



Best Practice -
Best Language Teaching Methods



The PhyEmoC Method **MANUAL**



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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The PhyEmoC (Physical – Emotional – Cultural) Method is based on a combination of principles included both in the Audio – Lingual and Cognitive –Code Learning Approaches. Some of its basic principles are:

- the new language is learned through imitation and analogy
- allowing the students to make minor mistakes is permitted for the sake of fluency; major mistakes must be corrected immediately; they must be discussed at the end of the activity
- the student's creative involvement in the learning process is more important than the avoiding of errors
- listening and speaking are the primary activities; reading and writing are secondary
- students must practice the patterns of the new language through intensive drills such as dialogues and pattern practice drills (repetition, substitution, transformation, etc.)
- associating words with thought and action must be used to guide the students out of their possible dependence on pre-fabricated language material
- as soon as the students have mastered a given pattern this must be used in conversation sessions
- if the group of students is bored or uninterested in a scheduled activity, this must be immediately changed with a new one
- advanced students can be used as group leaders and encouraged to develop activities according to the instructions and under the constant supervision of the teacher
- use of the student's native language should be completely avoided; they must use the new language to communicate
- acquiring skill in evaluating their own speech is important for the students progress in the process of learning the new language
- listening to what other students say during the class period helps them becoming their own critics; active listening (through eye contact, facial expression, posture and occasional rejoinders) must be trained and encouraged
- students must be stimulated to talk about their language, culture and civilization
- learning the common idioms of the new language is essential
- building a group spirit is essential; the teacher must make each student feel that he is also a member of the group
- use of the normal speed of speech is important; students must not be encouraged to speak very slowly; they will become unprepared for the normal pace of native speakers beyond the classroom



There are four major phases in the language learning process:

- 1) the completely manipulative phase;
- 2) the predominantly manipulative phase;
- 3) the predominantly communicative phase;
- 4) the completely communicative phase.

During the early stages of teaching and learning a new language the teacher is bound to maintain a fairly controlled situation in which the student interacts with the teacher and other students within the constraints imposed by their limited knowledge of the new language.

During the latter stages the control is gradually removed until it is eliminated altogether, and the students enter the realm of real communication.

Physical, emotional and cultural interaction in the process of learning a foreign language is considered essential since the method is based upon the natural process of acquiring the knowledge and skills that enable a two or three year old child to interact linguistically first of all with his/her parents and other members of the family, and with members of the community later on.

Creating the appropriate linguistic environment and selecting active ways of teacher-student, student-teacher and student-student interaction are, therefore, the main and permanent tasks of the teacher who chooses to use such a method.

Dramatic techniques, debates and role-playing activities are combined with games, songs, poems, proverbs and sayings. Competition is constantly encouraged because it adds physical, emotional and intellectual challenge to the process of learning the foreign language and prepares students for real life competition.

Learning the most important elements of the culture and civilization of the country whose language is learned are also seen not only as necessary but also as essential for the students of a foreign language. Intercultural exchange and use of information in groups formed of students belonging to various cultures broaden the horizon of general knowledge of the students and become an important part of their intellectual background.

The choice of suggested activities is up to each teacher and it must take into consideration the level of linguistic competence of his/her students, the four phases of the foreign language learning process, as well as the rich material provided by the suggested links.

The individual experience of the teacher, no less than the characteristics of each group of students involved in the process of learning a new language are important elements, which can contribute to the success of the PhyEmoC Method.



In the manipulative phase of language learning, dialogues are very often used. As a result, students spend much time repeating dialogues for pronunciation and memorization practice, or for grammar drills on selected lines. According to Julia M. Dobson¹ there are six common dialogue types:

➤ *Type one* focuses on a common, everyday situation, such as buying clothes, discussing sports, or going to a movie. It simply shows what people would say when involved in such a situation. For example:

A: Let's play tennis.

B: It's too hot. Besides, my racquet is broken.

A: I can lend you one of mine.

B: Well, all right.

A: If we leave now, we can get a court.

B: O.K. But I don't feel like playing more than one set

¹ Julia M. Dobson – *Effective Techniques for English Conversation Groups* – Newbury House Publishers, 1974



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- *Type two* revolves around a specific grammar point. For example:
 - A: How long have you lived in Washington D.C.?**
 - B: Three years. How long have you lived here?**
 - A: Let's see – we moved from New York to Washington in 1952. We've been here since 1952!**
 - B: That's more than twenty years. You've been here for a long time!**
- *Type three* clarifies the meaning of a specific word or expression. For example:
 - A: What do you call the powder used in water to make clothes stiff?**
 - B: "Starch."**
 - A: Is there a verb "to starch?"**
 - B: Yes, you can say, "Please don't starch these shirts," for instance.**
 - A: That's what I need to know. I can't stand starch in my shirts**
- *Type four* expresses very strong emotion. For example:
 - A: Mary, I want to apologize for ...**
 - B: Don't bother! I don't want to talk to you!**
 - A: Just a minute. Please listen! I'm sorry I couldn't call you last night.**
 - B: Do you realize I waited three hours for you to call?**
 - A: It won't happen again! I promise you!**
 - B: Well... it better not!**
- *Type five* collects related vocabulary items. For example:
 - A: So this is where so much fruit is grown!**
 - B: Yes, the soil and climate are ideal for most fruits.**
 - A: During the fall you have apples, quince, pomegranates...**
 - B: ... And in the winter there are oranges, lemons, limes, tangerines and grapefruit.**
 - A: I suppose you have cherries, strawberries, plums, peaches, apricots, grapes, and melons in the summer.**
 - B: Yes, but we have no bananas. They grow along the coast where it's really hot.**
- *Type six* highlights specific cultural features or customs. For example:
 - A: How was the New Year's Eve party?**
 - B: It was lots of fun. We danced all evening and sang *Auld Lang Syne* just before midnight.**
 - A: Did you blow a paper horn and throw confetti when the clock struck twelve?**
 - B: Yes, everybody did. Then we went on dancing until 3 A.M.!**

The use of dialogues in the communicative phase of teaching a new language seems to decrease when students are ready to use language more creatively. There are, nevertheless, some ways to use them as important means to free communication and help the students to develop fluency in the new language. Here are some of them:

