

Macmillan Books for Teachers

Welcome to the Macmillan Books for Teachers series. These books are for you if you are a trainee teacher, practising teacher or teacher trainer. They help you to:

- develop your skills and confidence
- reflect on what you do and why you do it
- inform your practice with theory
- improve your practice
- become the best teacher you can be

The handbooks are written from a humanistic and student-centred perspective. They offer:

- practical techniques and ideas for classroom activities
- key insights into relevant background theory
- ways to apply techniques and insights in your work

The authors are teachers and trainers. We take a 'learning as you go' approach in sharing our experience with you. We help you reflect on ways you can facilitate learning, and bring your personal strengths to your work. We offer you insights from research into language and language learning and suggest ways of using these insights in your classroom. You can also go to <http://www.onestopenglish.com> and ask the authors for advice.

We encourage you to experiment and to develop variety and choice, so that you can understand the how and why of your work. We hope you will develop confidence in your own teaching and in your ability to respond creatively to new situations.

Adrian Underhill

Titles in the series

<i>Beyond the Sentence</i>	Scott Thornbury
<i>Children Learning English</i>	Jayne Moon
<i>Discover English</i>	Rod Bolitho & Brian Tomlinson
<i>Learning Teaching</i>	Jim Scrivener
<i>Sound Foundations</i>	Adrian Underhill
<i>Teaching Practice</i>	Roger Gower, Diane Phillips & Steve Walters
<i>Teaching Reading Skills</i>	Christine Nuttall
<i>Uncovering Grammar</i>	Scott Thornbury
<i>700 Classroom Activities</i>	David Seymour & Maria Popova

Introduction

This book contains over 700 activities for EFL and ESOL students, and is intended to cover all the important topics, functions and structures from elementary to upper-intermediate level. The majority of activities included here are short and to the point, giving the teacher an opportunity to provide on-the-spot practice, either when the planned materials have proved insufficient, or when a change of focus is needed. They can also be included in normal lesson planning. This is an invaluable resource for experienced and inexperienced teachers, and is unique in that the activities require no preparation. All that is needed is a quick look through the chosen activity to check the language involved and to estimate the time needed. *700 Classroom Activities* is the ideal tool for teachers who appreciate the importance of reacting to students' needs, as and when they arise.

How to use this book

700 Classroom Activities is divided into four sections: conversation, functions, grammar and vocabulary. The activities within these sections are organised into categories that are arranged alphabetically, so that using the book is a simple matter of turning to the appropriate page for the topic in hand. There is an index at the back of this book, where the main references are in bold. There are also references to activities in which the topic is covered incidentally.

The activities fall into four main categories:


- The teacher prompts students with questions, key words or phrases.
- Cues are written on the board. This can either be done while students are engaged in the previous task, or they can be elicited during the presentation.
- The activity is instigated by means of a short dictation, or through the allocation of roles to individuals or groups.
- A project is assigned to individual students and they make preparations outside the class for an activity to be carried out in the next lesson.

The majority of activities are written as if spoken directly to the student. The language is not graded for lower levels because of the need to keep the instructions clear and concise for the teacher, so sometimes they will need simplifying. Instructions to the teacher are written in brackets. There is sometimes more than one activity under each heading. The start of each activity is indicated with a ►.

Grading

The level of difficulty is suggested next to each activity heading with shading on the corresponding level icon (E for Elementary, P for Pre-intermediate, I for Intermediate and U+ for Upper-intermediate). The range is wider for conversation topics, where the teacher can usually grade the language according to the class. It is more restricted for grammar topics, where structures are targeted at specific levels.

The danger sign

There are some topics in this book which may offend particularly sensitive or easily embarrassed students, and others which might lead to antagonism between students with potentially conflicting opinions. These topics have been marked . It is at the teacher's discretion to decide whether or not these activities are appropriate.

Timing

No timing has been given for any of the activities; the size of the class, the enthusiasm of students for conversation topics and their aptitude for grammatical structures will determine how long an activity takes. It is also up to the teacher to determine how far an activity should go, especially where there is a list of questions or cue words which do not necessarily have to be fully exploited.

