

**KYRGYZ REPUBLIC  
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**JALAL-ABAD STATE UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF PHILOLOGY**

# **Activities For fun**



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This small handbook contains various activities, games, and energizers.

There are warm up exercises, which were collected from teachers' experiences, colleagues, seminars and workshops in different places.

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## Introduction

Games to Use at Lessons, in Workshops, Meetings and the Community is one of a series of resources that the Alliance is developing to encourage participation in practice. It is a compilation of energizers, icebreakers and games that can be used by anyone working with groups of people, whether in a workshop, meeting or community setting.

Facilitators or teachers use games for a variety of different reasons, including helping people to get to know each other, increasing energy or enthusiasm levels, encouraging team building or making people think about a specific issue. Games that help people to get to know each other and to relax are called **ice breakers**. When people look sleepy or tired, **energizers** can be used to get people moving and to give them more enthusiasm. Other games can be used to help people think through issues and can help to address problems that people may encounter when they are working together. Games can also help people to think creatively and laterally.

This guide includes all these different types of games – in no particular order – and facilitators can pick and choose those that are most appropriate for their specific purpose and context.

### Things to consider when using Energizers

- ✓ Try to use energizers frequently during a workshop or meeting, whenever people look sleepy or tired or to create a natural break between activities.

- ✓ Try to choose games that are appropriate for the local context, for example, thinking carefully about games that involve touch, particularly of different body parts.

- ✓ Try to select games in which everyone can participate and be sensitive to the needs and circumstances of the group. For example,

some of these games may exclude people with disabilities, such as difficulty walking or hearing, or people with different levels of comfort with literacy.

✓ Try to ensure the safety of the group, particularly with games that involve running. For example, try to make sure that there is enough space and that the floor is clear.

✗ Try not to use only competitive games but also include ones that encourage team building.

✗ Try to avoid energizers going on for too long.

Keep them short and move on to the next planned activity when everyone has had a chance to move about and wake up!

## **The Alphabet Game**

This game is used to practice alphabet and check their vocabulary. Do as a competition. Divide Students into groups of five (it depends on the number of students you have) and ask them to stand in line. Give to the students of the front a marker to write on the whiteboard. Then draw with your finger an imaginary letter of the alphabet on the back of the students at the end of the line. They must do the same with the student in front of him/her and so on. The students with the marker are supposed to run to the board and write any word that begins with that letter. Students love it!

## **The Name Game**

This engaging introduction game is ideal for the first day of class and helps students get to know each other. In the game, students race to give basic personal information about themselves and repeat other students' information. Arrange the students into two teams and sit each team in a circle. Tell the teams that they are going to race each other to say everyone's name in their team first student then passes the ball to the second student. The second student repeats the first student's name and then says their own name, e.g. ', and I'm Kate'. The second student passes the ball to the next student. The next student continues, e.g. 'He's Ryan. She's Kate, and I'm Amiko'. The game continues until all the names have been said. If a student forgets the name of a teammate, the team starts over

from the first student. The first team to finish wins the round and scores a point. Then, start with a different student and repeat the game with other personal information, e.g. age, height, etc. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins.

### **Guess the Object**

The teacher prepares cutout pictures that are pasted or taped to index cards. One student selects a card and must describe it in Kyrgyz until another student can guess the object. This is very much like "20 Questions" but instead of the challenge being to ask questions, the bonus is on the cardholder to verbalize the description.

The teacher should be careful to select pictures that reflect the vocabulary level of the students. Simple objects, like "baby", "door" or "car" are good for beginners. Later on, more complicated pictures that suggest actions, scenes and relationships could be used, like: "mother bathing child".

### **Hangman**

Divide the class into two teams. On the blackboard, draw spaces for the number of letters in a word. Have the players guess letters in the word alternating between the teams. If a letter in the word is guessed correctly, the teacher writes it into the correct space. If a letter is guessed which is not in the word, the teacher draws part of the man being hanged. The team

which can guess the word first receives a point, then start the game over.

## Stop

**STEP 1:** On the top of a page each student writes the following category names: NAME, PLACE, ACTION, ANIMAL, OBJECT, FRUIT/VEGGY and TOTAL.

**STEP 2:** Someone starts saying the alphabet, A, B, C... etc. then someone else interrupts the alphabet-teller shouting: STOP!!!

**STEP 3:** Let us suppose the alphabet-teller was interrupted on letter "K". All the participants in the game would try to find words that start with "K" to fill out the category chart. For example one may write: **Kansas** for "PLACE", **Koala** for "ANIMAL", key for "OBJECT", **Kiwi** for "FRUIT" and so on.

**STEP 4:** The participant that finishes filling all categories first shouts STOP! And all the others should stop writing.

**STEP 5:** The participants compare their words. The words repeated by two players are worth 50 points. The words repeated by three or more are worth 25. The words that are not repeated by anyone are worth 100 points. The empty categories are "0". Each player adds up all the points he got for the letter in turn and put the result in the "TOTAL" At the end of the game all the subtotals are added and the one who gets the highest score is the winner.

## **Describing Appearances & Characteristics of People**

Each student is then give one sheet of paper. One student sits at the front of a room. He/she describes a person and the rest of the class draws the person being described.

It is more interesting if the person being described is known by everyone. Once the student has finished describing that person then he/she reveals who it is and each student shows his/her drawing. The laughter from this is hilarious as the impressions tend to make the character in question look funny.

It is a good idea to encourage students to ask the interviewee student questions about who they are describing.

### **Classroom Rules: Must and Mustn't**

- Prepare small pieces of paper each with either one thing students must do or one thing students must not do.
- Tell the students that they are supposed to form sentences that explain classroom rules.
- Divide the class into groups (of 4 if possible, so that everyone gets a chance to speak).
- Give each group the pieces of paper.

The winning group, the group that finishes first, reads their sentences aloud. (Each student of the group reads one or two sentences depend on size of group.)

It's an easy game and the preparation does not take too much time. You can make as many rules as you wish.

## Twenty Questions

First one member of the class chooses an object, an occupation, or an action which ever you decide. Then members of the class try to discover what it is by asking questions which can be answered by "yes" or "no."

**For example**, if the subject is "Occupations" then the questions might be like these.

- Do you work in the evenings?
- Do you work alone?
- Do you work outside?

## Time Indicators

**Rationale:** Students practice using different subject pronouns, verb tenses, and the time words and phrases that go with them. They must also be able to recognize different forms of the same verb, especially irregular verbs.

**Materials:** None.

**Levels:** All. Beginners can play using only four verb tenses (present, past, future, and present progressive). More advanced can play using all the tenses.

**Method:** One student says a time word or phrase (*e.g. next year, a few days ago*). A second student must complete a sentence using the proper verb tense. That student then says a different time word or phrase. A third student uses it to form a

sentence, but may not use the same verb or subject pronoun the second student used.

Verb tenses may be repeated if necessary, but verbs may not, and subject pronouns may be repeated only after they have all been used once.

The game can continue as long as the teacher wants, though two runs through all the subject pronouns is an appropriate length. The teacher may write the full sentences on the board, but should at least keep track of which subject pronouns and verbs have been used.

**Example:**

First student: "At the moment . . ."

Second student: ". . . I am sitting in a classroom."

Second student: "Last year . . ."

Third student: ". . . they went to Europe."

Third student: "Every day . . ."

Fourth student: ". . . she takes the bus to work."

**Getting to Know a Little More about Your group mate**

The teacher gives every student a piece of paper on which they write a sentence about their personal life. This sentence can be about school, family, music, friends, the last vacation, etc. For example "I went to the beach last vacation" or "I always study for my exams" or "I have two brothers" etc.

When they finish writing their sentences they fold the paper and give it to the teacher.

It is very important to tell students before writing the sentence that the information they are going to write is "a



secret" and not to show it to their classmates. If they have a question about something, they should ask it to you instead of a group mate. Tell students to write their names on the papers.

After collecting all the papers, ask the students to write the numbers from one to 10 (or 20, depending on the number of students you have in that moment in the classroom) in their notebooks. After that, the teacher reads the sentences in random order (without saying the name of the student), and the students write the names of the people they think wrote sentences.

After reading all the sentences, say the question number and read the sentence again for each piece of paper and ask the students to name who they thought wrote it.

Then tell the students the name from the student who wrote that sentence. Students should write (C) for correct guesses and (I) for incorrect guesses.

This is one way for students to start knowing a little more about their group mates.

### **Act Out an Activity**

This is a game-like activity to teach continuous tense.

One student simply acts out some activity (e.g. cooking) and the other students guess what that student is doing. The student who guesses correctly acts out another activity ... .

## **Advice (Imperative mood)**

**Aims:** To practice giving advice and suggestions.

1. Get a student to say the first sentence below to his neighbor. The latter makes a suggestion, and goes on to utter the next of my sentences, and so on.