- alteration of typical dialogues to make them conform to the reality surrounding the teacher and his students; the teacher must insist that students give answers consistent with reality; “reality exercises” such as these, while still manipulative to a great extent, are a good start toward free expression;
- logical additions to dialogues; this kind of exercises challenges the students to express themselves in an imaginative way while remaining in the spirit and general form of the dialogue
- paraphrases of the lines of the dialogues; the students are stimulated this way to use their own words and structures within the framework of the dialogue situation; the teacher must ask a student to say something similar to the first line of the dialogue, then have another student respond with something similar to the second line of the dialogue but pertinent to what the first student said, and so on;
- after the students have become adept at paraphrasing they can be asked to ad-lib a paraphrase of the dialogue, each taking one of the parts and using the appropriate motions and gestures;
- improvisations; the teacher outlines a situation similar to the one in the dialogue and have two or more students perform the conversation completely on their own; this kind of exercise is most challenging and therefore is a good test of the students’ competence; situations must be written down or presented in language the students will readily understand; for example: you are in a good mood but your friend is in a bad mood; you try to cheer him/her up but he/she remains unhappy; or: you order soup in a restaurant and when the waiter brings it you see a fly in the soup; you are very annoyed and ask the waiter to bring you something else;
- as an alternative to using situations, the teacher can ask the students to imagine their own situations and perform them afterwards;
- use of a situation as an assignment for each student to write his/her own dialogue around this situation.

Question-answer patterns allow the students to pose questions. They must be used regularly because the students are tempted to spend too much time answering questions and relatively little time asking them. This often results in the development of a certain degree of psychological passivity. There are four major types of question-answer sequences that can be used for directed conversation practice:



1) One Question- a Single Statement Answer

When somebody asks a question, he/she often receives just a single statement in reply. This statement can be as short as “yes” or “no”, another single word, or a statement almost as long as the question itself. Many textbooks leave the impression that “long”, “complete” answers are the best and students are encouraged to give such answers for drill purposes. However, most languages have a natural tendency to use short answers. Students must be, therefore, encouraged to use short statements as much as possible. The variety of short answer forms specific to the new language must be taken into consideration. Students must be encouraged not to come up with the same sort of short answers all the time.

2) One Question – Multiple Statement Answers

The multiple statement reply is a common occurrence in normal conversation. Unfortunately, if students are left to their own devices, they frequently attempt to respond as briefly as possible. The teacher must avoid the short cuts that students want to take and ask them to answer a question with one statement and add another one which is factual and related to the first one. As the students become more competent in their replies the teacher can change the instructions with each question. Student A must give a two statement reply to the first question, student B must give a three statement reply to the second question, student C must give a four statement reply to the third question and the number of replies can decrease with the next questions. This provides students with more than a challenge, and soon they may be able to reply with multiple statements even when the teacher sets no controls Dialogues as the following may occur:

A: Where did you see Ann last evening?

B: I saw her in a bar. She was with her boy friend.

A: Dan, did you wake up early this morning?

B: No, I didn't. I wanted to but the alarm clock did not ring.

A: Paul, will you come to Mike's party?

B: Yes, I will. I'm looking forward to. I hear his parties are cool

3) One Question Deduced from Answer

A useful variation is to give the students a factual reply and have them deduce the question that would have produced such a reply. For example, the teacher or one of the students may say:

“Mary has a new pair of glasses”

Possible questions:

“Who has a new pair of glasses?”

“What does Mary have?”

“What kind of glasses does Mary have?”

“Mary has a new pair of glasses, doesn't she?”

“Are Mary's glasses old or new?”

“What is special about Mary today?”

4) Multiple Questions Drawn from a Single Statement

Students usually spend more of their time answering questions than asking questions. These exercises correct the imbalance in students' syntactic habits and promote facility in question formation.

To set up such an exercise, the teacher writes a true-to-life statement on the blackboard and asks the students produce as many questions as possible that are answerable by the information contained in the statement.

As an additional part of the exercise the teacher can have his students practice questions that require judgement of the situation described in the statement.

See also the following:

<http://www.btinternet.com/~ted.power/discland.html>

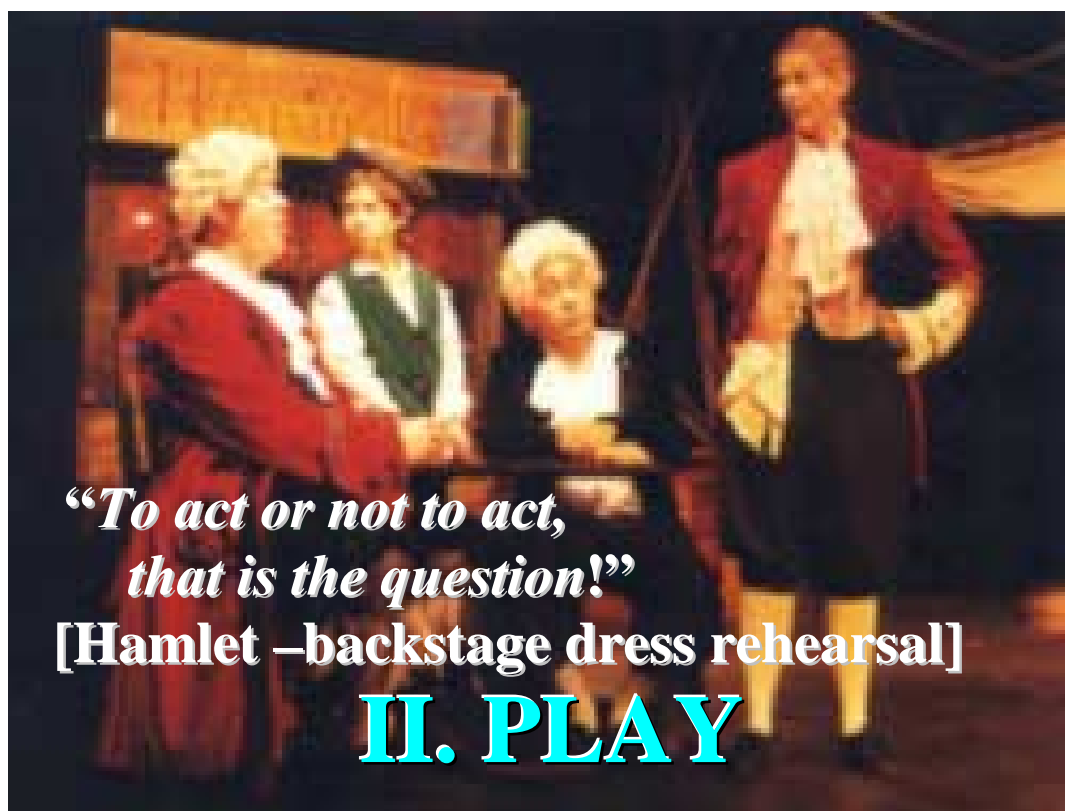
<http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/roleplaying/>

<http://www.cc.gatech.edu/~megak/7001/Roleplaying.html>

<http://webtools.cityu.edu.hk/news/newslett/learningwithrole.htm>

<http://www.darkshire.net/~jhkim/rpg/whatis/education.html>





If dialogues usually involve two students, a play is the interaction of several people in a role-playing situation. When the teacher has established a good group spirit the students may be more willing to try this kind of activity, and role-playing may turn into a great source of satisfaction for everyone, once initial reserve is dispelled.