Projects

These are assigned to students to work on outside the classroom, either for feedback in a subsequent lesson, or leading into a classroom activity. Many projects, and some other activities, require research on the Internet. These are marked (www).

Focus

Most activities have two or more parts, usually with a different focus in each – pairs, groups, open class, etc. – and often using different skills. Where activities begin with questions, these are in open class unless otherwise stated. Similarly, feedback is held in open class at the end of activities. Unless a special focus is required, no specific instruction is given to the teacher to conduct a feedback session; it should happen as a matter of course.

It is always good to vary the focus, to have students working together in different combinations and, at some stage during the course, with every other student. This book encourages different groupings and students should get used to moving from one place to another, as well as mingling in the middle of the room. Wherever space permits it is advisable to have the seats and tables in a horseshoe. When putting students together in groups these should be as diverse as possible, with students from different backgrounds and with different interests sharing experiences and opinions through English. In mixed nationality classes there is the obvious advantage of being able to exploit the diversity of cultures for encouraging a great deal of information exchange. Students also benefit from the relative strengths in English that different language speakers have.

When teachers get to know their students well they will identify experiences and abilities in certain students that they would like to encourage them to talk about. There are stages to many activities which involve groups interviewing an individual. This is usually at the end of an activity.

Team games are an integral part of many activities and they enable the kind of friendly competitiveness that increases students' emotional involvement in the lesson, and therefore their receptiveness. They are also *great fun*. In team work, and other group activities, it is important to make sure that one student does not dominate, either by saying too much during conversations, or by giving too many answers during games. If one student dominates, ask him/her not to give any more answers until everybody else in the team has had a go.

Written instructions

It is usually a good idea to write up the title of the activity at the outset, as a way of leading into the topic, and sometimes the first question to the class is about the title itself. Occasionally, however, the main point of the activity is intended to be kept secret until a later stage. In these instances, which will be obvious to the teacher, the title is not written up.

Where written cues are needed, these are kept short to reduce writing up time. A few examples and sentences require a bit more writing, and this can be done while the class is involved in the previous activity or stage. Students can also copy sentences as they are written, and these can include gaps to be filled in so that students are making decisions as they write.

Conversation

Accommodation

E P I U

My house

► In pairs, tell each other about the place you live. Is it a flat or a house? Do you rent it? Describe your favourite room.

Tell your partner about an interesting place you have lived, e.g. *I used to live on a boat / in a tent ...*

► Brainstorm some different kinds of accommodation and think of an adjective to describe each one, e.g. *palace – luxurious*.

► In small groups, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of living in these places.

basement flat, high-rise flat, hotel, caravan, cave, tree house

E P I U

Flatmates

In pairs, imagine you are looking for someone to share your flat. Write a newspaper advertisement including information about the room, the flat and a contact number. Make sure you both have a copy of the ad.

Swap partners with another pair and role-play this telephone conversation.

Student A, you have put an advertisement for a flatmate in the local paper. However, in order to save money you kept it short: 'Room to rent. Call 020 876 1421.'

Student B, you are looking for a room. Ask student A about the room, the flat, the other tenants, the rent and any rules.

Swap roles, and role-play the conversation again.

What problems can happen between flatmates? (Brainstorm ideas with the class about these issues.)

housework, money, TV, music, bathroom, telephone, friends, food

Imagine you went ahead with the tenancy. It is now six months later and you are fed up with living together. In your pairs, role-play an argument. Try to sort out your differences.

E P I U

Ideal home

In small groups, design your dream home and garden. Include information about rooms, decor, furniture, equipment, facilities, location and staff. Prepare a short presentation to the class. If there is an artist in the group, get him/her to do some illustrations.

Have a class vote for the best house.

E P I U

Projects

► Visit a stately home website and make notes about it to bring to the next lesson. Describe the home to the class.

► Find a house for sale on the Internet, print out the description and bring it to the class. In pairs, role-play a conversation between the estate agent and a prospective buyer.

Animals

Animal talk

In groups of three or four, discuss these questions.