2. If the students are a bit cold, do the following; get them all to write down a piece of advice for the first sentence on a page-give them time. Then, you can go around the class enjoying the wide variety of contributions which are sure to ensue.

## **7 UP**

Here is an amusing counting game. Have the students stand in a circle. The students then count in turn from 1 to 7 going around the circle. The first student says the number 1 and then indicates which student should say the next number by pointing left or right. The selected student then says the number 2 and indicates to their left or right and so on. This continues until the number 7. The student saying the number 7 raises their arm above their head in a seven formation to indicate the next student and says, "7 Up." The counting then starts again from number 1. The aim is to get other students out of the game by making them say a number when they have not been selected. Students do this by gesturing to a student next to them with

their head or other part of their body, but it's where they point with their hands that matter.

### **Perfect Possessions**

This is a great way to practice possessive pronouns. Cut out images of people from magazines. Make sure you have men and women, but also pairs and groups. Next cut out, pictures of cars, houses, dogs, and be sure to get some bedrooms and offices. Put the people in one bag and the possessions in another. Students take turns pulling one picture from each and talking about the items. Let's say a student takes a picture of a man and a picture of a house: This is John. This is his house. His house is very big and has a swimming pool. There are three bedrooms in his house. Etc... Challenge students to say as much as they can.

### **What Am I?**

Write a bunch of animals (or whatever vocab. you want) on slips of paper. Then tape or pin one to each student's back so that they can't see what it is. They have to go around the class asking questions to other students to find out what they are. For example, "Do I have 4 legs?" After 1 question, they can make a guess and the other student will answer "yes" or "no." They can only ask each student one question, so they will eventually talk to everyone in the class. Have some extras if a student uncovers their animal very quickly.

## **Two Truths, One Lie**

Each student should write three statements about themselves on a piece of paper. Two of them should be true, and one should be a lie. Students read their three statements, and their classmates question them to try to determine which statement is a lie.

## **Descriptive drawing activity**

Pair up the students and give each student a picture, placing it face down so partners cannot see each other's cards. They must describe the picture for their partner to draw.

## **Show and Tell**

Students can be asked to bring to school an object to show and tell about. This is lots of fun because students will often bring in something that's meaningful to them or which gives them pride. That means they'll have plenty to talk about! Encourage students to ask questions about each other's objects.

Instead of having students bring their own objects, you could provide an object of your own and ask them to try to explain what they think it is and what its purpose is. Another option is to bring in pictures for them to talk about. This could be discussed with a partner or in a group, before presenting ideas in front of the whole class.

Generate a stronger discussion and keep things flowing by asking students open-ended questions.

## **I Like People**

1. Students sit on chairs in a circle, leaving a space in the circle for the teacher to stand.

2. First, they're asked to listen to statements that the teacher makes and stand if it applies to them, such as: "I like people who are wearing black shoes," "I like people who have long hair," etc.

3. Next, the teacher asks standing students to change places with someone else who's standing.

4. Now it becomes a game. The teacher makes a statement, students referred to must stand and quickly swap places. When the students move around, the teacher quickly sits in someone's spot, forcing them to become the teacher.

5. The students quickly get into the swing of this game. Generally they'll quickly notice a "cheating" classmate who hasn't stood up when they should have, and they'll also eagerly encourage a shy student who finds himself standing in the gap with no ideas.

This game has no natural ending, so keep an eye on the mood of the students as they play. They may start to run out of ideas, making the game lag. Quickly stand and place yourself back into the teacher position and debrief (talk with them about how they felt about the game)

## **Blackboard Race**

This game is plain and simple—a good, old-fashioned classroom favorite for the ages.

Divide the board into two halves, and divide the class into two teams. Call out a theme or category for learned vocabulary words and have students run to the board and write as many related words as possible.

For example, you might call out something like, “Fruit and vegetables” and one student from each team must run up to the board and write as many fruit and vegetables names as they can think of within a certain time limit. This game gets students thinking quickly and creatively.

## **Hot Potato**

Use a foam or inflatable ball, and start up a fast-paced round or two of hot potato.

The objective, of course, is to pass the ball around in a circle as fast as possible. Before passing the ball to the next student, the student holding the ball must show off their Kyrgyz grammar skills.

When a student catches the ball, they must quickly think up a word that fits your given criteria, spit it out and pass the ball before the allotted time runs out.

This is super flexible and can be adjusted to practice virtually any bit of grammar you've recently introduced or would like to review.

For example, tell students learning the present tense that they must each say **one verb conjugated in the present tense, using first person singular or "I form."** Each student will then have to say something like, "I run," "I dance" or "I cry." The ball gets passed around and around, with students being eliminated whenever they draw blanks or conjugate their verb wrong.

For easier games, give each student 6-8 seconds. For harder, faster paced games, give students 2-3 seconds. You can also start slower and gradually increase the pace of the game as it progresses.

### **I'm Going On A Picnic And I'm Taking A ...**

This is a guess the rule type game. Think of a rule which governs which items can be taken on a picnic, for example, it must be six letters long, or it must start with a vowel. In this example, the rule is that the word must be an uncountable noun. Teacher: I'm going on a picnic and I'm taking milk. Student A: I'm going on a picnic and I'm taking eggs. Teacher: No, you can't take eggs. Student B: Can I take orange juice? Teacher: Yes, you can take orange juice. And so on. Continue adding items to your picnic list until a student correctly guesses the rule (the choices don't have to make sense within the picnic scenario e.g. love, information, air). When you've finished,

invite the students (alone or in pairs) to come up with their own rules and let them run the game.

### **Three Things In Common**

This is a great icebreaker, but you can also use it as a lead-in to a theme or to test your students' knowledge of a grammar point. Simply ask students to work in pairs and find three things that they have in common and then report back to the class. You can narrow the topic down to areas like *three things we both did at the weekend*, *three foods we both like*, *three things we both don't like about this city*, *three things neither of us has done yet but would like to*, etc.

### **Whose Weekend?**

Give each student a slip of paper and ask each student to write down three things they did at the weekend. Collect up the slips of paper and randomly read each one out. The students must guess whose weekend is being described.

### **“I see”**

Describe the classroom using basic nouns (classroom objects) and adjectives (color). The teacher says, e.g.

“I see something red». Trainees guess what the teacher sees. The trainee who correctly guesses the object, e.g. «I see a red pen», chooses the next object.



## **Organize Yourselves!**

Have students arrange themselves in order according to a given criterion. For example by age, alphabetical order of first name or surname, etc.

## **20 Questions**

One student chooses an object. The rest of the class takes turns asking yes/no questions to determine what the object is. After 20 questions, if the class has not guessed the object the student who chose the object wins.

## **A Lie And Two Truths**

### ***You Will Need:***

- Candies

### ***How To:***

1. Give equal number of candies to each player. Ask each player to take turns at the game. One player says three sentences about himself, a lie, and two truths. The others have to guess which one is the lie. If someone guesses right he gets a candy. For every wrong guess, the teen has to give a candy.

2. The player who collects the maximum number of candies is the winner.

## I Went To City ...

### **How To:**

1. The leader begins the game by saying ‘*I went to city, and I took a/an (object)*’.
2. The player sitting next to him will repeat the same phrase but with another object.
3. The trick is the objects should follow a pattern such as alphabetical order.
4. Object criteria can vary like it can begin with the first letter of any person’s name, two or more syllable words, etc.

## Charades

This simple but classic game is a great way to encourage your student to get out of their seats and participate in the lesson.

**Resources:** a list of people, actions or concepts related to the subject you are teaching.

**Game:** Select a student to stand at the front of the room and act out a word from your list (no speaking allowed). The rest of the class must then guess what the student is attempting to portray. Other students can shout out their guesses or put their hands up – depending on your teaching preference! Whoever guesses correctly can act out the next word.

**Alternative:** A more challenging version involves the student describing a subject-specific word but restricted by a

list of forbidden words, e.g. describing ‘habitat’ without using the words ‘home’ or ‘animals’.

## **Bingo**

A quick and simple game which never fails to motivate students in their learning.

**Resources:** whiteboards and pen or paper and pen/pencils, plus a list of subject-specific terms or concepts e.g. numbers, phonics, key vocabulary, scientific formulae or historical figures.

**Game:** Ask students to draw a 6 x 6 grid on their whiteboards or pieces of paper then select 6 words or images from the given list to draw/write in their grid. You must then randomly select a word from the list to describe, and students must guess the word in order to cross it off on their grid (if present). Continue describing different words until one student successfully completes their grid and shouts ‘bingo!’ (you can also award a prize to the first student who gets 3 in a row).

**Alternative:** Students can insert their own subject-related answers into the bingo grid, but this makes it more challenging for you due to extensive word choice and ambiguity. Also, if you have more time, then you could create your own bingo boards with specific vocabulary or concepts you are covering in that lesson (reusable).

