



CAMBRIDGE

Classroom warmers activity booklet

This booklet includes seven exercises each for primary, lower secondary and upper secondary students.



Where your world grows

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1. Animal mimes

Description

Students mime animals for each other to guess.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	(Optional) animal pictures – you could use the Pre A1 Starters Flashcards
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun, physical activity• To review animal vocabulary

Procedure

Model the activity. Say: 'What animal am I?' Choose an animal and mime it, making the animal noise if you like (younger children will enjoy this!). When someone guesses it, say 'Well done! It's your turn!' Ask them to choose an animal (or give them an easy one to mime and make the noise if they want (lion for example) for the rest of the class to guess.

Divide students into groups of 4–8, according to where they are sitting.

Students take it in turns to choose their own animals to mime for the rest of their group.

Confident students can mime for the whole class.

To add challenge, students could describe the word to give extra clues. For example, for cat they could say 'Four legs', 'It eats fish' or 'It is a pet'.

For extra support, you could display animal flashcards on the board and elicit the animal words first, helping with words children find difficult to pronounce. You could give a student an animal to mime if they struggle to think of one by themselves – write it on a piece of paper or show (don't give) them an animal flashcard so no one else can see.

Alternatives: You can use this activity to revise other lexical sets which can be mimed, for example jobs, sports, adjectives, hobbies.



2. Teacher says

Description

Students listen and move according to the teacher's instructions. This is similar to Simon says, but students need to listen carefully and do what you say (not always what you do!).

Time required:	10–15 minutes
Materials required:	None
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun, physical activity• To review parts of the body and action verbs

Procedure

Model the activity. Say: 'Listen. Do what I say.' Give some simple instructions and show the corresponding movements at the same time. See examples below.

Now say: 'Listen **carefully**. Do what I say.'

Point to your head, but say: 'Point to your hand.' If students point to their heads, repeat the instruction, until they all point to their hands.

Continue playing the game, encouraging children to listen carefully. Sometimes make the action the same as your instructions, and sometimes make it different – for example, say 'Hold up one finger' but hold up two. Keep it light and fun – it's not a test and part of the fun is that it's difficult to follow a spoken instruction that is different from the action you see!

Example instructions: Use vocabulary your students are familiar with.

Point to your [nose/head/eyes, etc.]

Hold up [2] fingers.

Show me your [hands/fingers, etc.]

Stand up.

Sit down.

To add challenge, you could make your instructions more difficult, for example, 'Clap your hands five times'. You could use more challenging vocabulary, for example: *chest, stomach, neck, nod/shake your head, smile, wave, etc.*

Older, more confident children can take it in turns to lead the activity for the rest of their group. First play the game as a whole class, as above. Then divide them into groups of 4–8, according to where they are sitting. Ask students to take turns to give instructions. They play the game with their group.

For extra support, you could review parts of the body and action verbs first. Point to different parts of your body and ask 'What's this?' Elicit the words, model and drill for pronunciation. Do the same with the action verbs, for example, point to your head: 'What's this?' (head) 'Point to your head' (demonstrate by pointing to your head and encourage students to copy you).

You could simplify the activity, by playing the game simply as 'Teacher says': children only copy you if you say 'Teacher says ...'. For example, if you say 'Put your hand on your head' they should not move, but if you say 'Teacher says stand up' they should stand up.

Alternatives: You can use this activity to revise other lexical sets such as colours 'Point to something blue/red/grey' or prepositions 'Point up/down'.

3. Draw it

Description

Students draw pictures to help other children to guess words.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	Follow the guidelines set by your school for the safe distribution and use of classroom resources and materials: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Student notebooks2. Felt tips or marker pens for each child3. Mini whiteboards (blank paper in a plastic sleeve) that can be wiped clean4. A4 or A3 scrap paper
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun group activity• To review vocabulary (for example, food, animals, furniture, hobbies)

Procedure

Divide students into groups of 4–8, according to where they are sitting.

Demonstrate the activity with the whole class first by drawing a simple picture on the board for children to guess (for example, an apple).

In each group, ask for a volunteer. Show a word to the volunteers – make sure it's a word they know, and can easily draw. Don't let any of the other students see the word. Say: 'Don't say anything. Draw it.' They draw a picture on their notebook/mini whiteboard/scrap paper, and show it to their team-mates to guess the word.