What's your favourite animal? Why?	Have you ever had a pet? Tell us about it.
Do you prefer cats or dogs? Why?	How do people treat animals in your country?
What animals do you eat?	What do you think of blood sports?

Animal extremes

In pairs, agree on an animal to fit each of these descriptions.

the biggest, the most beautiful, the most dangerous, the fastest, the slowest, the most unusual, the cuddliest, the ugliest, the smelliest, the friendliest
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Compare your ideas with another pair.

Animal expressions

► In small groups, explain these idiomatic expressions.

He's a wolf in sheep's clothing.	I've got a frog in my throat.
I feel like a fish out of water.	She's got ants in her pants.
That's let the cat out of the bag.	He's the black sheep of the family.

► In small groups, make up endings for these proverbs.

The early bird (catches the worm).	Don't look a gift horse (in the mouth).
Monkey see, (monkey do).	Don't count your chickens (before they're hatched).
Let sleeping dogs (lie).	When the cat's away, (the mice will play).

I'm going to read the real endings, out of sequence. Write them down and decide which expressions they fit. Discuss what the proverbs mean.

Do you have animal proverbs in your language? Explain some to the class.

Animal stories

In small groups, brainstorm a few of the pros and cons of the following: keeping animals in zoos; modern livestock farming and pest control. In your groups, choose one of these writing tasks. Appoint one person to do the writing.

the thoughts of an elephant in a zoo, including an account of how he ended up there the script of a conversation between a sheep and a pig on a farm an account of the day-to-day life of a mouse living in your kitchen
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Crime and punishment

Victims of crime

Have you, or anybody you know, ever been the victim of a crime? In pairs, tell your partner what happened.

Punishment

In pairs, decide on appropriate penalties for these crimes.

mugging, joyriding, vandalism, rape, shoplifting, murder, drink driving, manslaughter

Compare your answers with another pair. Then write a list of factors that make a crime more serious and those that make a crime less serious, e.g. homeless person stealing food.

Neighbourhood watch

There has been an increase in crime in your neighbourhood, especially violent crime and car crime. You are going to attend a meeting to decide what to do.

Prepare for the meeting in pairs. Discuss your ideas and make notes.

Pair A, you are:

The local MP – You represent the government's new 'get tough on crime' policy.

The local chief of police – You believe in zero tolerance towards criminals.

Pair B, you are:

A local youth worker – You want more money for community projects and you believe that prevention is better than punishment.

An ex-criminal – You are now working to help reformed criminals.

Pair C, you are:

The leader of the local tenants' association – You want a safer environment for the tenants.

A reporter from the local newspaper – You want find out the views of all concerned.

Pairs A, B and C, join to form groups of six. Role-play the meeting.

(If the class does not divide into groups of six, extra students can join pair C as reporters or local residents or act as chairperson to manage the meeting.)

Big bad wolf?

Who knows the story of Little Red Riding Hood? Form groups with those who do not and tell them the story. (If no one knows it, tell the class yourself and then ask for a summary.)

Write a few adjectives to describe Little Red Riding Hood and a few to describe the wolf.

Here is some evidence that suggests the wolf was not the criminal but the victim.

The wolf has been found murdered. He was shot three times, skinned and dumped in the river with his stomach full of stones. When Little Red Riding Hood was arrested she had the wolf's coat on and was carrying a gun. The grandmother has disappeared.
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Work in groups of three. Role-play the police interview with Little Red Riding Hood.

Students A and B, you are police officers and you want a confession.

Student C, you are Little Red Riding Hood. Deny everything and give an alibi. Explain how you came to have the coat and gun.

Police officers, report back to the class. What was Little Red Riding Hood's explanation? Are you going to charge her? If so, has she got anything to say before she's charged?

Capital punishment

Do you agree with the saying 'An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth'?

Work in two groups: those in favour of capital punishment, and those against it. Prepare your arguments for a class debate. Appoint one person to speak first for your group, and another to speak second. The others should help with the arguments and listen for problems with the other group's arguments. (Put anyone who is undecided in the smaller of the two groups. You could also ask a student to chair the debate.)

Organised crime

Is there a powerful crime organisation in your country? What is it called and what kinds of activity is it involved in? Does it have any influence in government? Why is organised crime so powerful in some countries and not in others?