## **Pictionary**

An old classic but also a great way for students to visualize their understanding in a fun team game.

**Resources:** whiteboards and pens or pieces of paper and pencils/pens, plus a list of subject-specific concepts.

**Game:** Students work in small groups. One student from each group is chosen to start and they must draw the subject-related concept you state, within a given time (30 seconds – 2 minutes). The rest of the group must then guess what he/she is drawing. The first group to correctly guess the word wins. The game repeats until every student has had a turn/there are no more words on your list.

**Alternative:** Students could model concepts using play dough for their peers to guess.

## **Blind Artist 1**

This amazing classroom activity can invoke creativity among students. Students are first paired and are placed in a position such that they don't face each other.

A student will be given a picture and the other student will be given a plain paper and pencil. The student with the picture has to describe what is in the picture without actually telling what it is.

The other person has to bring in some creativity and imagination to draw a picture according to his description.

## **Blind Artist 2**

### **(Body parts)**

This amazing classroom activity can be fun for students.

1. One volunteer will be asked to come to the board. His\her eyes will be tied.

2. The rest of the students will be asked to say the name of one body part one by one.

3. A student which is with closed eyes starts to draw a body part on the board.

*Note: At the beginning they can tell the name of the body parts in English, but later they should tell them in Kyrgyz.*

4. After finishing his\her drawing ask the student to untie his\her eyes.

5. Give him\her 5-6 seconds to look through his\her picture.

6. Ask him\her to present the picture.

## **Sentence Race**

This is a vocabulary review game that can be played among students.

The teacher would write up vocabulary words in pieces of paper and folds it and keeps in a box. The class would be divided into two groups and the blackboard would also be partitioned into two, each side for a team.

A member from a team would come up and picks a piece of paper. He needs to write a meaningful sentence that includes

the word specified on the paper on blackboard. Teacher would finally evaluate the sentences and the side with most meaningful sentences will win.

### **Chain spelling**

This is an amazing game in which students need to connect two unrelated words by looking at their spelling.

Teacher first writes a word on the board. First student is asked to take the last three or four letters of the word and form another word.

The next student has to repeat the same and this is continued until a student fails to form a word or misspells it. The game can be made tighter by restricting them to certain category of words.

### **Blindfold Conversation**

This is a team building activity for a new classroom. First teacher asks everybody to introduce themselves in a few sentences.

Once it is done, class would be divided into two teams. A student from a team is called up and his eyes would be tied. A student from the other team is then called and asked to say something.

The student who is blinded has to recognize him/her from his voice. If he/she failed to do so, he/she may also ask certain

questions related to what was discussed in the introduction to identify the person.

### **Jumping the line**

This is an energizer game that would be apt to play at the end of a class which can be used as a revision too.

A line is drawn on the class floor and one side of the line will be marked 'true' and the other as 'false'. The students are asked to stand on the line.

Teacher would pick a student and says a statement based on what is taught in the class. If the student thinks that it is true, he/she has to jump to the true side or else the false side.

If the student's assessment is wrong, he/she has to go back to his desk.

Teacher would continue the game and the last student standing in the line with the most right assessments will be the winner for the day.

### **Missing Word**

This is a memory game for any level students that improve their attention to detail. The class is first divided into two. Teacher has a set of flash cards with words which denotes different categories.

A student from the first team is asked to come up and teacher shows him/her 5 cards for 10 seconds. He/she then shuffles the card and shows only 4 cards next time.

The student has to recall his/her memory and identify the missing card. The team with the most number of correct card recalls win.

## **Mime**

This is a very popular game in which action words or verbs are revised in a funny manner.

The class is first divided into teams. Teacher writes action words such as running, gardening, singing etc in pieces of paper. It is then folded and placed in a bag or box.

A student from a team comes and picks a paper and enacts the word. The other team has to guess the word correctly to win a point.

## **Hot Seat**

This fun game is a lot like the game show *Password*. Split your class into two teams and have them sit together in teams facing the white board or chalk board. Then take an empty chair—one for each team—and put it at the front of the class, facing the team members. These chairs are the “hot seats.” Choose one volunteer from each team to come up and sit in the “hot seat,” facing their teammates with their back to the board.

Prepare a list of vocabulary words to use for the game. Choose one and write it clearly on the board. Each team will take turns trying to get their teammate in the hot seat to guess



the word, using synonyms, antonyms, definitions, etc. Make sure team members work together so that each member has a chance to provide clues.

The student in the hot seat listens to their teammates and tries to guess the word. The first hot seat student to say the word wins a point for their team. Once the word is successfully guessed, a new student from each team sits in the hot seat, and a new round begins with a different word.

### **Storytelling Round-Robin**

This activity helps students pool their creative resources. Students can sit in a circle or at their desks. The teacher will begin with the first line of the story, for instance, “Once upon a time there were three trainees walking through the community ... .” One by one, each student adds one sentence with new details to the story. The story cannot end until every student has participated.

### **Detective**

This game requires teamwork and close observation. Students stand in a circle. One student (the detective) steps outside. While out of the room, another student is chosen as the leader to start the motion. The leader begins a motion, for instance, tapping the top of their head, while the rest of the

students in the circle follow along. The student in the hallway returns to the room and goes to the center of the circle. After a couple of minutes, the selected student changes the motion, for instance clapping their hands, and the rest of the students follow along. The detective has to figure out which student is the leader. The detective gets three guesses. Then a new leader and detective are chosen for the next round.

### **Buyi-buyi-buyi Groups**

This activity is good for encouraging trainees to mix it up. Students mill about the room saying, in a quiet voice, “*Buyi-buyi-buyi*” Then, the teacher calls out a group size, for example, groups of three. Students must break into groups of that size. The goal is to form different groups of individuals every time. If a person tries to join a group with whom they have already partnered, they must find a different group. After a few rounds, the process may take a bit of rearranging.

### **Wordplay**

Aims: to help students remember new words to develop creative learning strategies

#### **Procedure:**

□ Ask students to write down some new words that they have met recently. These could be taken from their vocabulary

note-book, from exercise or text, or from recent lessons in general.

□ Tell them they are going to think of ways of demonstrating the meaning of the words using mime, voice and writing. Give an example, e.g. the word *long*. You can *mime* this with your hands to show a long rope, for example; you can *say* the word, pronouncing it for several seconds; or you can write it on the board so that the shape of the word demonstrates the meaning. Or you could mime the shape of a *leaf*, or draw a tree with branches on which the word *leaf* is growing.

□ Put students in pairs or groups of three and ask them to choose some of the words they have written down, and to try expressing the meaning in any or all of these ways. Tell them that it may not be possible to use all three strategies for a particular word, but that they should try to use at least one.

□ After several minutes, ask each pair or group to demonstrate one of their words, by miming it, saying it, or writing it on the board.

**Notes:**

□ This is a creative activity that provides variety from normal learning patterns, and which caters for different learning styles: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic (i.e. using mime or movement).

□ You can focus this activity on just writing the words if you like, since this is often the easiest way. Suggest to students

that they may sometimes like to record new words in this way in their vocabulary books.

□ As an alternative, and in order to develop this vocabulary learning strategy, you can give them a list of words that are easy to represent; e.g. *jump, sad, bird*.

### **Back to the board**

Aim: to revise vocabulary taught in class.

#### **Procedure:**

□ Prepare a list of words that you have taught the class recently.

□ Put the class in two teams and ask one member of each team to come to the front and sit with their back to the board.

□ Write one of the words on the board and tell the teams that they have to help their team member guess the word, by giving clues or definitions, but without using the word itself.

#### **Example:**

You write *expensive*

Students may say *it costs a lot of money*, or *the opposite of cheap*. The first person to guess the word scores a point for his or her team. The game continues with another representative from each team, and another word, until you run out of time or words. The team that has scored the most points is the winner.

## Notes

□ This activity works best with smaller classes; it can be a noisy activity if you have a large class, with many students shouting over each other to be heard! You may need to set rules such as appointing a team leader to consult with the rest of the group, and then quietly give information to the person who has their back to the board. This will also mean that they listen to their own team members, and not those from the opposing group.

□ As with any game, you need to do a couple of examples before you start, so that students understand what to do.

□ It is a good idea to make a systematic note of words that you teach in class for activities such as these. You may like to make a list in a notebook, or write the words on cards or slips of paper, and keep these in a 'vocabulary box' in the classroom.

## How was your weekend?

Aim: to practice talking and asking about the past

### Procedure:

□ Put students in pairs or small groups and ask them to tell each other the best thing that happened to them at the weekend, or on the previous evening (or during the last week, if it is a class that you only see once a week). Tell them to listen carefully because they will have to repeat the information to the rest of the class.

□ Go round the class and ask some students to report back on what their partner told them. Tell the rest of the class to listen carefully, because they will have to ask questions.

□ When each person has finished speaking, ask another pair or group to ask a question about what they heard. This will then be answered by the person whose experience was described.