Such activities require sufficient time to devote to the study, practice, and staging of a play. Generally speaking, plays require too much time to work with conveniently in just one class hour.

A good mastery of the new language is also necessary. However, role-playing helps students overcome the inhibitions of self-consciousness, which, more often than we may think, are the underlying obstacles in reaching the completely communicative phase of the new language.

It would appear that through impersonation, the students temporarily divest themselves of the responsibility for personal mistakes. One might say that, as they improve their ability to converse in the new language, the students gradually acquire almost a new personality. Julia M. Dobson² suggests the following steps in choosing and working with a given play:

- 1) “Select a short modern play – one that is a simple comedy or family drama.
- 2) See that each student receives a copy of the play. He can read it and look up any unfamiliar words at home.

² Julia M. Dobson – op. cit. p.5

- 3) Discuss the play in class. First make sure that everyone understands the structure and vocabulary. Then, analyze with the students, the setting of the play, the characters, the plot, and the author's message.
- 4) Seat the students in a circle. Assign roles and have them go through the play using the talk-and-listen system. In this system *only the person who is going to speak looks at his script*. The speaker looks at the script and reads the line to himself. Then he looks the appropriate character – the person to whom he is supposed to be speaking – and says as much of that line as he can remember. While he speaks he must be making eye contact with the other person, and that person must be looking at him, not reading the script. This will develop his interlocutor's comprehension. It also, eventually, will give his interlocutor a clue as to how he should respond. All the other people in the play should be listening too, rather than reading. When the speaker finishes, then everyone can look to see who speaks next. This method is extremely important because you can't be a good actor without listening to what the other person is saying and to the way he is talking to you.
- 5) Do not ask the students to memorize the play. Using the talk-and-listen system, the students can look at the beginning of the sentence and know what the line is. Eventually, they will put the script down, because they have already learnt the play. Although this method may take longer than traditional memorization, in the end the students benefit because they are not just reciting words. They are saying something meaningful to themselves and the audience.
- 6) Encourage the students to speak their lines with feeling. To do this, they must *get involved* in the situation. They should ask themselves, "How should I feel when I speak this line?" and "What do I expect the other person to do after I speak?"
- 7) Stage the play if you and the students can devote time to the project. Be prepared to contribute many hours and much effort to the undertaking, but rewards will be abundant in both practice of the new language and group spirit."

See also the following:

<http://www.realistatheatre.com/body.html>

<http://www.santamonicaplayhouse.com/educationaltheatre.html>

<http://www.jimmybrunelle.com/theatrelinks.html>

<http://www.ucsm.ac.uk/cacs/drama.php>





With groups of students who have reached fairly good level of knowledge and mastery of the new language debates can be organized. It is essential, however, for everybody to understand from the very beginning that such activities are not meant to improve the debating skills of the participants but practice in speaking the language. Students, on the other hand, will speak more fluently during a debate if they can represent their true feelings on an issue. Therefore, the teacher must have them defend their actual sentiments – everyone will find the debate more satisfying this way. The following suggestions may prove useful for the teachers in organizing a debate:

- describe the debate topic and ask which students would like to be “pro” and which “con”;
- select an equal number of students to speak on each of the debate “teams” (two to four students on each team usually work out the best);
- allow the students sufficient time to prepare their arguments; they can speak from notes but they should not read their whole presentation;
- have the two teams to sit in front of the class so that everyone can see them;
- appoint one member on each team as the “captain”; the captain will give his presentation first and summarize the team’s views at the end;
- set a time limit (three minutes, for example), for each presentation; alternate a presentation by a team A member with one by a team B member;

- after everyone has given his presentation and the captains have summoned up team views, class members in the audience can question students on either team. The teacher may also want to direct questions to team members;
- end the debate when the subject is exhausted or if the students get involved in heated argument;
- it is best not to have the audience vote on which team they found most impressive since this might touch on speakers' sensitivities.

In choosing the debate topic the teacher should find a subject that has elements of controversy but does not arouse uncontrollable passions. You may find some of the following subject appropriate for debates or find more suitable ones:

1. Television does more harm than good.
2. It is better to marry for love than for money.
3. No family should have more than two children.
4. The younger generation knows best.
5. Smoking is a bad habit.
6. Money is the most important thing in life.
7. Boys are better than girls.
8. Examinations are unnecessary and boring.
9. Living in a city is better than living in the countryside.
10. Computers are better than teachers.
11. Travel is the best education.
12. Fashion contributes much to my social success.
13. Civilization brings progress.
14. Experience is more important than education.
15. Old music is better than modern music.

See also the following:

<http://www.btinternet.com/~ted.power/dis00.html>

<http://www.youdebate.com/EDUCATION.htm>





Discussing aspects of the cultural background of each student can become one of the most productive activities in learning a new language. Students are apt to be fascinated by the ways in which other culture is similar to or different from his/her own. If you mention a specific feature of Romanian culture or any other culture and ask your group of students how this compares to features in their own culture, you will surely find several students so eager to answer that they will all start speaking at once. Experience has shown that teen-age students are especially interested in the following aspects of life:

1. Dances.
2. Eating habits.
3. Standard of living.
4. Professions
5. Drinking customs.
6. Student – teacher relationships.
7. Educational system.
8. Dating.
9. Movie - going.
10. Engagement and wedding customs.
11. Holidays.
12. Fashion.
13. Sports and games.
14. Festivals.
15. Free – time activities.
16. Goals in life
17. Superstitions

One topic which should not be overlooked is the way that language reflects social manners. “No, thank you”, for example may have a cultural meaning in Romania and a different one in other countries.

While in Romania and in other Romance language speaking countries like Italy it is customary for a host to offer food or drink to a guest several times, because he knows that politeness requires the guest to decline initially, even though he may be very hungry or thirsty. Finally, the guest may either accept what is being offered or he may make it clear to his host that he really doesn’t want to have anything.