Work in two groups, A and B.

Group A, you are the leaders of the main global crime organisations. Brainstorm ideas to improve your power and profit.

Group B, you are the leaders of the police forces of the most powerful countries. Brainstorm ideas to help reduce the power of organised crime.

Compare ideas as a class with students in Group A taking it in turns to call out one of their ideas for students in Group B to try and counteract, e.g.

A – *We're going to smuggle more into the country through the ports.*

B – *Well, we've decided to increase security and the number of random checks at all ports.*

Project

Visit a website on the subject of crime, e.g. the FBI's ten most wanted website. Make notes on what you find out for a presentation to the class.

Culture

Culture clash

► What are the advantages and disadvantages of life in a multicultural city? What does the proverb 'When in Rome do as the Romans do' mean? Do you agree with it?

► In groups, discuss the differences between cultures using these topics.

festivals, family, weddings, religion, language, gestures, music, food, art, alphabet, clothing, famous people

► What happens when different cultures meet? Think of positive examples, e.g. the Moorish influence on Spain.

Customs and traditions

► In small groups, discuss what you know about these festivals.

Carnival, Easter, Guy Fawkes Night, Chinese New Year, Eid, Diwali, Christmas, Thanksgiving, Passover, Pancake Day

Find a partner from another group. Did his/her group know anything that your group didn't?

► In small groups, ask each other about your own countries, or other countries you know well. What is the national ...?

dish, sport, dress, drink, music, monument

(If it's a single nationality class, answer questions about the UK/USA. Then ask students to work in groups and write sentences about another country. Allocate a different country to each group. Ask them to read out their sentences and see if the other groups can guess the country.)

High culture

► What cultural activities do you take part in?

In pairs, tell each other about what you do and the places you go, e.g. cinemas, theatres, galleries, museums, etc. (Ask students to specify films, plays and exhibitions.)

► Mingle with the rest of the class and find out everyone's favourite painting, building and piece of music. Note down the name of anyone who shares your opinion. Did anyone find someone with the same three favourites?

Education

My school

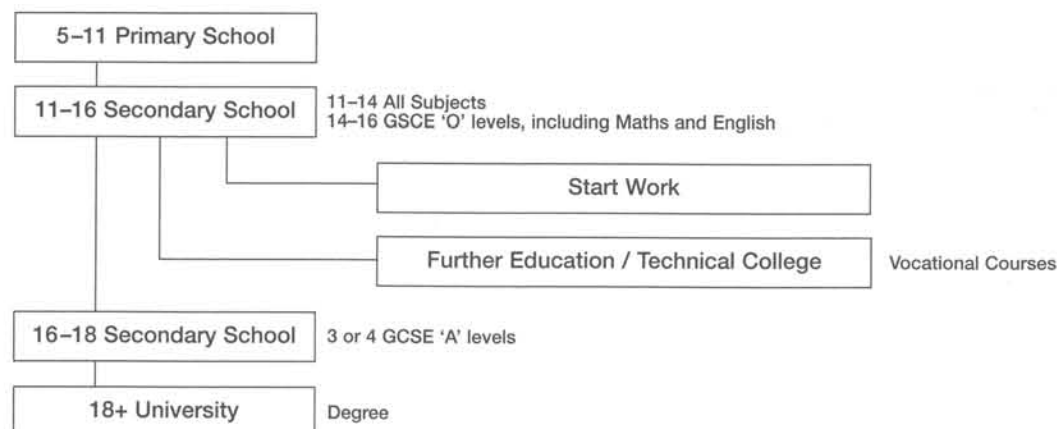
In groups, tell each other about a school you went to as a child.

where it was, a teacher you admired, a teacher you detested, a good friend, your favourite subjects, your best/worst subjects, a memorable day

Would you send your child to the same school? Why (not)?

English school system

What are the stages of the English school system? (Draw the chart on the board and elicit as much as possible from the class.)



In small groups, compare the English school system with the system in your country, including subjects, fees, age ranges, degree length, etc.

