

# **Games and Fun Activities to Motivate Cadets in a Second Language**

## **Introduction**

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Games and fun activities are a vital part of teaching English as a foreign language. Whether you're teaching adults or children, games will liven up your lesson and ensure that your cadets will leave the classroom wanting more [1].

Games can be used to warm up the class before your lesson begins, during the lesson to give cadets a break when you're tackling a tough subject, or at the end of class when you have a few minutes left to kill. There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of games that you can play with your cadets. EFL games are used to test vocabulary, practice conversing, learn tenses - the list is endless.

This list of ten classic ESL games every teacher should know will help get you started and feeling prepared. Having these up your sleeve before stepping into the classroom will ensure your lessons run smoothly, and, should things get a little out of control, you'll be able to pull back the attention of the class in no time [1].

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### **1. Board Race**

There isn't an EFL teacher I know who doesn't use this game in the classroom. Board Race is a fun game that is used for revising vocabulary, whether it be words from the lesson you've just taught or words from a lesson you taught last week. It can also be used at the start of the class to

get cadets active. It is a great way of testing what your cadets already know about the subject you're about to teach.

Why use it? Revising vocabulary; grammar

Who it's best for: Appropriate for all levels and ages

How to play:

First, watch this helpful video of real teachers using this game in the classroom by BridgeTEFL:

This is best played with 6 cadets or more - the more, the better. I've used it in classes ranging from 7-25 years of age and it's worked well in all age groups. Here's a step by step explanation:

Split the class into two teams and give each team a colored marker.

If you have a very large class, it may be better to split the cadets into teams of 3 or 4.

Draw a line down the middle of the board and write a topic at the top.

The cadets must then write as many words as you require related to the topic in the form of a relay race.

Each team wins one point for each correct word. Any words that are unreadable or misspelled are not counted [3].

## 2. Call My Bluff / Two Truths and A Lie

Call My Bluff is a fun game which is perfect at the start of term as a 'getting to know you' kind of game. It is also a brilliant ice breaker between cadets if you teach classes who do not know one another -- and especially essential if you are teaching a small class size.

The game is excellent for practicing speaking skills, though make sure you save a time for after the game to comment on any mistakes cadets may have made during the game. (I generally like to reserve this for after the game, so you don't disrupt their fluency by correcting them as they speak).

With older groups you can have some real fun and you might be surprised what you'll learn about some of your cadets when playing this particular EFL game.

Why use it? Ice-breaker; Speaking skills

Who it's best for: Appropriate for all levels and ages but best with older groups

How to play:

Write 3 statements about yourself on the board, two of which should be lies and one which should be true.

Allow your cadets to ask you questions about each statement and then guess which one is the truth. You might want to practice your poker face before starting this game!

If they guess correctly then they win.

Extension: Give cadets time to write their own two truths and one lie.

Pair them up and have them play again, this time with their list, with their new partner. If you want to really extend the game and give cadets even more time to practice their speaking/listening skills, rotate partners every five minutes.

Bring the whole class back together and have cadets announce one new thing they learned about another cadet as a recap [3].

### 3. Word Jumble Race

This is a great game to encourage team work and bring a sense of competition to the classroom. No matter how old we are, we all love a good competition and this game works wonders with all age groups. It is perfect for practicing tenses, word order, reading & writing skills and grammar.

Why use it? Grammar; Word Order; Spelling; Writing Skills

Who it's best for: Adaptable to all levels/ages

How to play:

This game requires some planning before the lesson.

Write out a number of sentences, using different colors for each sentence. I suggest having 3-5 sentences for each team.

Cut up the sentences so you have a handful of words.

Put each sentence into hats, cups or any objects you can find, keeping each separate.

Split your class into teams of 2, 3, or 4. You can have as many teams as you want but remember to have enough sentences to go around.

Teams must now put their sentences in the correct order.

The winning team is the first team to have all sentences correctly ordered [3].

#### 4. Pictionary

This is another game that works well with any age group; children love it because they can get creative in the classroom, teenagers love it because it doesn't feel like they're learning, and adults love it because it's a break from the monotony of learning a new language - even though they'll be learning as they play.

Pictionary can help cadets practice their vocabulary and it tests to see if they're remembering the words you've been teaching.