In England or the United states, however, people usually take a guest’s first refusal as final so that the Romanian guest who courteously refuses according to the Romanian custom may find himself starving or thirsting.

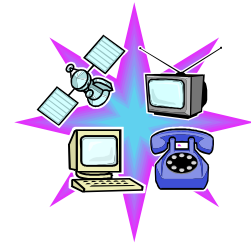
The reverse situation, where an American, unfamiliar with Romanian or Italian etiquette, may say “Yes, please” immediately when offered something to eat or drink will be considered ill-mannered by his hosts, must be also discussed.

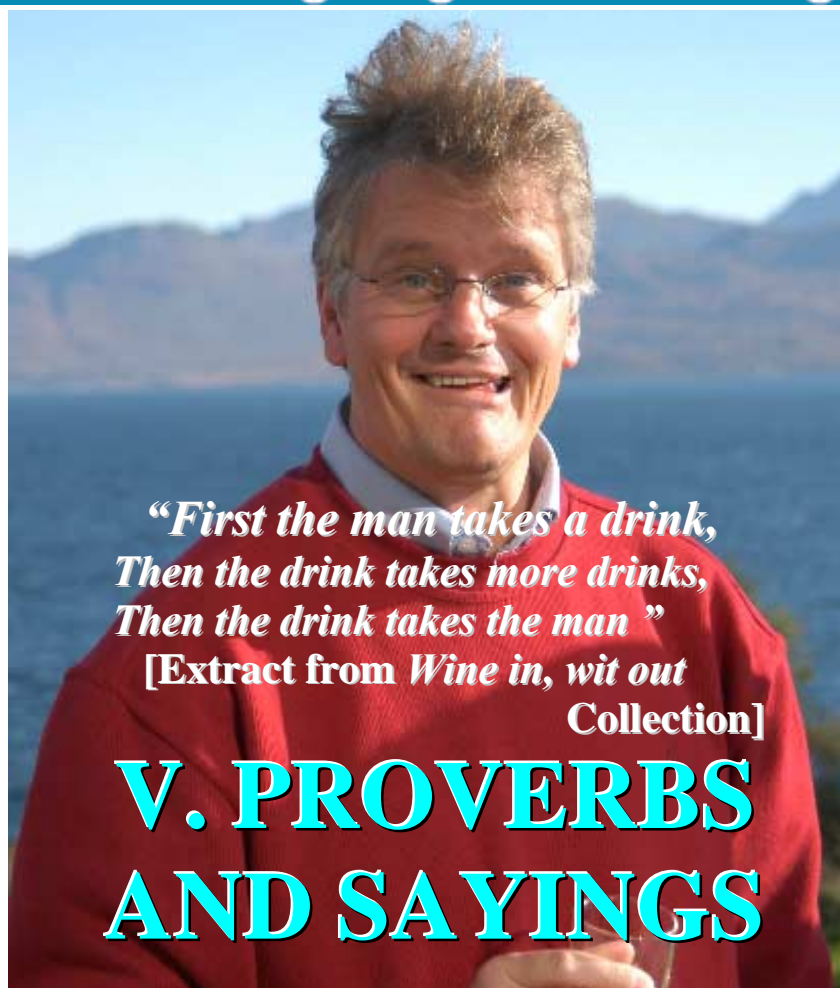
See also the following:

<http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/areas/issues/educatrs/presrvce/pe3lk1.htm>

<http://www.udel.edu/sine/educ/multcult.htm>

<http://www-rcf.usc.edu/~cmmr/BEResources.html>





Proverbs and sayings are of special interest to the students of a new language and culture. They tend to retain archaic elements of language and reflect popular attitudes that have persisted throughout the centuries. One may say that a body of proverbs reveals interesting stratifications of both language development and the historical experience of the people, just as archeological layers show stages of civilization for the trained archeologist.

Besides, knowledge of a certain body of proverbs specific to the new learned language and their use adds a specific cultural color to the vocabulary used by the students in conversations with the native speakers of that language and show good knowledge of the respective culture and civilization.

Proverbs or sayings, on the other hand, can be good conversation starters in advanced level groups. The teacher can select a body of proverbs and sayings from the new language and present them one at a time by:

- writing it on the blackboard,
- explaining the grammar and vocabulary,
- discussing it in terms of its popular wisdom, historical significance, etc.,
- asking the students to find proverbs or sayings expressing similar or opposite thought in their own language.

After students quote and describe their own proverbs and sayings the teacher may lead the group in a conversation about cultural values in the new language and the native language versions. Students usually enjoy cross-culture conversations of this sort and are thus motivated to use the new language in class or social discussions.

If the teacher chooses a proverb as a conversation starter, he/she may develop the discussion around these questions:

1. What does the proverb mean?
2. Is this good advice? Why?
3. Is there a proverb/saying similar to this in your native language?
4. Do the students know any other proverb or saying that has similar advice?
5. Have the students ever experienced the situation suggested by the proverb/saying?
6. What were the circumstances and the results?

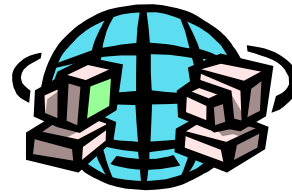
Finally, the fact that nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced and even a proverb or a saying are not real till your own experience has illustrated it, should also be taken into consideration when proverbs and saying are introduced in the language habits of the student of a foreign language.

See also the following:

<http://www.fortunecity.com/boozers/bird/203/index.htm>

http://www.great-quotes.com/Educational_Quotes.htm

<http://www.cherrylanepillows.com/quotes.htm>





Use of humor in the form of jokes, puns, and riddles is appropriate in conversation; yet, teachers who include items like these are sometimes disappointed in the results. The students may understand the vocabulary and grammar in a joke but do not laugh because the joke is alien to their way of thinking. Humor does not usually travel well from one culture to another. Each society has a somewhat different concept of what is funny. Nevertheless, a certain degree of success may be reached with jokes, puns and riddles if the following procedures are followed:

- when assembling humorous material, choose only those items with elements that are known universally;
- use jokes, puns and riddles with advanced students only, since the humor in these items requires a relatively high degree of linguistic sophistication for complete understanding;
- do not use jokes, puns or riddles that are offensive to your students;
- after you tell a joke or pun, or pose a riddle, turn it into a stimulus for a brief discussion of some kind in order to get the most conversation mileage out of it;
- use jokes, puns, and riddles sparingly; three or four jokes during a conversation session will probably be all you will want to have;
- if the students want to keep the joke, pun, or riddle in mind, dictate it for them; so they can have the written form;
- do not encourage students to translate jokes, puns, or riddles from their own language, unless they feel that the others will understand or respond to the humor;
- of all humorous material, riddles often provide the most fun in language classes. Therefore, the teacher must find a large collection of riddles and choose the ones he thinks his students would most readily understand.