Discipline

► How do you think disobedient and disruptive schoolchildren should be disciplined? In groups, decide on the best methods.

corporal punishment, lines, discussion, expulsion, detention, parents, young offender institutions / reform schools, privileges, child psychologist

► In groups, tell each other about something bad that you, or somebody you know, did at school. What was the punishment? Was there anybody at your school who was particularly disruptive or delinquent? Do you know what happened to him/her in later life?

Study skills

In pairs, compare the way you study, including these categories.

notes, filing, dictionaries, other reference books, speaking in class, asking questions, handouts, vocabulary learning techniques

In small groups, discuss the advice you would give to a student who wants to learn a new language. Agree on your top ten suggestions for effective study, e.g. *Keep a vocabulary notebook using different colours for different parts of speech. Ask the teacher if you do not understand something.*

Class contract

In small groups, make two lists of duties to help make a class effective: 1) students' duties; and 2) the teacher's duties, e.g. *The students must arrive on time. The teacher must correct written work within a week.* Compare your lists with the other groups.

Which duties should go in a class contract? (Elicit ideas and write them on the board.)

Projects (www)

Work with another student who would like to study the same subject as you. Visit a university or FE (Further Education) college website and print out some information. Find out about courses, fees, entry qualifications and other activities available for students.

Environment**Green manifesto**

► What are the main threats facing our environment? How can they be avoided?

In pairs, discuss these questions, comparing your experience of different countries.

What are the most well-known ecological threats? Are people environmentally conscious? Is there a Green Party? How is the rubbish dealt with? What recycling facilities are there?

► In groups, write a Green Party manifesto, giving your proposals for an environmentally friendly lifestyle.

Public consultation meeting

A paper factory is planned for your town, which is very beautiful but high in unemployment. There are concerns from the local community about pollution and the destruction of an ancient forest nearby.

In groups of eight, you are going to role-play a public consultation meeting to listen to local views. (Allocate these roles. If the class does not divide into groups of eight, drop one or two of the roles.)

In favour of the factory: the mayor, a representative of the paper company, the building contractor, an unemployed person.

Against the factory: a member of the Green Party, an environmental scientist, a local craftsman, a local hotel owner.

Before the meeting, discuss your arguments with the people who share your views, considering pollution, visual impact, tourism, jobs and effects on other businesses.

Role-play the meeting.

Eco-warrior

What is an 'eco-warrior'? What kind of issues do they fight for and how do they fight for them?

In pairs, imagine a motorway is being built through an area of outstanding natural beauty. How would you oppose it if you were an eco-warrior? What arguments would you make, and what arguments would you expect from the developer?

Role-play an interview between a journalist and an eco-warrior chained to a tree. Discuss the planned development, how long he/she has been there and what he/she plans to do when the bulldozers arrive.

Fashion**Fashion statements**

In small groups, briefly discuss these questions and choose someone to report the group's opinions and answers to the class.

Where do you buy your clothes?
 What is the most expensive garment you've ever bought?
 What is good and bad taste in clothes?
 Who is the best-dressed person in the class?
 Which countries are the most influential in fashion?
 What do you think of the fur trade?
 What famous designers do you know about?
 What is a 'fashion statement'?
 Do you ever make your own clothes?
 What piece of clothing would you most like to buy?
 What piece of clothing would you most hate to wear?
 Is fashion important? Why (not)?
 What do clothes tell you about the person wearing them?

Uniforms

Why do people wear uniforms? Have you ever worn one? Tell us when it was, and why you wore it. How is a uniform different from a dress code? What is 'dressing down'?

Here is a list of people who dress in a particular way. Describe how they dress. Can you think of any more?

B boys (Hip Hop), grunge kids, ravers, new age people, goths, surfers, punks

In small groups, discuss why these groups dress as they do. What messages are they trying to send?

Clothes lines

In groups, discuss the meaning of these sayings.

Keep it under your hat.	I wear the trousers in this family.
We'll have to tighten our belts.	She's got a bee in her bonnet.
Keep your shirt on.	He was caught with his pants down.
Put yourself in my shoes.	He's too big for his boots.

Tell the rest of the class some clothes sayings from your country.