**Example:**

'Sonia went to the cinema on Sunday evening and saw "Gladiator".'

(Group A): What did you think of the film?

(Sonia) : I enjoyed it.

(Group B): Why did you enjoy it?

(Sonia) : The acting was very good.

(Group C): Who did you go with?

(Sonia) : With my parents.

Notes

□ As this is a personalized activity which is based on true information, it should motivate the class, and help students to get to know each other, thus creating good classroom dynamics.

□ Very often it is the teacher who asks all the questions in class. This activity forces students to formulate questions themselves. It can be done by students who have learned the

Past Simple tense, and should produce more complex questions at higher levels.

### **The Gift Game**

**Aims:** to practice writing about likes and dislikes to revise or learn the names of objects e.g.

#### **Procedure:**

- Ask students to write their name on the top of a blank sheet of paper and collect the sheets in.
- Put the students in pairs and give each pair **two** of the sheets of paper, making sure they don't get their own sheets back.
- Tell the students that they have to choose a present for the two people whose names are on the papers, thinking carefully of what each person is interested in or likes doing. When they have chosen, they should write the name of the present on the paper with an explanation, e.g. *We are giving you a bicycle because you enjoy taking exercise*, or *Here is a box of chocolates because you like sweet things*.
- While students are doing the activity, go round and help them with the names of objects they don't know.
- When the students have finished, take in the papers and redistribute them to the people whose names are at the top.

## Notes

□ This can be a good way of improving group dynamics by allowing students to think about the interests and needs of other class members. It will not work so well if students don't know each other well.

□ Younger learners may enjoy drawing the objects on the piece of paper instead of writing the names.

□ If you like, or have time, students could write thanks you letters, and you can again distribute these to the givers of the gifts.

## Tell us about it

**Aims:** to practice asking questions to provide opportunities for free meaningful communication

### Procedure:

□ Ask each person in the class to think of something they know about but which the rest of the class may not be familiar with, giving some suggestions of areas to think about (and choosing a topic yourself). The precise focus will depend on your class, but it could be, for example, a hobby, an area of study, a place they have visited, a book they have read, a film or concert they have seen, their pet, a pop star or football team, etc.

□ Model the activity yourself by getting students to ask you about your chosen topic.



□ Choose one of the class members to answer questions. Ask this student to prepare points to tell the class, and offer to help with vocabulary problems.

□ Ask the class to prepare questions on the topic. It may be helpful for them to work in pairs to help preparation, and you should monitor to help and correct as necessary.

□ Go round the class getting students to ask their questions.

### **Notes**

□ This is potentially a good way of involving the class in a genuine information gap exchange, i.e. one person providing information that the other person does not know.

□ Be sure to allow students plenty of time to think of an area they know something about, and give plenty of suggestions. Stress that *everyone* knows about *something*, but if there is someone who genuinely can't think of a subject, don't put them on the spot. Tell students it doesn't matter if they can't answer all the questions.

□ As a variation at higher levels, you could get students to mill around asking each other questions more spontaneously. This can also be combined with practice of indirect questions, e.g. *Have you any idea when Timur was born? Could you tell me what the population of the village is?*

## Memory Game

**Aims:** to practice asking questions revision of descriptions, colours, etc., e.g.

### Procedure:

□ Put the students in pairs and arrange them so they are sitting back to back.

□ Tell them they are going to ask their partner questions about their clothes and appearance to test their memory and observation.

□ Remind them of the kind of questions they could ask, e.g. *What colour are my eyes (or socks etc.)? What kind of shoes (or sweater etc.) am I wearing? Am I wearing glasses (or earrings etc.)?*

□ Students take it in turns to ask and answer the questions. You should move around the classroom to make sure they don't look behind and cheat!

### Notes

□ This can be a good warmer at the beginning of a lesson, or a filler if you just have a few minutes left at the end.

□ As it can be quite a noisy activity, it is better to do it with a smaller group, or to move the students so they are not sitting too near to each other.

□ If you like, you could give students a few minutes to observe each other before they are put into pairs for the activity.

## My bedroom

**Aims:** to practice speaking and listening accurately and to revise the use of postpositions of place

### Procedure:

□ Tell the class that you are going to describe your bedroom (or kitchen, or living room), and they have to draw it by following your description. When you have finished, students can compare their drawings in pairs, and if you like you could hold up a large copy of your own.

□ At this stage, you might like to revise with the students the language they need for the activity, e.g. names of furniture, prepositions of place (e.g. *next to*, *opposite*), expressions of place (e.g. *in the right hand corner*).

□ Put students in pairs facing each other, and tell them they have to do the same; one describes their bedroom while the other draws.

□ When they have finished, they show their drawing to their partner, who comments on how accurate it is. They may then discuss the room, e.g. what they like/dislike about it, what they would like to change, etc.

### Notes

□ One of the many advantages of an information gap activity like this one is that students have to speak and listen carefully in order to complete the final product. If something is not clear, the listener may need to ask for clarification, encouraging the speaker to express him/herself more accurately.

You could teach or revise expressions such as 'Can you repeat that, please?' or 'Sorry, where's the X?'

□ It is up to you whether the students can see their partner's drawing as it is done. The advantage is that they have to rely on language rather than pointing. But lower levels or weaker students may find this too difficult.

□ Instead of drawing their bedroom, students may like to draw their ideal bedroom (this will require some initial planning), or a map of their house, or another place they know (e.g. a sports club or restaurant).

### **That's me!**

**Aims:** to revise giving personal information

**Procedure:**

□ Tell students that you are going to describe a person and that at the end they will have to guess who it is (it could be a famous person, or a real person known to the group, such as another teacher at the school). Include a physical description, some facts about the person's life, and a few details about their character. Elicit guesses from the class.

□ Now tell the students that they are going to write similar descriptions of themselves so that others will be able to guess who they are. They should try to include facts or characteristics that could only be true to them, and not of other people in the class.

□ Allow students a few minutes to write their descriptions on a piece of paper.

□ Put students in groups of about 6-10, and ask each group member to fold up their piece of paper and put it in a box. Then each person in turn has to take out a slip of paper and read out the description (if they draw out their own name, they put it back in the box and take another).

□ When the description has been read, the rest of the group have to guess who was being described, and to pick out the details that make that person unique. If they can't guess

because the description was too general, they should try to suggest some details that could only be true of that person, and of no-one else.

### **Notes**

□ This can be done as an open activity, as described above, or it could be tied to language recently done in class (e.g. likes/dislikes, *has got*, Present Perfect).

□ To make the activity more interesting and challenging, try excluding the physical description, and including ideas, beliefs, or abilities.

□ The students should aim to write in such a way that no-one else in the group could say "That's just like me!" In this way students also build their confidence in their own uniqueness.

## What's the question?

**Aims:** to help students get to know each other to practice forming questions

### Procedure:

□ Model the activity by writing a few words on the board, e.g. *Barcelona, 2001, Jessica, red*. Tell the class that this is some information about you, and that they have to ask the right questions to get the information. For example, for *Barcelona*, the question is *Where did you go on holiday last summer?* For *2001*, the question is *When did you start teaching at this school?*

□ Elicit suggestions for the other answers. Students are likely to produce several questions, until someone comes up with the correct one, i.e.. *What's the name of your cat?* (*Jessica*). *What colour is your car?* (*red*).

□ Tell students to write down 4-6 similar pieces of information about themselves on a piece of paper.

□ Put them in groups of three or four, and explain that each person in turn has to show their information to the other group members, and that they have to guess the correct questions.

□ As students are doing the activity, monitor and note down problems that students are having with question formation.

□ At the end, ask a representative from each group to tell the whole class one new thing they learned about each person in their group.

**Notes:**

□ This activity works well as an ice-breaker with a new class who do not know each other yet, or a class who do not know each other well.

□ You may like to finish the activity by giving the class a correct model of any questions they produced incorrectly. Alternatively, you may decide to do this in a later lesson.

**Find your partner**

**Aims:** to consolidate language learned in class to change the pace of the lesson

**Procedure:**

□ Give each student a small slip of paper, with the number or letter of one of the matching items on it. Ask them to copy out their item on the other side of their piece of paper. So, for example, if there are ten sentences, you will have twenty different pieces of paper.

□ Tell students to get up and move around the classroom until they have found the person whose half sentence matches their own. They should then sit down with their partner.

□ When everyone has finished, each pair read their sentence aloud to the rest of the class.

## Notes:

- This is a good way of bringing a matching exercise to life by turning it into a game. It also adds pace to a lesson.
- If there are more than twenty students in the class, you can repeat some sentences – but you need to make sure that the two halves match.
- You can also use this activity as a way of changing the class seating arrangements, since at the end of it students can sit down to work with a new partner.

