

ACTIVE USE OF CARDS IN THE EFL CLASS

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The main objective of the techniques suggested here is to provide EFL teachers with some ideas on how to make a dynamic use of cards in the EFL setting so that their students can practice the English language in interesting and challenging situations. Each activity suggested consists of four phases: Materials, Procedure, Language Items and Follow-up. In the "materials" section of the techniques I suggest the use of hand-outs and cards. The latter should be made of thin cardboard paper, 12 cm x 8 cm in size. In the "procedure" stage I describe the way the strategies should be handled to get the most out of them. I also recommend some cue words in scrambled order so that the students can organize them to ask questions. Additional questions for conversation

practice are also included. Naturally, these are only suggestions, the teacher and his students may very well come up with their own ideas and quiries. The "Language Items" part includes some of the grammar points and/or lexical items that can be incorporated through the exercises. It should be noticed though, that my main concern is not to teach grammar, this should become a means to reach the goals of communication set up by the teacher. Of course, he may want to organize and/or adapt the contrivances so as to touch upon the items that need to be practiced. Finally, the "Follow-up" section contains some hints that can be of help for further practice of the material dealt with.

LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH MATHEMATICS

a. Materials.

A hand- out per group. The following is a part of a sample sheet for this exercise.

Instructions : Next you have a series of additions. Please write in front of each number a word which contains the number of letters dictated by it. The words given should bear some sort of relationship. For the sake of clarity the following additions illustrate this. To join the words of an addition to those of other you can use whatever words are required.

4 Mary	3 she
2 is	5 stays
1 a	2 at
7 student	4 home
14 Mary is a student	2 on
	8 weekends
	24 she stays at home on weekends.

Joining the two sentences we may have something like this :
 "Mary is a student but she stays at home on weekends".

Now, try the following :

3	8
5	3
2	3
3	3
<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
18	21

b. Procedure.

The students are arranged in groups, and receive a sheet like the previous one. They are to work as rapidly and accurately as possible. When they have finished forming the sentences, a student from each group goes to the board and writes some of the sentences they made. Students from other groups should do the same until all the sentences have been written on the board, for there may very well be various possible sentences for each addition.

Cue words :

- Finished - sentence - one ?
- start - why - don't - addition - second ?
- explain - sentence - three ?
- math - like ?
- think - we'll - first - exercise - finish ?

Additional Questions for Conversation :

- Are you good at Mathematics ?
- Which Math operation is the hardest for you ? why ?
- Why is Math a very useful subject ?

- Besides Math, in which other fields are numbers useful ?

Illustrate your answer with examples.

- Did you like this exercise ?

c. Language Items.

To review coordinating conjunctions and prepositions in general ; perfect tenses ; the future tense with will ; other and another; the superlative form of adjectives ; the morpheme of the third person singular present tense.

d. Follow - up.

The students are divided into pairs. Then they choose a sentence from those supplied in the procedure stage and develop a dialogue around it. They should be advised to focus their conversation contrasting what the sentence says and what their personal ideas, situation, etc. are. Next is a dialogue which exemplifies this :

- SA : The sentence reads 'Mary is a student but she stays at home on weekends'.
And what about you ? What do you do on weekends ?
SB : Well, I I also And what about you ?
SA : I

LEARNING ABOUT ANIMALS

a. Materials.

A hand-out per group. Next is a sample sheet for this exercise.

Instructions : Below is a series of incomplete sentences. Under them is a list of words in scrambled order. Select the proper words to fill in the blanks correctly. You can write the same word in two or more blanks if necessary.

..... live in
..... live in
..... live in
..... live in
..... live in
..... like to eat
..... like to eat
..... like to eat
..... like to eat
..... like to eat
..... has a long
The has a long
The has a
The has a long
The has strong

giraffe - fields - vegetables - fish - water -
hump - tail - neck - cows - monkeys - very
cold countries - fish - caves - dogs - trees -
stork - paws - elephant - bats - birds - hay -
penguins - rabbits - camel - trunk - seeds -
meat - tiger.

and the students begin to work as rapidly
and as accurately as possible.

Cue words : - like - animals ?
- bats - live - ?
- horses - eat - ?
- seen - you - giraffe - ?
- could - draw - penguin - ?

b. Procedure.

