

500 Activities for the primary classroom

How to use art and craft activities

Art and craft activities can be used for a range of purposes, for example, to practise counting (7.4) or telling the time (7.20), to play language practice games (e.g. 7.3, 7.5, 7.13) to memorise and recall vocabulary (e.g. 7.2, 7.6) as well as to reinforce grammar and encourage children to notice particular language forms (e.g. 7.18, 7.19). They can also be used in role plays (e.g. 7.11, 7.17), to act out stories (e.g. 7.13, 7.14), to personalise learning (e.g. 7.1) and to develop creative thinking skills (7.7, 7.15). Some general tips for using art and craft activities in English lessons are as follows:

Before children start

- Prepare an example of the art or craft activity children are going to do and show it to the class. As well as being motivating for the children, this also ensures you know how it is made.
- Explain the reason and purpose for doing the art and craft activity e.g. We're going to make a ... in order to ...
- Make sure children have available any materials they will need e.g. scissors, crayons, glue.

Using art or craft in a language activity

- Explain the game or activity and demonstrate this with the whole class using the cut-out or model you have made.
- Check the children understand what they have to do.
- Divide the class into pairs or groups depending on the activity.
- Set a time limit if appropriate.
- Monitor the children in order to make sure they are using English and to give help and advice where necessary.
- Observe the children as they work and make any relevant notes.
- Let the children enjoy using their cut-outs to interact in English and remember that a reasonable level of noise is natural for communication to take place.
- Stop the activity before the children's interest peaks.

Make a spinner

Level: A1.1, A1.2

Age: 6 –12

Classroom organisation: individual; pairs

Aims: To follow instructions; to practise specific vocabulary or language pattern; to interact and take turns in simple games or other activities

Language focus: in the examples: colours (i), numbers (ii), any relevant vocabulary (iii) and iv), questions (v) Alternatives Any relevant language and vocabulary

Materials: Essential: stiff card, rulers, scissors, crayons, pencils / Optional: copies of spinner shape on stiff card (one for each child); sticky labels

Procedure: Explain to the children that they are going to make a spinner and show them the example you have prepared. Give out the card. With older children, explain and demonstrate on the board that they should draw a circle and then divide this into six segments which they should then make into triangles. They should then cut off the card round the edges to make the shape of the spinner with six straight sides and colour, write or draw on the different segments of the spinner depending on the activity they are going to do (see examples below). When they have done this, they should make a hole in the centre of the spinner and put a pencil through. The spinner is now ready to use.

Some examples of ways in which spinners can be used are as follows:

i) Primary colours spinner: Children colour alternate segments of the spinner e.g red and yellow / blue and yellow / red and blue. In pairs they then take turns to spin their spinners and identify the colours e.g. a red and yellow spinner looks orange when you spin it, a blue and yellow spinner looks green etc.

ii) Numbers spinner: Children write numbers 1-6 on their spinner. They can then use the spinner as an alternative to a dice in board games (e.g. 5. 28) or dice games (see 5.21)