See also the following:

http://www.workinghumor.com/education_humor.shtml
<http://www.naesp.org/ContentLoad.do?contentId=634>
<http://www.mcooper.teach-nology.com/catalog.html>
<http://www.humorjokescorner.com/index.php/jokes/Educational/507>
<http://www.dailyhumor.net/index.php/jokes/educational/>





Singing is a very popular activity throughout the world and foreign language students often delight in learning songs. Teaching a song has the following benefits:

- as you sing or play a record of a song, the students are apt to listen attentively, thereby improving their aural comprehension;
- the vocabulary, sentiments, and cultural background are acquired and can also serve as discussion material;
- singing allows the students a chance to relax from the pressure of everyday activities;
- group spirit is fostered;
- the students can carry the song beyond classroom doors and make it a part of their education;
- reinforces the students' interest in learning the foreign language;
- singing is suitable for small and large groups alike.

Songs, of course, should not monopolize didactical activities, although, students are sometimes so eager to sing that they may even demand songs when the teacher wants to schedule other activities. They are better used sparingly – once or twice a week and in ten-to-twenty-minute periods.

While most of the teachers usually recognize the merits of songs, some of them lack confidence in leading one because they feel they are not good singers. There are, however, solutions to this problem. If the teacher can play a musical instrument such as a guitar or a piano, he can arrange to have the instrument available when he teaches a song. If the teacher does not play an instrument, perhaps he knows somebody who does. He can invite that person to accompany him as he teaches the song. Sometimes, one or more students in the group are better than average singers. The teacher must teach the song to these students first, by having them hear a recording of the song. Then, they can lead the rest of the students in singing. Occasionally, however, no one in the class is a particularly good singer, so the best the teacher can do is to have everyone listen to and sing along with a recording of the song.

The kind of songs that a teacher chooses to teach depends entirely on the age and interests of his student group. Teen-agers and adults usually want to learn well-known folk songs or current “hit” songs. The students can usually tell the teacher the names of the songs they would like to learn. The teacher himself can decide upon the kind of songs he would like his students to learn. Once the teacher has a list of these songs, he can borrow copy or buy the appropriate records. To make the most of any songs he chooses the teacher may find the following procedures helpful:

- be sure that you know the words and melody if you plan to sing it yourself or sing along with a tape or CD;
- if you do not sing well, have someone else sing the song and record it on tape; be sure that the singer sings at a pitch and speed that will be easy for other people to follow;
- if none of your acquaintances can sing the song on tape for you, find a commercial recording of the song and either play the CD in class or put it on tape which you will than play in class;
- prepare a copy of the lyrics for each student; if you plan on using a current song, you may have to write down the words directly from the CD or tape; if you have no duplicating facilities available, you can write the words to song on the blackboard and have students copy them; this takes valuable time, but it is very important that the students have the words;
- read each line in the song with the students following in choral repetition; correct any problems in pronunciation that may occur;
- explain the meaning of the new words and phrases and point out cases of elision and linking; have the group say each line again in choral repetition;
- have the students listen to the melody two or three times before they sing it;
- lead the students in singing the song; they should not sing so loudly to disturb the neighboring classes;
- correct problems in pronunciation or phrasing that may have occurred during singing;
- have the students practice the song several times so that they learn it well; do not permit them to sing the song too slowly – students are likely to sing at a funeral pace in a foreign language unless you urge them on;
- once the song is learned, make it a departure point for conversation; ask questions with vocabulary items from the song or have students use the vocabulary in original sentences;
- if it is a folk song, talk about its historical background, its particular meaning in its context, and so forth;
- review the song from time to time; students enjoy singing songs they have previously learned; it gives them a sense of mastery and enthusiasm for learning other songs.

See also the following:

<http://www.illumisware.com/>
<http://www.songsforteaching.com/Store.html>
<http://www.sara-jordan.com/>
<http://www.jacquot.net/>
<http://mypage.uniserve.ca/~sus/suzee.html>





Poetry is the artistic use of language that sums up its essence and unbounded versatility. It requires, however, a degree of linguistic sophistication for understanding and appreciation.

Therefore, foreign poems are useful for students who are both proficient in the foreign language and genuinely interested in poetry. A poem that is short, written in clear language, and universally appealing is more likely to interest the students.

Being usually more suited for the completely communicative phase in language learning, poems can, nevertheless, be successfully used in the manipulative phase as well.

Once the teacher collects poems that he considers suitable, he may use the following procedures:

- read the poem two or three times to your students before they see it in the written form; they should listen for meaning as well as for rhythm in the individual words and lines;
- give everyone a copy of the poem;
- explain the meaning of words or phrases that students may not be familiar with;
- read the poem again while the students follow the written form;
- discuss the message or messages in the poem; ask the students if they agree or disagree with the poet's views; have the students restate the message in prose;
- read the poem and have the students listen to it with their eyes closed so that they can concentrate on the sounds of the words;
- have the group go through the poem with a different student reading each line, one student reading one verse and the entire group reading the next, female students reading some lines and male students reading others, or any other pattern that adds interest and varied vocal quality during the reading of the poem;



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- discuss the poet – his life, philosophy, other poems he has written, and additional information that would interest your students;
- delineate the cultural elements that appear in the poem; have the students compare these with elements in their own culture;
- help the students memorize the poem if they are interested in doing so; poems learned by heart, as well as songs, can be repeated by the group as a whole or by individual students and are apt to become even more attractive with familiarity; besides, a poem which is memorized becomes the students' actual "possession", a living part of their own linguistic and intellectual heritage.