## Engagement Diary

**Aims:** to practice language describing activities to revise making invitations and arrangements

### Procedure:

- Ask students to imagine that they have lots of free time next week and are going to go out with a friend every evening. Ask them to write on a piece of paper three things they would like to do (e.g. *go to the cinema / go shopping / play football*).
- Draw the following engagement diary on the board and ask students to copy it onto a blank piece of paper:

Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	



Thursday	
Friday	
Saturday	

Explain that they are going to move around the classroom talking to their classmates. The aim is to fill in their engagement diary. They should invite different people in turn to do join them doing one of the activities they have noted down. If the person agrees, they should decide on a day and time, and write it in their diary. Model on the board what they should write e.g.: *Weds: play tennis with Anna – 6.30*. When they have made one arrangement, they should move to another person and try to make another arrangement. They should continue until their diary is full for every evening.

- Move the furniture so everyone can move freely and let the activity run for the time you have available. Monitor to make sure students are doing the activity correctly, but try not to interfere.

- If you have time at the end, you could ask students to compare their diaries with a partner

### **Notes**

- This is quite a complicated activity, so ask questions to check students have understood your instructions.

- As with any mingling activity, make sure all the students move around freely, and are not stuck behind desks.

□ Make it clear to students that they don't have to accept an invitation for an activity they don't enjoy, but if they turn it down, they should give a polite excuse.

### **Howdy Howdy**

Participants stand in a circle. One person walks around the outside of the circle and taps someone on the shoulder. That person walks the opposite way around the circle, until the two people meet. They greet each other three times by name, in their own language. The two people then race back, continuing in opposite directions around the circle, to take the empty place. Whoever loses walks around the outside of the circle again and the game continues until everyone has had a turn.

### **Juggling Ball Game**

Everyone stands in a close circle. (If the group is very large, it may be necessary to split the group into two circles.) The facilitator starts by throwing the ball to someone in the circle, saying their name as they throw it. Continue catching and throwing the ball establishing a pattern for the group. (Each person must remember who they receive the ball from and who they have thrown it to.) Once everyone has received the ball and a pattern is established, introduce one or two more balls, so that there are always several balls being thrown at the same time, following the set pattern.

## **Names And Adjectives**

Participants think of an adjective to describe how they are feeling or how they are. The adjective must start with the same letter as their name, for instance, “I’m Henri and I’m happy”. Or, “I’m Arun and I’m amazing.” As they say this, they can also mime an action that describes the adjective.

## **Three Truths And A Lie**

Everyone writes their name, along with four pieces of information about themselves on a large sheet of paper. For example, ‘*Alfonse likes singing, loves football, has five wives and loves PRA*’. Participants then circulate with their sheets of paper. They meet in pairs, show their paper to each other, and try to guess which of the ‘facts’ is a lie.

## **Connecting Eyes**

Participants stand in a circle. Each person makes eye contact with another person across the circle. The two walk across the circle and exchange positions, while maintaining eye contact. Many pairs can exchange at the same time, and the group should try to make sure that everyone in the circle is included in the exchange. Begin by trying this in silence and then exchange greetings in the middle of the circle.

## **Match The Cards**

The facilitator chooses a number of well-known phrases, and writes half of each phrase on a piece of paper or card. For

example, they write *'Happy'* on one piece of paper and *'Birthday'* on another. (The number of pieces of paper should match the number of participants in the group.) The folded pieces of paper are put into a hat. Each participant takes a piece of paper from the hat and tries to find the member of the group with the matching half of the phrase.

### **Space On My Right**

Participants are seated in a circle. The facilitator arranges for the space on their right to remain empty. They then ask a member of the group to come and sit in the empty space; for example, "I would like Lili to come and sit on my right". Lili moves and there is now a space on the right of another participant. The participant who is sitting next to the empty space calls the name of someone different to sit on his or her right. Continue until the entire group has moved once.

### **What We Have In Common**

The facilitator calls out a characteristic of people in the group, such as *'having children'*. All those who have children should move to one corner of the room. As the facilitator calls out more characteristics, such as *'likes football'*, people with the characteristic move to the indicated space.

### **Who Is The Leader?**

Participants sit in a circle. One person volunteers to leave the room. After they leave, the rest of the group chooses a 'leader'. The leader must perform a series of actions, such as

clapping, tapping a foot, etc, that are copied by the whole group. The volunteer comes back into the room, stands in the middle and tries to guess who is leading the actions. The group protects the leader by not looking at him/her. The leader must change the actions at regular intervals, without getting caught. When the volunteer spots the leader, they join the circle, and the person who was the leader leaves the room to allow the group to choose a new leader.

### **Who Are You?**

Ask for a volunteer to leave the room. While the volunteer is away, the rest of the participants decide on an occupation for him/her, such as a driver, or a fisherman. When the volunteer returns, the rest of the participants mime activities. The volunteer must guess the occupation that has been chosen for him/her from the activities that are mimed.

### **What Kind Of Animal?**

Ask participants to divide into pairs and to form a circle. Put enough chairs in the circle so that all but one pair has seats. Each pair secretly decides what type of animal they are. The two participants without chairs are the elephants. They walk around the circle calling the names of different animals. Whenever they guess correctly the animals named have to stand up and walk behind the elephants, walking in mime. This continues until the elephants can guess no more. Then they call "Lions!" and all pairs run for seats. The pair left without chairs become the elephants for the next round.

## **Killer Wink**

Before the game starts, ask someone to be the ‘the killer’ and ask them to keep their identity a secret. Explain that one person among the group is the killer and they can kill people by winking at them. Everyone then walks around the room in different directions, keeping eye contact with everyone they pass. If the killer winks at you, you have to play dead. Everyone has to try and guess who the killer is.

## **The Sun Shines On...**

Participants sit or stand in a tight circle with one person in the middle. The person in the middle shouts out “the sun shines on ...” and names a color or articles of clothing that some in the group possess. For example, “the sun shines on all those wearing blue” or “the sun shines on all those wearing socks” or “the sun shines on all those with brown eyes”. All the participants who have that attribute must change places with one another. The person in the middle tries to take one of their places as they move, so that there is another person left in the middle without a place. The new person in the middle shouts out “the sun shines on...” and names a different color or type of clothing.

## **Coconut**

The facilitator shows the group how to spell out C-O-C-O-N-U-T by using full movements of the arms and the body. All participants then try this together.

## **Body Writing**

Ask participants to write their name in the air with a part of their body. They may choose to use an elbow, for example, or a leg. Continue in this way, until everyone has written his or her name with several body parts.

## **Names In The Air**

Ask participants to write their name in the air first with their right hand, then their left hand. Finally, ask them to write their name in the air with both hands at the same time.

## **Family Members**

Prepare cards with family names. You can use different types of professions, such as Mother Farmer, Father Farmer, Sister Farmer and Brother Farmer. Or you could use names of different animals or fruits. Each family should have four or five in it. Give each person one of the cards and ask everyone to walk around the room. Explain that when you call out, “family reunion”, everyone should try to form a ‘family group’ as quickly as possible.

## **Who Am I?**

Pin the name of a different famous person to each participant’s back, so that they cannot see it. Then ask participants to walk around the room, asking each other questions about the identity of their famous person. The

questions can only be answered by “yes” or “no”. The game continues until everyone has figured out who they are.

### **As And Bs**

Ask everyone to choose silently someone in the room that is their ‘A’ person and another person who is their ‘B’ person. There are no particular criteria on which to base their choices - selections are entirely up to individuals. Once everyone has made their choices, tell them to get as close to their respective ‘A’ person as possible, while getting as far away from their ‘B’ person. People can move quickly but should not grab or hold anyone. After a few minutes, participants stop and reverse the process, getting close to their ‘B’ persons and avoiding their ‘A’ persons.

### **Group Statues**

Ask the group to move around the room, loosely swinging their arms and gently relaxing their heads and necks. After a short while, shout out a word. The group must form themselves into statues that describe the word. For example, the facilitator shouts “peace”. All the participants have to instantly adopt, without talking, poses that show what ‘peace’ means to them. Repeat the exercise several times.

### **Move To The Spot**

Ask everyone to choose a particular spot in the room. They start the game by standing on their ‘spot’. Instruct people to walk around the room and carry out a particular action, for



example, hopping, saying hello to everyone wearing blue or walking backwards, etc. When the facilitator says “Stop”, everyone must run to his or her original spots. The person who reaches their place first is the next leader and can instruct the group to do what they wish.

### **Banana Game**

A banana or other object such as a bunch of keys is selected. The participants stand in a circle with their hands behind their backs. One person volunteers to stand in the middle. The facilitator walks around the outside of the circle and secretly slips the banana into someone’s hand. The banana is then secretly passed round the circle behind the participant’s backs. The job of the volunteer in the middle is to study people’s faces and work out who has the banana. When successful, the volunteer takes that place in the circle and the game continues with a new person in the middle.

