

ESL GAME IDEAS

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Intonation Fun

Level: Medium

Use this activity to underline the importance of intonation when your students, as they often do, talk like robots. Basically, get them to say the words in quotation marks in the contexts that follow.

'Hello'

to a friend

to a friend you haven't seen for 3 years

to a neighbour that you don't like

to a 6 month old baby

to someone you have just found doing something they shouldn't

to someone on the phone when you're not sure if they are still on the other end

'Goodbye'

to a member of your family as they are going through the boarding gate at the airport

to someone who has been annoying you

to a child starting his very first day at school

'How are you?'

to someone you haven't seen for 20 years

to someone who has recently lost a member of the family

to someone who didn't sleep in their own bed last night

'I never go to pubs'

by a person that totally disapproves of drinking alcohol to someone who often goes to pubs

as a response to someone who has told you they sometimes go to pubs
said before: '...but I quite like discos.'

'What have you done?'

to someone who claims to have fixed your television only that now it's worse than before

to someone who is scolding you for not doing anything when you suspect the same about them.

to someone who has just done something very bad and which has serious consequences

Truth or Lie?

Level: Any Level

This isn't really new. I got the idea from a book and have expanded on it a bit. It can be used at any level from pre-int. up. It can be used just for speaking practice but it's particularly useful if you're doing present perfect for past experiences. It works soooo well! The students just love it! Lots of question and past tense practice. Even the quiet ones will talk!

Based on a group of three (it can be done in pairs, or fours if you write some more questions), each student has a piece of paper with five questions on it (see below) and takes it in turns to ask the person on their left one of their questions. The student answering the question must answer 'Yes I have.' regardless of the truth. The student who asked the question can then ask as many further questions as he likes in order to help him decide whether the truth is being told or not. Obviously, sometimes they'll be telling the truth. The third student can also join in with questions, thereby 'ganging up' on student B. Listen how students fabricate stories in an attempt to avoid questions! When the first student feels he's heard enough he says 'No further questions' and writes 'True' or 'False' next to the question. The game then carries on (student B asks a question to student C and so on) When all the questions have been asked the papers are passed to the left for marking i.e. the truth is revealed. The highest score out of five wins.

This game will really open your eyes to people's ability to LIE. Here are the questions. You can use different ones, obviously.

Have you ever...

spoken to a famous person?
danced on a table in a public place?
been trapped in a lift?
taken an illegal drug?
sung karaoke?

Have you ever...

appeared on television?
left a bar or restaurant without paying?

written graffiti on a wall?
appeared in a photograph in a newspaper?
chased a criminal?

Have you ever...
done a very dangerous sport?
won a medal or trophy?
missed a flight?
stayed in a five-star hotel?
swum naked in the sea?

A typical exchange might be something like:

- Have you ever swum naked in the sea?
- Yes I have.
- Where did you do it?
- Erm. On holiday in Majorca.
- Who were you with?
- Some friends.
- What were their names?
- Erm...etc.

Submitted by Bradley George

Syllable Game

Level: Medium

Write a difficult word on the board for example
ACCOMMODATION.

Then clap your hands while saying the word. Repeat as necessary.

Then ask them to count the claps in ACCOMMODATION. There are 5 handclaps.
Get students to clap and say ACCOMMODATION.

Tell students these handclaps are called SYLLABLES and that every word breaks down into one or more syllables. Briefly practice saying "syllables."

On the board underneath ACCOMMODATION draw 5 medium sized boxes. Put the correct number underneath each box.

Clap and say the first syllable of ACCOMMODATION and ask your students which letters should go in box 1. They should say AC (some might say ACC.) Repeat this process until all of the letters are in the correct boxes. So now you should have

Box1 AC Box2 COM box3 MO Box4 DA Box5 TION

Then choral drill the letters like this.

Teacher: Which letters are in Box1?

Students: AC

Teacher: and in Box2?

Students: COM

Continue this until all 5 boxes (syllables) have been covered.

Then ask a student to give you the contents of BOX1 and 2. Then ask another to give you the contents of box 2 and 3. Then 3 and 4. then 4 and 5.

This gradual building of the word helps them not only to understand the rhythm and concept of syllables, but also helps them to fix the spelling in their minds.

Once they grasp the concept of syllables, Write some 3,2, single syllable words on the board and get the students to work out how many syllables the word has, and then get them to put the letters into the correct boxes

Submitted by Gary Pownall. Greenwich Community College. London. UK

Karaoke

Level: Difficult

-for larger classes

Preparation: choose songs that are easy to understand and somewhat enjoyable.

1. Divide the students up into groups of 4-5 people.

2. Give each group a different song. Have them figure out all the words to the song. Make sure that not just one person is doing the work, but that it is a group effort.
3. Give them the entire class (one hour) to work on it. Next class, have them return to their groups to practice one time.
4. You then have the group as a whole, stand up and sing along with the recording.

- this is fun for the students if they all participate and work together.
- choose both popular and silly songs to keep their attention and interest

Submitted by Melanie Dutton, University of Texas at El Paso

Getting To Know You

Level: Medium to Difficult

-for larger classes

1. Give each student an index card
2. Have the students pair up and write the name of their partner on their card. Give them five or six questions that they must ask each other such as:
 - Where were you born?
 - What is your favorite color and why?
 - What did you dream last night?
3. Make sure that they write down the answers to these questions on their card. When they are done, have them each choose a new partner.
4. They will then tell their new partner about their old partner based on the questions answered. Each person will record this information on the other side on the index card (the index card is only to help them remember everything).
5. Once they have finished, they each stand up in front of the class and tell everyone what they learned about one of their classmates.

-this helps them to develop their communication skills and helps them get comfortable with speaking and interacting with all the students in the class

Submitted by Melanie Dutton

Extreme Situations

Level: Medium to Difficult

The point of this activity is to make difficult questions involving choosing a course of action in extreme situations. Usually These situations will involve feelings, prejudices, ethics,,etc.

Examples 1:

You are on a deserted island. There is a motor boat and you are the only one who knows how to drive it. It is up to you to decide which people of the following people you are going to take with you in the boat. There is space for only you and 3 more people.

Here they are:

- a prostitute
- a drug addict
- a dying old man
- a doctor convicted of malpractice
- a child pornographer
- a convicted criminal
- (Note: You should adjust the list to suit the students in your class. Delete some if you find them offensive. Add others that you think would generate good discussion.)

Example 2:

You find a wallet with \$50,000 and the ID of its owner. That money is exactly the amount of money you need to cover the expenses of a delicate operation for your daughter. She needs that operation to survive. What would you do with the money?

And you can create new extreme questions to challenge students to speak.

Submitted by Pablo Ortega Juárez portegaj63\$\$\$hotmail.com

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Level: Medium to Difficult

Divide the group in pairs. For this activity you get two apparently equal pictures. You can get these pictures in puzzle books or internet. Give one of the pictures to a student and the counter-picture to his/her partner. Make the students sit far from his/her partner in order to describe the picture without looking at the counterpicture. The point of the

game is to detect the differences without using body language or looking at the partner's counter-picture. The team that finds all the differences first is the winner.

This activity is specially good for those students who are reluctant to speak.
Submitted by Pablo Ortega Juárez portegaj63\$\$\$hotmail.com