The group which guesses the word first wins a point. Then choose a different volunteer in each group.

You could use this to review food, classroom objects, furniture, or other words children know that are easy to draw.

To add challenge, use more difficult words, or phrases. For example, *jumping, rain, a happy cat, a thin man*. Or, let students lead the activity and choose their own words for their team-mates to guess.

For extra support, tell students the topic (for example, food). Write four or five words on the board for children to choose from when they are guessing.

4. Quiz: How many?

Description

Students answer questions that involve counting.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	(Optional) numbers flashcards – you could use pages 42–43 in Pre A1 Starters Flashcards <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One student in each group uses their own notebook and felt tip or marker pen to write the answers• If you do this as a whole-class activity, each student should use their own notebook and pen to write
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun, collaborative activity• To review numbers

Procedure

Ask a couple of simple ‘How many?’ questions for the whole class to answer. For example, you could ask what they can see in the classroom: ‘How many teachers are there?’ (one) ‘How many windows are there?’

Divide students into pairs or groups of 3–4, according to where they are sitting. Say: ‘Who will write?’ Make sure they have writing materials (see **Materials required**).

Display ‘How many?’ questions on the board, one at a time. Say: ‘Work together. Write your answer.’ Give students a little time to think, discuss and write the answer on their scrap paper or mini whiteboard. Make sure they write their number nice and big. You could show a countdown timer.

Then, count down ‘Three, two, one, show me!’ The children hold up the numbers they wrote at the same time. Confirm correct answers (depending on the questions, answers might be different for different groups). Move to the next question.

Choose questions according to the level of your students. Examples:

Easier questions

How many children/girls/boys are in your group?

How many pencils/pens/bags are on your table?

How many fingers/eyes/feet have you got?

How many clocks/doors/people are there [in the classroom]?

More challenging questions

How many legs does a cat/do two dogs/cats have?

How many eyes/noses/hands are there in your group?

Plus, other questions based on what all the children can see.



To add challenge, students could try asking their own ‘How many?’ questions. Include higher numbers, up to 20 (or higher, if your students know them).

For extra support for younger, lower level students, you might want to review numbers first – use flashcards to elicit and check understanding. Model and drill the numbers. Ask children to count to 10. Check understanding by holding up your fingers and asking ‘How many?’ When you check answers to the How many? questions, encourage the children to count together: ‘How many heads are there in your group? Let’s count. One, two, three, four. Four heads!’

Alternatives: Do this as a whole-class activity. All the children hold up the numbers they wrote at the same time.



5. Anagrams

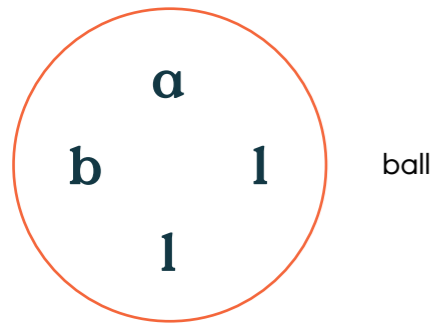
Description

Students unscramble letters to make words.

Time required:	10–15 minutes
Materials required:	Follow the guidelines set by your school for the safe distribution and use of classroom resources and materials: 1. Student notebooks 2. Felt tips or marker pens for each child 3. Mini whiteboards (blank paper in a plastic sleeve) that can be wiped clean 4. A4 or A3 scrap paper
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun word game• To review vocabulary and spelling

Procedure

Choose a word students know. Write the scrambled letters on the board. Say: 'What's the word?'. E.g.:



Write other words on the board, one at a time for students to guess. You could set a time limit, and at the end, ask students for their answers.

To add challenge, use longer words. Students could create their own anagrams. They write the scrambled letters on their notebook/mini whiteboard/scrap paper and hold them up for their group to solve. Tell them to write big letters so their group can see them clearly.

For extra support, use 3 or 4-letter words. You could give students the first letter of the word. Tell them the topic (for example, animals). You could show a picture of the word.

Alternatives: Ask children to write their answers on scrap paper or a mini whiteboard. You could do it as a group activity, and have one 'writer' per group.