See also the following:

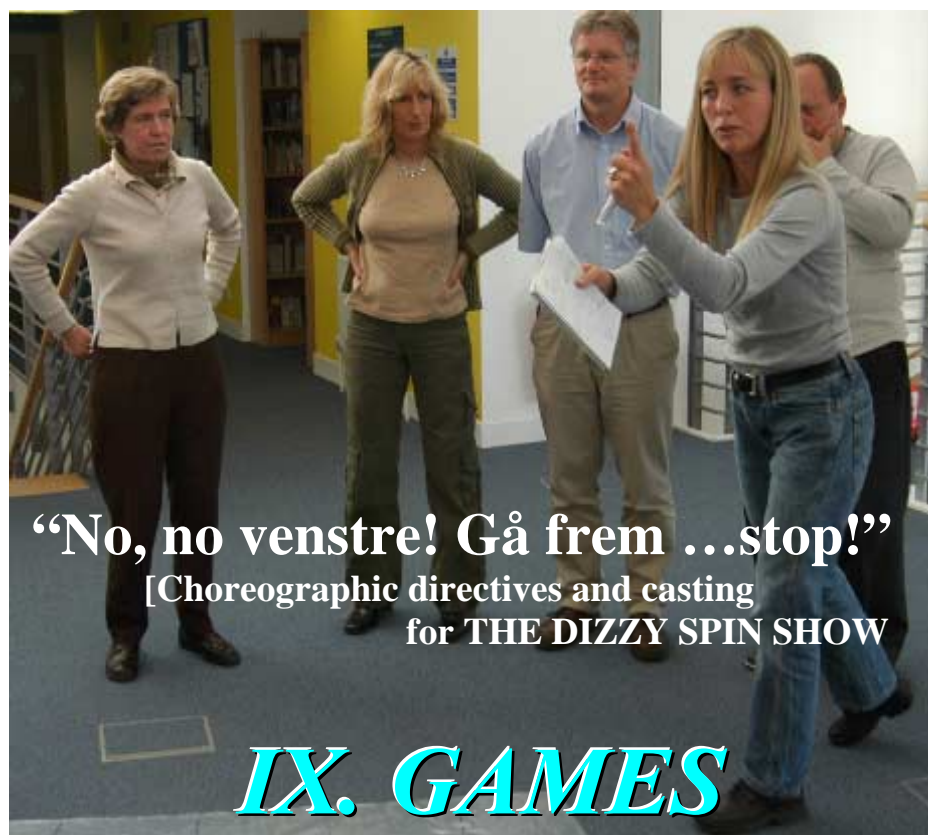
<http://www.personal.psu.edu/users/n/x/nxs232/poems.htm>

http://members.tripod.com/~Patricia_F/poems.html

<http://www.mentaleducation.com/poems.html>

http://www.love-poems.me.uk/a_poems_for_children_great_children's_poems.





Language games can add fun and variety to the process of learning a foreign language because all students are fond of games. Games are especially refreshing after demanding activities. The change of pace from the serious to the lighthearted is particularly welcome. Some teachers feel that language games are more appropriate in the manipulative phase than in the communicative phase of language learning. Most teachers, however, find language games valuable in both phases. In the manipulative phase, a game is a wonderful way to break the routine of classroom drills by providing relaxation while remaining within the framework of language learning. In the communicative phase, a game can be stimulating and entertaining, and when the participants have stopped playing the game, the teacher can use it as a stimulus for additional conversation.

For the maximum benefit from a language game in either phase, the teacher should select only the best from the hundreds of language games available. A “good” language game:

- requires little or no advance preparation;
- is easy to play and yet provides the students with an intellectual challenge;
- is short enough to occupy a convenient space in the group’s daily programme;
- entertains the students but does not cause the group to get out of control;
- requires no, or little time consuming correction of written responses afterward.



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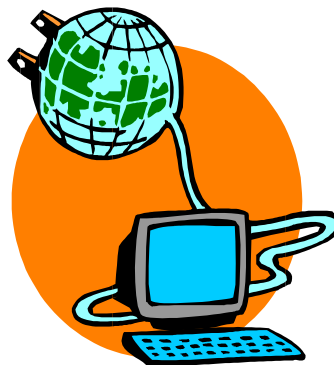
The following suggestions are designed to insure the greatest success with any of the games you select:

- Make thorough preparations for the game; read the rules to yourself several times so that you have a good understanding of how it is played;
- Gather materials for the games that require special equipment;
- Before introducing a game to a class, ask the students if they think they would enjoy this kind of activity; if they don't look interested in the prospect of playing a game, it is best to abandon the idea – at least for the time being;
- Choose a game that allows as many students as possible to participate; if the group is large, a number of students will sit as the audience during some games; even then, members of the audience may keep the score and in other ways take part in the game;
- In small groups, you should make sure every student has an active role in every game;
- Be sure that the game you select is within the range of your students' ability; although language games are usually easy to play, remember that the students will be greatly challenged by the fact that they are playing the game in a different language than their own;
- Do not play the game at the beginning of the learning activity; save the game for use in the middle or toward the end of the session, when the students will welcome a change of pace;
- Give the directions to the game very clearly, making sure that everyone understands exactly how to play; you may want to play a few "trial" games first, just to make sure that everyone knows his role;
- Direct the game yourself; always stand in front of the class, so that all students can see you while you act as the leader or referee;
- Be sure to follow the rules of the game exactly; if you do not "stick to the rules" and permit even one student to break a rule, you will establish a precedent that may lead to hostility among the students; it is always best, therefore, to anticipate problems of this kind and to play strictly according to the rules;
- Keep the game well under control; even though you want your students to have a good time, you cannot allow group discipline to disintegrate; establish a pleasant but firm tone, and the students will enjoy the game and learn in the process;
- Observe how the individual players react to the games; students who make an error in a game may feel a little bit sensitive, so you should soften any blows to pride;
- In team games, try to have an equal number of more proficient students and less proficient students in each team; this will balance the teams and prevent embarrassment on the part of weaker students;
- Create new teams each time you play a game, thus lending variety and interest to every new contest;
- If a game does not seem to be going well, try a different game; be flexible in your use of games;
- Always stop a game before the students are ready to quit; in other words, never play a game so long that it begins to bore the participants;
- Do not play one game too often, since this will cause it to lose its novelty;

As you read the directions of the games that follow, do not be discouraged by the length of some of the directions. Long directions might make you think that the game is a complicated one, but all the games here are easy for the students to learn if they are geared to foreign language proficiency level.

See also the following:

http://www.teach-nology.com/web_tools/games/
<http://www.eduplace.com/edugames.html>
<http://www.prongo.com/>
<http://www.learningplanet.com/>
<http://www.cogcon.com/gamegoo/goeeyhome.html>
<http://www.kidwizard.com/>
<http://www.primarygames.co.uk/>
<http://education.jlab.org/indexpages/elementgames.html>
<http://www.gamequarium.com/>
<http://sitesforteachers.com/index.html>



Here are just a few examples of games that can be used:

Adjectives and Nouns

Position of adjective before nouns; vocabulary.