### **Taxi Rides**

Ask participants to pretend that they are getting into taxis. The taxis can only hold a certain number of people, such as two, four, or eight. When the taxis stop, the participants have to run to get into the right sized groups. This is a useful game for randomly dividing participants into groups.

### **Fruit Salad**

The facilitator divides the participants into an equal number of three to four fruits, such as oranges and bananas. Participants

then sit on chairs in a circle. One person must stand in the centre of the circle of chairs. The facilitator shouts out the name of one of the fruits, such as ‘oranges’, and all of the oranges must change places with one another. The person who is standing in the middle tries to take one of their places as they move, leaving another person in the middle without a chair. The new person in the middle shouts another fruit and the game continues. A call of ‘fruit salad’ means that everyone has to change seats.

### **“Prrr” And “Pukutu”**

Ask everyone to imagine two birds. One calls ‘prrr’ and the other calls ‘pukutu’. If you call out ‘prrr’, all the participants need to stand on their toes and move their elbows out sideways, as if they were a bird ruffling its wings. If you call out ‘pukutu’, everyone has to stay still and not move a feather.

### **Dancing On Paper**

Facilitators prepare equal sized sheets of newspaper or cloth. Participants split into pairs. Each pair is given either a piece of newspaper or cloth. They dance while the facilitator plays music or claps. When the music or clapping stops, each pair must stand on their sheet of newspaper or cloth. The next time the music or clapping stops, the pair has to fold their paper or cloth in half before standing on it. After several rounds, the paper or cloth becomes very small by being folded again and again. It is increasingly difficult for two people to stand on.

Pairs that have any part of their body on the floor are 'out' of the game. The game continues until there is a winning pair.

### **Tide's In/Tide's Out**

Draw a line representing the seashore and ask participants to stand behind the line. When the facilitator shouts "Tide's out!", everyone jumps forwards over the line. When the leader shouts "Tide's in!", everyone jumps backwards over the line. If the facilitator shouts "Tide's out!" twice in a row, participants who move have to drop out of the game.

### **Delhi Buses**

This game can be called after any type of local transport. Select a number of 'drivers'. Assign a certain number of passengers for each driver to pick up. (Make sure that you have counted correctly, so that no one is left without a ride!) Ask the drivers to go around the room making vehicle noises and touting for business. The passengers form up behind or alongside their driver to make it look like they are in a vehicle. Now all the 'vehicles' drive around as if in traffic, sounding their horns and shouting at other drivers and vehicles.

### **Rabbits**

Someone starts by putting both hands up to their ears and wagging their fingers. The people on either side of this person put up one hand only, to the ear nearest the person with both hands up. The person with both hands up then points to another person across the circle. This person now puts both hands up to

their ears and waggles their fingers. The people on either side have to put up the hand nearest the person with both hands up and waggle their fingers. The game continues in this way until everyone has been a ‘rabbit’.

### **Port/Starboard**

Participants stand in the centre of the room. If the leader shouts “Starboard”, everyone runs to the right. If they shout “Port”, everyone runs left and if they shout “Man the ship”, everyone runs back to the centre. Other statements can be introduced; for example, “Climb the rigging” when everyone pretends to climb, “Scrub the decks”, and so on.

### **I’m Going On A Trip**

Everyone sits in a circle. Start by saying “I’m going on a trip and I’m taking a hug”, and hug the person to your right. That person then has to say “I’m going on a trip and I’m taking a hug and a pat on the back”, and then give the person on their right a hug and a pat on the back. Each person repeats what has been said and adds a new action to the list. Go round the circle until everyone has had a turn.

### **Find Someone Wearing...**

Ask participants to walk around loosely, shaking their limbs and generally relaxing. After a short while, the facilitator shouts out “Find someone...” and names an article of clothing. The participants have to rush to stand close to the person described.

Repeat this exercise several times using different types of clothing.

### **Touch Something Blue**

Ask participants to stand up. Explain that you will tell everyone to find something blue, and that they have to go and touch it. This could be a blue shirt, pen, shoe or whatever. Continue the game in this way, asking participants to call out their own suggestions for things to touch.

### **Simon Says**

The facilitator tells the group that they should follow instructions when the facilitator starts the instruction by saying “Simon says...” If the facilitator does **not** begin the instructions with the words “Simon says”, then the group should not follow the instructions! The facilitator begins by saying something like “Simon says clap your hands” while clapping their hands. The participants follow. The facilitator speeds up the actions, always saying “Simon says” first. After a short while, the “Simon says” is omitted. Those participants who do follow the instructions anyway are ‘out’ of the game. The game can be continued for as long as it remains fun.

### **What Has Changed?**

Participants break into pairs. Partners observe one another and try to memorize the appearance of each other. Then one turns their back while the other makes three changes to his/her appearance; for example, putting their watch on the other wrist,

removing their glasses, and rolling up their sleeves. The other player then turns around and has to try to spot the three changes. The players then switch roles.

### **Birthday Graph**

Ask people to line up according to their birthday months or seasons. Discuss which month or season has the largest number and what reasons there might be for this.

### **Body 'TIG'**

Explain to participants that you will 'tig' someone. They then use just the part of their body that you have 'tiggered' to 'tig' someone else in turn. Continue the game until everyone has been 'tiggered'.

### **Five Islands**

Draw five circles with chalk on the floor, big enough to accommodate all of the participants. Give each island a name. Ask everyone to choose the island that they would like to live on. Then warn participants that one of the islands will sink into the sea very soon and participants on that island will be forced to move quickly to another island. Allow the suspense to build and then call out the name of the island that is sinking. Participants run to the other four islands. The game continues until everyone is squashed onto one island.

## **The Animal Game**

This game helps to divide a large group into smaller groups. Make slips of paper for each member of the large group. Write the name of an animal on each slip, using as many different animals as you need smaller groups. Hand the papers out at random and ask people to make the noise of their animal to find the other members of their smaller group.

## **Mime A Lie**

Everyone stands in a circle. The facilitator starts by miming an action. When the person on their right says their name and asks “What are you doing?”, they reply that they are doing something completely different; for example, the facilitator mimes swimming and says “I am washing my hair.” The person to the facilitator’s right then has to mime what the facilitator said that they were doing (washing their hair), while saying that they are doing something completely different. Go around the circle in this way until everyone has had a turn.

## **Bring Me**

Participants sort themselves into small teams, and the teams stand as far as possible from the facilitator. The facilitator then calls out “Bring me...”, and names an object close by. For example, “Bring me a man’s or woman’s shoes.” The teams race to bring what has been requested. You can repeat this several times, asking the teams to bring different things.

## **The King Is Dead**

The first player turns to their neighbour and says, “The king is dead!” The neighbour asks, “How did he die?”, and the first player responds, “He died doing this”, and starts a simple gesture or movement. All participants repeat this gesture continuously. The second player repeats the statement and the third player asks, “How did he die?” The second player adds another gesture or movement. The whole group then copies these two movements. The process continues around the circle until there are too many movements to remember.

## **Locomotion**

Everyone sits in a circle and a leader stands in the middle. The leader then walks or runs around the outside of the circle, imitating some means of locomotion such as a car, a train or swimming. S/he stops in front of several people, gives them a signal and they follow the leader, imitating the form of locomotion. When the leader has six to ten people behind him/her, s/he shouts 'All change’ and everyone, including the leader, races for a seat. The person who is left without a seat must start the game again, with a different form of locomotion.

## **Paper And Straws**

Participants split into teams. Each team forms a line and places a piece of card at the beginning of their line. Each member of the team has a drinking straw or reed. When the game starts, the first person has to pick up the piece of card by



sucking on the straw. The card then has to be passed to the next team member using the same method. If the card drops, it goes back to the first person and the whole sequence has to start again.

### **Don't Answer**

Ask the group to stand in a circle. One person starts by going up to someone and asking them a question such as, "What is your most annoying habit?" However, they must not answer the question themselves the person to their left must answer. People can make their answers as imaginative as possible!

### **Tug Of War**

The participants split into two teams. Each team takes one end of the rope. The teams have to pull on the rope to bring the opposite team towards them.

### **Pass The Parcel**

The facilitator has wrapped a small gift with many different layers of paper. On each layer they have written a task or a question. Examples of tasks are '*sing a song*' or '*hug the person next to you*'. Examples of questions are '*What is your favourite colour?*' or '*What is your name?*' The facilitator starts the music, or claps their hands if there is no music available. The participants pass the parcel around the circle, or throw it to each other. When the facilitator stops the music or the clapping, the person who is holding the parcel tears off one layer of paper

and carries out the task or answers the question that is written on the paper. The game continues until all the layers have been unwrapped. The gift goes to the last person to take off the wrapping.