Why use it? Vocabulary

Who it's best for: All ages; best with young learners

How to play:

Before the class starts, prepare a bunch of words and put them in a bag.

Split the class into teams of 2 and draw a line down the middle of the board.

Give one team member from each team a pen and ask them to choose a word from the bag.

Tell the cadets to draw the word as a picture on the board and encourage their team to guess the word.

The first team to shout the correct answer gets a point.

The cadet who has completed drawing should then nominate someone else to draw for their team.

Repeat this until all the words are gone - make sure you have enough words that each cadet gets to draw at least once! [3]

## 5. The Mime

Miming is an excellent way for cadets to practice their tenses and their verbs. It's also great for teachers with minimal resources or planning time, or teachers who want to break up a longer lesson with something more interactive. It's adaptable to almost any language point that you might be focusing on.

This game works with any age group, although you will find that adults tire of this far quicker than children. To keep them engaged, relate what they will be miming to your groups' personal interests as best as possible.

Why use it? Vocabulary; Speaking

Who it's best for: All ages; best with young learners

How to play:

Before the class, write out some actions - like washing the dishes - and put them in a bag.

Split the class into two teams.

Bring one cadet from each team to the front of the class and one of them choose an action from the bag.

Have both cadets mime the action to their team.

The first team to shout the correct answer wins a point.

Repeat this until all cadets have mimed at least one action.

Don't be afraid to be a little goofy [3]

## 6. Hot Seat

This is one of my cadets' favorite games and is always at the top of the list when I ask them what they want to play. I have never used this while teaching ESL to adults, but I imagine it would work well.

Hot Seat allows cadets to build their vocabulary and encourages competition in the classroom. They are also able to practice their speaking and listening skills and it can be used for any level of learner.

Why use it? Vocabulary; Speaking and Listening

Who it's best for: All ages and levels

How to play:

Split the class into 2 teams, or more if you have a large class.

Elect one person from each team to sit in the Hot Seat, facing the classroom with the board behind them.

Write a word on the board. One of the team members of the cadet in the hot seat must help the cadet guess the word by describing it. They have a limited amount of time and cannot say, spell or draw the word.

Continue until each team member has described a word to the cadet in the Hot Seat [3].

## 7. Where Shall I Go?

This game is used to test prepositions of movement and should be played after this subject has been taught in the classroom. This game is so much fun but it can be a little bit dangerous since you'll be having one cadet in each pair be blindfolded while the other directs them. So make sure to keep your eyes open!

It is also excellent for the adult EFL classroom, or if you're teaching teenagers.

Why use it? Prepositions; Speaking and Listening

Who it's best for: All ages and levels

How to play:

Before the cadets arrive, turn your classroom into a maze by rearranging it. It's great if you can do this outside, but otherwise push tables and chairs together and move furniture to make your maze.

When your cadets arrive, put them in pairs outside the classroom. Blindfold one cadet from each pair.

Allow pairs to enter the classroom one at a time; the blindfolded cadet should be led through the maze by their partner. The cadets must use directions such as step over, go under, go up, and go down to lead their partner to the end of the maze [3].

#### 8. What's My Problem?

This is a brilliant EFL game to practice giving advice. It should be played after the 'giving advice' vocabulary lesson has taken place. It is a great way for cadets to see what they have remembered and what needs reviewing. This game works well with any age group, just adapt it to fit the age you're working with [3].

Why use it? Speaking and Listening; Giving Advice

Who it's best for: All ages and levels

How to play:

Write ailments or problems related to your most recent lesson on post-it notes and stick one post-it note on each cadet's back..

The cadets must mingle and ask for advice from other cadets to solve their problem.

Cadets should be able to guess their problem based on the advice they get from their peers.

Use more complicated or obscure problems to make the game more interesting for older cadets. For lower levels and younger cadets, announce a category or reference a recent lesson, like "Health", to help them along [2].

## Conclusion

These games will keep your cadets engaged and happy as they learn! Remember, these are just ten on the hundreds of different EFL games that you can play with your cadets. As you get more confident in the classroom, you can start putting your own spin on games and eventually make up your own.

Whatever the age of your cadets, they're guaranteed to love playing EFL games in the classroom. An EFL classroom should be fun, active and challenging and these games are sure to get you heading in the right direction [2].

### **Фойдаланилган адабиётлар:**

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