Procedure: Students suggest adjective-noun phrases, for example “a brown cat”, “a good doctor”. The teacher can contribute himself. As the phrases are suggested, ask a student to write the adjectives in a column down the left-hand side of the blackboard, and the nouns on the right-hand side, so you will get something like this:

a brown	cat
a good	doctor
an intelligent	student
a tidy	room
a windy	day
a difficult	problem

Ask the students to volunteer ideas for different combinations like, for example, “an intelligent cat”, and you draw a line to join the two words. See how many the class can make. If someone suggests an unusual or strange combination, he has to justify it. The teacher may ask, “Can you justify ‘a tidy problem’?”

Variation: For an advanced group the teacher may try adverb-adjective combinations: “desperately miserable”, “reasonably fair”, etc.



Expanding texts

Forming grammatical sentences by adding words or phrases.

Procedure: Write a single simple verb in the centre of the blackboard. Invite students to add one, two or three words to it. For example, if the word was “go”, they might suggest “I go”, or “Go to bed!” They go on suggesting additions of a maximum of three consecutive words each time, making a longer and longer text, until you, or they, have had enough.

The rule is that they can only add at the beginning or end of what is already written. Add or change punctuation each time as appropriate. For example:

Go
Go to bed!
“Go to bed!” said my mother
“Go to bed!” said my mother angrily
“You must go to bed!” said my mother angrily
etc.

Variation: Students can erase additions in reverse order, starting with the last addition and ending with the original word in the centre of the blackboard.

If I had a million dollars

Practice of conditionals; imaginative situations

Procedure: Tell the students to imagine that a million dollars is to be won by the person who can think of the most original (or worthwhile, or exciting) thing to do with the money. Listen to their ideas and decide, or make the students decide, who has “won”.

If I weren't here

Conditional; sharing ideas

Procedure: The students note down the answer to the question: “If you weren't here, where would you be?” Share ideas. Then introduce a slight variation: “If you weren't here, where would you *like* to be?”

Variation: Other similar questions: “If you weren't yourself, who would you like to be?”
Or: “If you weren't living now, when would you have liked to live?”



Rub out and replace

Changing text while maintaining grammatical accuracy.

Procedure: Write a sentence of about ten words on the blackboard.

One day, the farmer went to plough his fields.

Ask the students to suggest substitutes: one, two or three words that could be rubbed out and others (not necessarily exactly the same number or even consecutively), put in their place.

One day, the farmer went to plough her fields.

One day, the farmer went to see her horses.

One day, the queen went to see her horses race.

etc,

The original structure does not have to be maintained, provided the sentence as a whole remains grammatical.

Say things about a picture

Composing simple grammatical utterances.

Preparation: Select a picture from a course book, or a magazine, or a poster.\

Procedure: The students look at the picture and say things about it; the teacher can give directions that these must be in the form of complete, grammatical sentences. How many can the class think of in five minutes? Ask the students to write down their sentence/sentences.

Or, can they find at least 20 or 30 sentences?

Variation I: After the first time, students can do the same activity as a group competition: divide the class into two groups; which group can find the most sentences? Or groups can try to beat their own record: can they think of more sentences for a second picture than for the first?

Variation II: Ask students think of as many sentences as they can that are obviously not *true* about the picture. Then, they can correct each other to form the true statements.

Story-telling

The game calls on the imaginative talents of each group member in composing a portion of an entertaining story.

The teacher will begin the story with the classical phrase:

“Once upon a time there was ...” and complete the sentence any way he/she wishes.

Then a group member supplies the second sentence to the story – a line that is a logical addition to the previous one.

Then, another group member has a chance to contribute to the story, and so on.

At a suitable stopping point, have someone add the final.

Classroom twenty questions

This is a guessing game in which one person chooses a visible object in the classroom and the other students try to guess what it is by asking questions. Each student can ask one question about it.

The person who made the choice must give a complete answer to each question.

After several questions have been asked, the person whose turn is next may think he knows what the object is. In this case he/she can ask:

“Is it a ...?” If he/she has guessed correctly, he/she wins the game and becomes the next person who chooses the object in the next game.

One student must keep count of the number of questions asked. If no one has guessed the object after twenty questions, the person who selected the object wins the game and can choose an object for the second game.

In this form of the game, only questions that take a “Yes” or “No” answer are permitted.

Visual consequences

What to do:

The students work in groups of five. Each person has a sheet of paper. Everyone is instructed to draw a head at the top of the paper, including the beginnings of the neck (it may be human, animal or fantastic). The sheets of paper are then folded so that the head is not visible, and passed on to the next person in the group. Everyone then draws the top half of the creature (with arms, wings, or other appendages). Sheets of paper are passed on again. The same procedure is followed for the trunk, legs, and lower limbs. At the end, everyone unfolds his or her sheet of paper and compares it with those of others in the group. The result will be five 'creatures', rather like the example below. The group is now asked to discuss these five creatures, to assign them names, and to invent a character — even a history — for each of them. A dramatization is then worked out involving the five creatures, and acted by the group for another group.

Remarks:

Level: *elementary upwards.*

There is enormous intrinsic interest in seeing what the creatures turn out to be like, and the resulting dramatizations are usually highly inventive.



Word for word

What to do:

The students sit in a big circle. One person starts off by saying a word, e.g. black. The next person on the right has to say a word, which 'goes with' this word, e.g. sheep. The next person continues in the same way, e.g. wool, etc. Here is an example of such a series: Book — worm — earth — sky — blue — sea — fish — swim — sink — dishes — food — supermarket — shoplifting — detective ... From here, if one wishes, one may lead straight into a rhyming verse game. The group is asked to think of words with the same sound (this may be an internal sound, like the [o] in the examples below — but it could also be a rhyme), e.g. go, slow, soak, show, home, told. Each word is written on a slip of paper, and the slips are mixed. Each person then draws two slips of paper, which he or she uses to write a two-line rhyming verse, e.g. She said 'Absolutely no!' "I don't like mowing, so I couldn't go. But the grass keeps on growing!"

Remarks:

Level: *elementary to intermediate upwards.*

The first exercise is the equivalent in words of the non-verbal (physical) warming-up exercises, and it works well at all levels. The second is an optional follow-on. Both will waken the mind for more difficult tasks, and neither need take more than a few minutes.

Leading the blind

What to do:

The students are divided into two equal groups. Each group forms pairs. The centre of the room is filled with 'obstacles' (e.g. chairs), with passages left in between. One member of each pair from group A goes to the opposite end of the room. The remaining partners are then blindfolded (or close their eyes). The 'guides' then give directives to their partners to enable them to walk through the obstacles without touching them. Anyone touching an obstacle is eliminated.