6. Kim's game

Description

Students try to remember and identify missing objects.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flashcards Pre A1 Starters Flashcards A1 Movers Flashcards A2 Flyers Flashcards• Or real objects (providing all the children can see them), a tray to hold them and a cloth to cover them
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun memory game• To review common objects

Procedure

Display 10 objects – flashcards on a screen or real objects on a tray. Make sure your students know them in English, and can see them clearly. Carry the tray around to show everyone if necessary. Say: 'Look. Try to remember.' Give students 1 minute to look at them. Help them with the words, if necessary.

Hide the objects (show a blank screen or cover up your tray with a cloth). Remove one item (secretly!) and show the objects again. Say: 'What's missing?' Show children the missing item when they guess correctly.

Hide the objects again, remove a different item and show the remaining objects. Repeat.

To add challenge, display more items. You could rearrange the items when you take one away. You could ask for more information about the objects, for example a red pen, a small white ball.

For extra support, elicit the name of each object the first time you show them. Reduce the number of objects. To stop stronger students shouting out, you could give them 10 seconds of thinking time before saying their answers.

Alternative: Give students 1 minute to look at the items, then cover all the items. Students work together in groups to make a list of all the items they can remember.

You can choose different lexical sets if you show pictures, rather than real objects, for example hobbies, clothes, jobs, etc. You could show different-coloured objects to practise colours, or show letters or numbers.



7. Virtual ball games

Description

Students play a speaking game by throwing a pretend ball.

Time required:	10–15 minutes
Materials required:	None
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun, physical activity• To review vocabulary (such as colours, hobbies, food, etc.) or grammar (such as I like, He/she likes, Do you like ...? Yes I do/No I don't, My favourite ... is ...)

Procedure

Tell students they are going to play a ball game – but with an invisible ball. Ask students questions about the ball. For example: *'Is it big or small?'* big! Mime holding a big ball. *'Is it heavy or light?'* heavy! Mime holding a heavy ball.

Say: *'Stand up!'* Students should remain in their assigned places. Choose a student and make eye contact with them. Mime throwing your invisible ball to a student, saying *'Catch!'* Encourage them to mime catching the ball, then say: *'Now throw the ball to someone else.'* Let students practise until they get the idea, pretending to throw and catch or even drop the ball, sometimes. Just make sure they keep to the social distancing rules.

Add the language element. Choose from the options below, according to the level of your students:

Vocabulary review

Choose a topic, for example colours.

Say a word connected with the topic (e.g. *blue*) and throw the ball to a student. They say a different word linked to the topic (e.g. *red*) and throw the ball to another student. Continue until all children have caught the ball. They need to listen carefully to make sure they don't repeat what someone else has said.

To add challenge, you can throw other invisible balls at the same time. Or, ask children to repeat the word(s) they heard before saying their own word. For example:

Student 1: *red*

Student 2: *red, blue*

Student 3: *blue, yellow (or red, blue, yellow)*

You could also change the pretend ball. For example, say: *'New ball! Can you catch this really heavy ball? Show me.'* or *'New ball! This ball is really small. Show me how you catch a really small ball.'*

My favourite ...

Model the activity by saying a sentence, for example: *'My favourite food is cake.'* Then throw your virtual ball to a student. They catch it and say: *'My favourite food is ...'* They throw the ball to another student who says their favourite food, and so on.

To add challenge, you can throw other invisible balls at the same time.

For extra support, write the sentence starter on the board e.g. *My favourite food is ...*

I like ...

You could ask the student catching the ball to repeat what the thrower said, before saying their answer. For example:

Student 1: *'My name's Claire and I like cats.'* (throws ball)

Student 2 (catching): *'Claire likes cats. My name's Hiam and I like football.'* (throws ball)

Student 3 (catching): *'Claire likes cats. Hiam likes football. My name's Sami and I like playing computer games.'* (throws ball)

For extra support, just ask them to say their own sentence. Write *I like ...* on the board.

Question/answer

Tell the student throwing the ball to ask a question, and the student who catches it has to answer. For example:

Student 1 (throwing): *'Do you like chocolate?'*

Student 2 (catching): *'Yes, I do!'* (throwing) *'Do you like strawberries?'*

Student 3 (catching): *'No, I don't!'* (throwing) *'Do you like pizza?'*

To add challenge, students think of their own questions.

For extra support, make the question the same each time. You could write it on the board.