### **Fox And Rabbit**

You need two scarves for this game. Participants stand in a circle. One scarf is called '*Fox*' and the other is called '*Rabbit*'. '*Fox*' must be tied around the neck with one knot. '*Rabbit*' is tied around the neck with two knots. Start by choosing two participants who are opposite each other in the circle. Tie the '*Fox*' scarf around one person's neck and the '*Rabbit*' scarf around the other. Say "go". People need to untie their scarves and retie them around the neck of the person on their right or left. The scarves should travel in the same direction around the circle. The '*Fox*' scarf with only one knot will travel faster than the '*Rabbit*' scarf. The people tying the two knots for the '*Rabbit*' scarf will try to go faster and faster to get away from the '*Fox*' scarf.

### **The Longest Line**

This game requires a lot of space and may need to be done outdoors. Divide into teams of eight to ten people. Each team must have the same number of members. Explain that the task is to create the longest line using participants own bodies and any clothing or things in members pockets. Participants are not allowed to collect other things from the room/outside. Give a

signal for the game to start and set a time limit, such as two minutes. The team with the longest line wins.

### **Robots**

Divide the participants into groups of three. One person in each group is the robot controller and the other two are the robots. Each controller must manage the movements of their two robots. The controller touches a robot on the right shoulder to move them to the right, and touches them on the left shoulder to move them to the left. The facilitator begins the game by telling the robots to walk in a specific direction. The controller must try to stop the robots from crashing into obstacles such as chairs and tables. Ask participants to swap roles so that everyone has a chance to be the controller and a robot.

### **King Of The Jungle**

The group sits in a semi-circle. The ‘King of the Jungle’ (usually an elephant) sits on one end of the semi-circle. This person makes a sign to show they are sitting in the elephant’s position. At the other end of the semi-circle sits the monkey, and the person in this seat makes an appropriate sign. All the seats in between belong to different animals, such as lions, fish, and snakes, which people define with different signs. Once everyone has defined the sign for their seat, the game begins. The elephant makes their sign, and then makes the sign of another animal. That animal makes his or her own sign, then the sign of another animal, and so it continues. If someone makes a mistake, or doesn’t notice that their sign has been made, they

have to swap places with the person next to them, moving down towards the monkey. They then take on the sign of the seat they now occupy, and the person who moves up a place takes their sign. The aim is to move all the way up to take the place of the King of the Jungle.

### **Pass The Energy**

Participants stand or sit in a circle, hold hands and silently concentrate. The facilitator sends a series of *'pulses'* both ways round the group by discreetly squeezing the hands of those next to her/him. Participants pass these pulses round the circle, as in an electric current, by squeezing the hand of the person next to them and literally *'energizing'* the group.

### **Bottle Game**

Participants stand in a circle. In the first round, a bottle (or some other object) is passed around the circle. Participants have to do something with the bottle, such as kiss it, rub it, or turn it upside down. In the second round, tell participants to remember what they did with the bottle, and do the same thing to the person standing on their right.

### **How Do You Like Your Neighbour?**

Ask participants to sit in a circle. Go around the circle and number each person one, two, three, four, etc. One person stands in the middle and one chair is removed. The person in the centre points to someone and asks them, "How do you like your neighbour?" If the person replies "I like him", everyone

gets up and moves to another chair. There will be one person left standing, who then takes their turn in the centre of the circle and asks someone, “How do you like your neighbour?” If the person replies “I don’t like him”, the person in the middle asks him/her “Who do you want?” The person calls out two numbers. The two people whose numbers have been called have to get up and change chairs with the two people on either side of the answerer.

### **Dragon’s Tail**

Ask the group to divide into two. The two groups form dragons by holding on to one another’s waists in a long line. The last person in the line has a brightly coloured scarf tucked into his/her trousers or belt, to form the dragon’s tail. The object is to catch the tail of the other dragon without losing your own tail in the process.

### **Group Massage**

Ask the group to stand in a circle and turn sideways so that each person is facing the back of the person in front of them. People then massage the shoulders of the person in front of them.

### **Pass The Person**

Participants stand in two lines facing each other. Each person tightly grasps the arms of the person opposite. A volunteer lies face up across the arms of the pairs at the beginning of the line. Pairs lift their arms up and down to move

the volunteer gently on to the next pair. The game continues until the volunteer is '*bumped*' all the way to the end of the line.

### **Blindfold Pairs**

An obstacle course is set out on the floor for everyone to look at. Participants split into pairs. One of the pair puts a scarf around their eyes, or closes their eyes tightly so they cannot see. The obstacles are quietly removed. The other member of the pair now gives advice and direction to their partner to help them safely negotiate what are now imaginary obstacles.

### **I Like You Because...**

Ask participants to sit in a circle and say what they like about the person on their right. Give them time to think about it first!

### **Heads To Tummies**

People lie on the floor in a chain so that each person has their head on another person's stomach. Someone will laugh. Hearing someone laugh through their stomach makes the next person laugh and so on round the chain.

### **Ball Under Chins**

Make some small balls out of any material that is available, such as crumpled paper. Participants split into teams and each team forms a line. The line passes a ball under their chins. If the ball drops, it has to go back to the beginning of the line. The

game continues until one team has finished passing the ball along their line.

### **Knees Up**

Participants stand in a close circle with their shoulders touching and then turn, so that their right shoulders are facing into the centre of the circle. Ask everyone to put their hand on the shoulder of the person in front and to carefully sit down so that everyone is sitting on the knees of the person behind them.

### **Get Up, Sit Down!**

Give each participant a number (several participants could have the same number). Then tell a story that involves lots of numbers - when you say a number, the person(s) with this number has (have) to stand up.

### **Knots**

Participants stand in a circle and join hands. Keeping their hands joined, they move in any way that they want, twisting and turning and creating a '*knot*'. They must then unravel this knot, without letting go of one another's hands.

### **Coin Game**

Participants divide into two lines. The two people at the end of each line start the race by dropping a coin down their clothes. When it drops free on the floor, they hand the coin to the next

person in the line who does the same. The race continues until the coin has reached the end of one of the lines.

### **Countdown**

Ask participants to form a circle. Explain that the group needs to count together from one to 50. There are a few rules: they are not to say '*seven*' or any number which is a multiple of seven. Instead, they have to clap their hands. Once someone claps their hands, the group must count the numbers in reverse. If someone says seven or a multiple of seven, start the counting again.

### **Fizz Buzz**

Go round the group counting upwards. The group replaces any number divisible by three with '*fizz*', any number divisible by five with '*buzz*', and any number divisible by both three and five with '*fizz buzz*'. Count up and see how high you can go!

### **Group Balance**

Ask participants to get into pairs. Ask pairs to hold hands and sit down then stand up, without letting go of one another's hands. Repeat the same exercise in groups of four people. Then form into groups of eight people holding hands in a circle. Ask members in each group to number off in even and odd numbers. At a signal, ask the even numbers to fall backwards while the odd numbers fall forwards, achieving a group balance.



## **Leading And Guiding**

Participants split into pairs. One participant puts on a blindfold. Their partner then leads them carefully around the area making sure they don't trip or bump into anything. After some time, the facilitator asks the pairs to swap roles. At the end, participants discuss how they felt when they had to trust someone else to keep them safe.

## **Clap Exchange**

Participants sit or stand in a circle. They send a clap around the circle by facing and clapping in unison with the person on their right, who repeats the clap with the person on their right, and so on. Do this as fast as possible. Send many claps, with different rhythms, around the circle at the same time.

## **People To People**

Everyone finds a partner. A leader calls out actions such as "nose to nose", "back to back", "head to knee", etc. Participants have to follow these instructions in their pairs. When the leader calls "people to people" everyone must change partners.

## **Count To Seven**

The group sits in a circle and someone starts the process of counting. Each person counts in sequence. When the counting reaches seven, the next person starts over with the number one. Every time someone says a number, they use their hands to point out the direction that the counting should go in.

## **Football Cheering**

The group pretends that they are attending a football game. The facilitator allocates specific cheers to various sections of the circle, such as '*Pass*', '*Kick*', '*Dribble*' or '*Header*'. When the facilitator points at a section, that section shouts their cheer. When the facilitator raises his/her hands in the air, everyone shouts "Goal!"

## **An Orchestra Without Instruments**

Explain to the group that they are going to create an 'orchestra' without instruments. The orchestra will only use sounds that can be made by the human body. Players can use hands, feet, voice etc, but no words; for example, they could whistle, hum, sigh or stomp their feet. Each player should select a sound. Choose a well-known tune and ask everyone to play along, using the 'instrument' that they have chosen. Alternatively, don't give a tune and let the group surprise itself by creating a unique sound.

## **Hands Slapping**

Ask participants to kneel on the floor, link arms with the people on either side of them, and place their palms flat on the floor. Now ask people to slap their palms on the floor in turn so that it goes round the circle. Having linked arms makes it difficult to work out which hand is your own! If someone makes a mistake, they have to put a hand behind their back and the game continues.

