. The teacher can then choose which team has 'won' based on which team's final mime best matches the original mime. Often much laughter ensues!

TIPS

- After the first round, students can take turns to be the person who comes up with the original mime. This means that the volunteer will definitely get to join in the game as a participant.
- This game can be tricky to explain at first, so it's very useful to have a volunteer involved who knows the game and can help model how to participate.

all levels

A1–C2



10 MIN

15 WORD STORY

This exercise aims to build vocabulary and bring awareness to intonation, word stress and the fact that successful communication doesn't always need lots of words! It can be used as a warm up or an energiser in between other activities.

PREPARATION

Prepare a list with 10 given words to use. These should be simple words from different categories like nouns or verbs: man, woman, love, go, time, now, just... There are 5 blank spaces for students to add their own words. These words can be anything the students choose.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. The goal of the exercise is for students to write a story using only the 15 words. They're not allowed to use other words or alter the words in any way. Incorrect grammar and missing words are not only allowed, but inevitable. A story could look like this: Man love woman. Woman go away, etc.

VOLUNTEER'S ROLE

Volunteers can walk around while the students write and check if the 15 word rule is followed and if not, remind students to use 15 words only.

2. The teacher should point out at the beginning that this is a fun exercise to play with words and that the story is what is important, not the missing words and/or grammar mistakes. A lot can be told using 15 words only!
3. Once students have prepared their stories, they are read out aloud and applauded.

4. Debrief / follow up options: these stories can be made into coherent and "correct" texts by adjusting the endings or adding extra words within a small group as a follow up activity. A debrief could include each story being described and expanded on by other students:

Is this story sad or funny?
Who is this man/woman?
Can we give him/her a name?
What happens next?

all levels

A1–C2



20 MIN

MIMING AN ACTION

Target group: language learners of all ages

Group size: 8 and up

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Students (individually or in pairs) get one minute of preparation time to think about the situation they want to mime. Objects are not allowed! Everything should be mimed using the body alone.
2. Before the activity starts, the teacher should agree with the group gestures to show 'yes', 'no' and 'almost'. The teacher could teach these, or could agree them based on students' suggestions.
3. Once students have prepared their mime, they demonstrate their mime to the rest of the group.
4. The other participants sit in a circle around the student(s) and ask them questions: Are you brushing your teeth? Are you driving a car? The student(s) performing don't reply, but instead answer with gestures for "yes" "no" or "almost" (e.g. nodding, shaking head, shaking head from side to side).

VOLUNTEER'S ROLE

While the activity is taking place, the volunteer can write down the questions that come up during the exercise on the board (and correct them after the exercise, if necessary).

TIPS

- Tell the volunteer to write the questions verbatim on the board during the process, rather than correcting as they go.