The class is split into groups. Next each team receives a page like the previous one

Additional Questions for Conversation :

- Why are animals useful ?
- What is your favorite animal ? Why ?
- Some animal species are dying away. What should man do to avoid this ?
- Do you like wild or tame animals ? why ?
- Which animal runs the fastest ? The slowest ?

c. Language Items.

The do auxiliary ; wh words ; perfect tenses ; modals can and could ; some two-word verbs as die out and die away ; present

progressive ; superlative form of adjectives ; verbs in their simple form joined by to, i. e. like to eat ; use and omission of the definite article ; vocabulary concerning the animal world.

d. Follow - up.

The students are organized in groups. They then receive a paper which includes pictures of various animals, i.e. a horse, a cow, a giraffe, etc. Next they are to think of similarities and differences among the animals. A student from each group is to read out loud for the whole class the comparisons made, i. e.

Similarities :

The horse, the cow and the giraffe have four legs.
The horse, the cow and the giraffe have a tail.
The horse, the cow and the giraffe are all mammals, etc.

Differences :

The cow has an udder but the horse doesn't.
The monkey has nails but the horse has hooves.
The giraffe has a long neck but the horse doesn't.

IF I WERE

a. Materials.

A card per student. Each card bears on one side the clause "If I were". On the other side it includes a series of lexical items, in list form, i. e.

a car
a tree
a plane
a house
a dog, etc.

they wish, i.e. "If I were a car, I would cover long distances rapidly and effortlessly." "If I were a plane, I would go to various places all over the world". When the groups are done with their sentences, a student from each team, reads out loud for the whole class the work done by his teammates.

Cue words :

- travel - like - ?
- travel - how - you - ?
- often - travel - ?
- usually - travel - who - ?
- expensive - travel - ?

b. Procedure.

Groups are organized to perform this task. The students receive their cards. At this point, they are told to complete the clause "If I were" with the various options given. They can make as many sentences as

Additional Questions for Conversation :

- Which is the most common system of transportation in Colombia ? Why ?

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of travelling by bus? by plane? by train?
- Do you think the systems of transportation are safe in our country? Explain your answer.
- What is your favorite system of transportation? Why?
- Who do you think are the people who travel the most in the world? Explain your answer.

c. Language items.

If clauses to express conditions contrary to fact; the modal would; the subjunctive mood; prepositions over, to, in, by; Wh question words; frequency words; the superlative form of adjectives; possessive adjectives, attributive adjectives, indefinite article a/an; prepositions followed by verbs in the ing form, as in of travelling.

d. Follow - up.

The students are arranged in pairs. Next each student receives a card, which reads as follows:

"Suppose you were to become an object or an animal. Below is a list of options from which you can make your choice.

a car
a radio
a horse
a plant

Now discuss with your partner the reasons that moved you to make your decision. When finished with your questions, exchange roles with your peer.

WHEN YOU ARE WHAT DO YOU THINK OF ?

a. Materials.

A card per student. Each card bears the question "When you are what do you think of?"

b. Procedure.

The students form pairs. Next each student receives a card like the one previously described. At this point, the teacher tells his students that they are to think of words to complete the question given on the card. He may want to give an example to lead his students, i. e. "When you are sad, what do you think of?". Each student is to write as many questions as possible without letting his peer see what he's writing. Then, each student poses his questions for his partner to answer.

Cue words : - sad - think of - when - you -
what - are - ?
-sad - you - always - ?
-people - sad - become -why- ?
- sad - do - you - when - what?
- antonym - what - sad - ?

Additional Questions for Conversation

- What do you think people should do to avoid becoming sad?
- Why do you think people become sad sometimes?
- Do you think sadness helps people discover their personal weaknesses?
- Who can help sad people?
- Can you think of other words that mean about the same as sad?

c. Language items.

Wh question words; the do auxiliary; use of else after wh words; some with count and non-count nouns; the verb to think followed by the prepositions of and about; noun adjuncts; vocabulary regarding states of mood.

d. Follow-up.

The students continue working in pairs. Then, the teacher asks them to choose one of the questions dealt with in the procedure stage and supply as many answers as possible t, i. e.

SA : When you are thirsty, what do you think of ?

SB : Well, I think of some water.

SA : What else do you think of ?.

SB : I also think of