### **Pass The Action**

Participants sit in a circle. One person (A) stands in the centre. A moves towards another person (B) using a specific action, such as jumping. When s/he reaches B, s/he takes B's place and B then moves to the centre of the circle using A's action or movement. When B reaches the centre, s/he walks towards C, using a new action or movement. The game continues in this way until everyone has taken part.

### **Clap And Point**

Participants form a circle. The facilitator sends a clap all the way around the circle, first in one direction, then in the other direction. The facilitator then shows participants how they can change the direction of the clap, by pointing the clapping hands in the opposite direction. Repeat this until the clap is running smoothly around the group and changing direction without missing a beat. Finally, show how you can 'throw' the clap by pointing the clapping hands at someone across the circle.

### **Rainstorm**

Everyone sits quietly in a circle, with their eyes closed, waiting for the facilitator's first movement. The facilitator rubs their palms together to create the sound of rain. The person to their right makes this sound, and then the next person until everyone in the group is making the same sound. Once everyone is rubbing palms, the facilitator makes the rain sound louder by snapping his/her fingers, and that sound in turn is

passed around the circle. Then the facilitator claps both hands together, and that sound is passed around the circle to create a rainstorm. Then the facilitator slaps their thighs, and the group follows. When the facilitator and the group stomp their feet, the rain becomes a hurricane. To indicate the storm is stopping, the facilitator reverses the order, thigh slapping, then hand clapping, finger snapping, and palm rubbing, ending in silence.

### **Statue Stop**

Ask participants to form two circles of people of equal numbers. The people in the inner circle should face outwards. The people in the outer circle should face inwards. Each person in the outer circle uses the person opposite them in the inner circle to create a 'statue'. They have only ten seconds to do this. The person in the inner circle allows the 'sculptor' to bend and twist their body into any shape that they wish, provided they do not hurt them. The 'statue' must remain in that position without speaking, until you call 'time'. The outer circle then moves round one person to the left and they begin sculpting again. The people in the inner circle are bent and twisted into new positions through this process. Continue in this way and then ask people in the inner circle to change with people in the outer circle so that everyone has a chance to be 'sculptor' and 'statue'.

### **Orchestra**

Divide the group into two and ask half to slap their knees and the other half to clap their hands. The facilitator acts as the

conductor of the orchestra, controlling the volume by raising or lowering their arms. The game can continue with different members of the group taking the role of conductor.

### **Stand, Sit And Sing**

Participants sit in a circle and sing a song they all know. Choose two letters which occur frequently in the song, and ask the men to stand up when they sing a word beginning with one letter and the women to stand up when they sing a word beginning with the other letter. For example, all the men have to stand up each time the group sings a word that starts with the letter 'm', while all the females have to stand up every time the group sings a word that starts with the letter 'f'.

### **Passing The Rhythm**

Participants sit in a circle. The facilitator establishes a rhythm; for example, clapping your thighs, clapping your hands together, then clapping your neighbour's hands. This rhythm is then passed around the circle. Once the rhythm is moving steadily through the group, try to speed it up. Once the group can do this, try inserting more rhythms into the circle so that several rhythms are being passed around the circle at the same time.

## **Messenger**

Before the game starts, the facilitator builds something out of blocks and covers it with a cloth. Participants are divided into small groups and each group is given a set of blocks. Each group selects a ‘messenger’ to look under the cloth. The messengers report back to their groups about what they have seen under the cloth. They must give their group instructions for how to build the same thing. The messengers are not allowed to touch the blocks or to demonstrate how it should be done - they can only describe how it should look. The group can send the messenger to have a second look at the structure. When all the groups are finished, the structures are compared to the original.

## **Drawing Game**

Participants work in pairs, sitting back to back. One person in each pair has a simple drawing. The other person has a blank piece of paper and a pen. The person with the drawing describes it in detail so that the other person can reproduce the drawing on their sheet of paper.

## **Mirror Image**

Participants sort themselves into pairs. Each pair decides which one of them will be the ‘mirror’. This person then copies (mirrors) the actions of their partner. After some time, ask the pair to swap roles so that the other person can be the ‘mirror’.

## **Hokey Cokey**

Participants stand in a circle to sing the song and do the actions. The first verse goes like this:

*You put your RIGHT FOOT in*

*You put your RIGHT FOOT out*

*In, out, in, out*

*And you shake it all about*

*You do the hokey-cokey (wiggling waist)*

*And you turn around*

*That's what it's all about!*

With each new verse substitute a different body part for 'right foot' - left foot, right arm, left arm, head, and whole self.

## **Muddling Messages**

Participants sit in a circle. Think of a long message, such as "I'm going to go to the market to buy some bananas and mangos tomorrow morning, and then I am going to meet my cousin for lunch". Whisper this message to the person sitting on your right. That person then whispers the same message to the person on their right and so on. Once the message has been passed around the circle, ask the last person to say the message aloud. Compare the final message with the original version.

## **Talking Object**

Participants sit in a circle. An object is passed around the circle. The person who receives the object has to talk continuously until his/her neighbour decides to take the object.

## **Samson And Delilah**

The game revolves around the story of Samson and Delilah and the lion. Participants divide into two teams and stand in two lines, with their backs to the other team. Each team decides whether they will be Samson, Delilah or the lion, without telling the other team. They turn around to face the other team and mime an action representing who they are. For example, a sexy pose could represent Delilah, flexed muscles could be Samson, and a ferocious roar could represent the lion. Delilah defeats Samson, Samson defeats the lion, and the lion defeats Delilah. Sometimes, neither group will defeat the other because they will both choose to be the same thing!

## **Yes/No Game**

Participants split into two lines, so that each person faces a partner. Line one has to say “Yes” in as many different ways as possible, and line two has to try to change their partner’s minds by saying “No” as convincingly as possible. Give both lines a chance to say both “Yes” and “No”. Then discuss how people felt. How did it feel to say “Yes” or “No”? Was it easier to say one than another?



## **THE “E” GAME**

Write a large, curvy letter E on a piece of flipchart paper and place it in the centre of the circle. Ask participants to describe exactly what they see on the piece of paper, from where they are standing/sitting. Depending on where they are in the circle, they will either see an ‘m’, a ‘w’, a ‘3’ or an ‘E’. Participants can then move places so that they see the letter from a different perspective. This is a useful activity to highlight the fact that people see things very differently, according to their own specific perspective. Alternatively, put a person in the centre of the circle and ask those around to describe exactly what they see from their perspective.

## **Sagidi Sagidi Sapopo**

The group forms a circle or a line. The facilitator teaches everyone the simple chant “Sagidi sagidi sapopo”. Every time the group chants “Sagidi sagidi sapopo”, the facilitator makes a different action, such as clicking fingers or clapping, to the rhythm of the chant. With each new repetition of the chant, each person copies the actions of the person to their left so that everyone is always one move behind the person to their left.

## **What Are We Doing?**

Two teams line up at opposite ends of the room. Team A are the Mimes and Team B are the Tigers. Team A decides secretly on an activity to be mimed. They walk toward Team B, coming as close as they dare, and then act out their mime. Team

B tries to guess what is being mimed. When they succeed they try to tag members of Team A before they can get back to their goal line. All who are tagged join the Tiger's side. After the first round, get the teams to swap roles.

### **What Is The Adverb?**

One participant leaves the room and the others choose an adverb; for example, 'quickly' or 'sleepily'. When the leaver returns, s/he must find out what the adverb is by commanding people to do various actions 'in that way'. For example, if the leaver says "Talk that way", the group must talk 'quickly' or 'sleepily'. After each command, the participant tries to guess the word.

### **Shopping List**

The group forms a circle. One person starts by saying "I am going to the market to buy fish." The next person says, "I am going to the market to buy fish and potatoes." Each person repeats the list, and then adds an item. The aim is to be able to remember all of the items that all of the people before you have listed.

### **What Am I Feeling?**

Participants sit in a circle. Each person takes a turn acting out an emotion. Other participants try to guess what feeling the person is acting out. The person who guesses correctly acts out the next emotion.

## **O Dililah!**

Everyone in turn has to say “O Dililah!” (or another name) in as many different ways as possible, for example with anger, with fear, with laughter, and so on.

## **Presenting Gifts**

This can be used at the end of a workshop. Put participants’ names in a box or bag. Pass the box or bag around and ask each person to pick a name. If they get their own name they have to put it back and choose another. Give the group a few minutes to think of an imaginary gift they would present to the person whose name they have drawn. Ask them also to think how they would present it. Go round the group asking each person to present their imaginary gift.

## **Writing On Backs**

At the end of a workshop, ask participants to stick a piece of paper on their backs. Each participant then writes something they like, admire or appreciate about that person on the paper on their backs. When they have all finished, participants can take their papers home with them as a reminder.

## **Reflecting On The Day**

To help people to reflect on the activities of the day, make a ball out of paper and ask the group to throw the ball to each other in turn. When they have the ball, participants can say one thing they thought about the day.

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**ACTIVITIES FOR FUN**

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