Then group B does the same.

Remarks:

Level: elementary upwards.

An exercise developing trust between partners, precision in the language of instructions and careful listening (in natural conditions - with background noise!).



The golden tip of the day:

Try your mind's eye!

When you can't see properly,



The all-purpose sock

What to do:

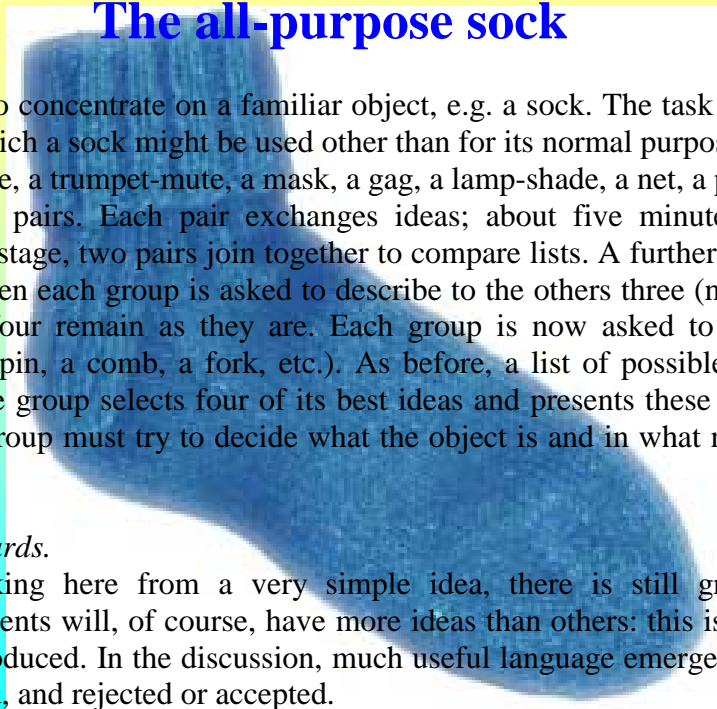
Each student is asked to concentrate on a familiar object, e.g. a sock. The task is to draw up a list of six to ten ways in which a sock might be used other than for its normal purpose, for example: a coffee-filter, a bandage, a trumpet-mute, a mask, a gag, a lamp-shade, a net, a purse, etc.

The group then forms pairs. Each pair exchanges ideas; about five minutes are allowed for discussion. At the next stage, two pairs join together to compare lists. A further five to ten minutes are allowed for this. Then each group is asked to describe to the others three (not more) of its best ideas. The groups of four remain as they are. Each group is now asked to think of a similar everyday object (a hairpin, a comb, a fork, etc.). As before, a list of possible new uses for this object is drawn up. The group selects four of its best ideas and presents these as a mime to other groups. The observer group must try to decide what the object is and in what new way it is being used.

Remarks:

Level: elementary upwards.

Although one is working here from a very simple idea, there is still great scope for the imagination. Some students will, of course, have more ideas than others: this is why the exchange of ideas in pairs is introduced. In the discussion, much useful language emerges when suggestions are compared, criticized, and rejected or accepted.



What am I holding?

What to do:

The class is divided into groups of five or six. The groups stand in a circle, each person facing inwards, with hands held cupped behind back. The organizer then slips a small object, e.g. a safety-pin, a coin, or a matchbox, into the hands of one member of each group. This person can feel the object, of course, but cannot see it. The group's task is to discover by questioning what the object is.

Remarks:

Level: elementary upwards.

Before using this exercise, it is worth giving a demonstration to the class as a whole. A volunteer stands facing the class, with hands behind back: a small object is slipped into his or her hands, and he or she answers the class's questions. This enables the class to discover together what kind of questions work best. In this exercise, the questioners have nothing, initially, to guide them. They rely exclusively, therefore, on what can be learnt from their questions. In order to avoid loose guesses ('Is it a drawing pin?') and vague questions ('Is it big?' 'Is it nice?'), the students should be encouraged to use strategies, which will progressively eliminate the possibilities, e.g. 'Is it hard?' 'Is it made of metal?' 'Can it be bent?' 'Is it precious?'



"This is just the ... -th glass
that slipped into my hand. Honestly..."

And I'm a butcher

What to do:

The students sit in circles, facing inwards (about ten to twelve per circle). One student begins by giving his or her real name and an imaginary profession, e.g. 'I'm Alan, and I'm a butcher'. The student on the right then repeats this information and adds his or her own name and an imaginary profession e.g. 'You're Alan, and you're a butcher. I'm Helen, and I'm a hairdresser'. The next student to the right continues the process, e.g. 'He's Alan, and he's a butcher. You're Helen, and you're a hairdresser. I'm Ann, and I'm a skin-diver'. The process goes on until everyone has added information about himself or herself. The person who began the process then has to repeat the whole series.

Remarks:

Level: *elementary upwards.*

It is a good exercise to develop careful listening to what others are saying, and to sharpen the memory. (It is best not to exceed twelve people in a circle; otherwise the activity may break down.) It is also good for giving each person a sense of his or her own value — the repetition of one's name by others somehow seems to give satisfaction, particularly to weaker students. Although here the input is limited to a simple sentence involving a name and a profession, other more complex inputs can be used (perhaps to give practice in structures currently being dealt with),

e.g. "I'm Frank, and I like swimming."

"I'm Marianne, and I like dancing."

"I'm Jimmy, and I've just returned from Poland."

"I'm Julia, and I'm going to Pitesti next week.", etc.



Reconstructing Map

1. Students form into groups of three, or four at the most.
 2. Each group works together to make a drawing of their ideal city.
- They are allotted a limited amount of time-the duration of the first three songs on the Basque CD. The music creates a relaxing atmosphere.

Questions:

What do you feel? How do you feel?

Teachers can introduce more questions and make them more difficult depending on the level of language they want students to practise.

3. When the groups have finished their drawings they leave them where they are and move to another table. They tear up the drawing left on the new table. The music for this part of the exercise is the fourth song on the Basque CD. It has an increasingly aggressive tone.

Questions:

What do you feel? How do you feel?

4. Each group goes back to its original table and has a look at what the other group has done to its drawing of their ideal city.

Questions:

What do you feel? How do you feel?

5. Now the groups try to put their drawings back together again by gluing or sticky taping the pieces. The teacher plays the relaxing music from the first part of the exercise. Once the students have repaired their drawings as well as they can they answer the same questions:

Questions:

What do you feel? How do you feel?





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