Alternatives: You can use this activity to review or recycle any lexical set or language structure, or as a 'getting to know you activity' (to learn names, etc.).



1. Think of five things

Description

Students play a competitive vocabulary game.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	Each student can use their own notebook and pen
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To engage students with a fun, competitive activity To review vocabulary

Procedure

Divide students into four groups, according to where they are sitting. Give each group a category. For example:

- Things that are red/green/blue etc.
- Things you find in a classroom/kitchen/bedroom.

Say: 'Think of five things. Write them down.' Everyone in the group should write the same list. For example, things that are red: *tomato, blood, stop light, lips*, etc. Tell them that the other students are going to try to guess what they wrote, so they should try to think of things that are not obvious.

To play the game, work as a whole class. Ask one group to be quiz masters (the group who will ask the questions). They say their colour (e.g. blue) and then ask the other groups in turn to say one thing that is [blue]. As the groups guess, the quizmasters listen and tick the things their classmates guess from their list that they created at the planning stage. Allow a few minutes for this. Monitor to make sure they ask a different person each time.

At the end of the time, the quizmasters get one point for each word on their list that their classmates didn't guess.

Repeat, with a different group as quizmaster each time. The team with the most points wins.

To add challenge, ask students to think of 10 things.

For extra support, instead of asking students to think of things 'on the spot', give them time to brainstorm (1–2 minutes).

Alternative: Get them to choose their own category from a list.

2. Pictograms





Description

Students draw pictures to represent letters, and make a word.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	<p>Follow the guidelines set by your school for the safe distribution and use of classroom resources and materials:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Student notebooks 2. Felt tips or marker pens for each child 3. Mini whiteboards (blank paper in a plastic sleeve) that can be wiped clean. 4. A4 or A3 scrap paper
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To engage students with a fun drawing activity To review vocabulary and spelling

Procedure

Model the activity. Show an example on the board (see below). Say: 'What's this? What's the first letter?' Elicit and write the first letter of each picture to make a word, like this:

	s	Say: 'What's this?' snowman. 'Good, what's the first letter?' S 'That's right.'
	o	Say: 'What's this?' octopus. 'Good, what's the first letter?' O 'Yes.'
	f	Say: 'What's this?' fork. 'Good, what's the first letter?' F 'Yes.'
	a	Say: 'What's this?' alien. 'Good, what's the first letter?' A 'Yes! Now put all the letters together s-o-f-a – we have a new word ... sofa!'

Divide students into groups of 3–4, according to where they are sitting.

Ask students to make their own pictograms. First they should think of a word. Ask them to write it, keep it secret from their classmates, but show you so that you can check their spelling. Then they need to think of something to draw for each letter of their word. They draw their pictograms as large as possible.

When they're ready, students take it in turns to hold up their paper so that everyone in their group can see and try to work out the words from the pictures.

Option: You could make this a whole-class activity by taking a photo of each student's paper and projecting it onto the board.

To add challenge: Students choose their own words.

For extra support: Students can work in pairs to create their pictograms. One student should write/draw. You could suggest a topic or words for students to create pictograms from. You can suggest things for students to draw for each letter.

Alternative: You could do this as a way to get to know names if you have a class of new students – unless some of your students have a very long name which might be time-consuming to draw!



3. One-word stories

Description

Students create a story together using one word at a time.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	(Optional) unusual pictures to add challenge
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage students with a fun story-building activity • To activate useful language for telling a story, for example, past simple, time sequencers (then, after that, later etc.)

Procedure

Divide students into groups of 4–6, according to where they are sitting.

Students make a story as a group. You or they can decide on a running order by giving them a number each. Each student says one word in turn. Encourage students to make their story as creative as they like. For example:

Student 1: One
 Student 2: day
 Student 3: a
 Student 4: small
 Student 5: boy
 Student 6: flew

When they have created their story as a group, you could ask each group to retell their story to the rest of the class, and ask them to vote on their favourite story.

To add challenge, show a picture. Students have to incorporate the picture into their stories somehow. When they have done it, show another picture. The more unusual the picture, the more creative they will have to be.

For extra support, listen carefully and help them with grammar, e.g. make sure a is followed by an adjective or a noun, make sure verbs agree with nouns. You could nominate a writer in each group to keep a record of the story so far, in case any students need a reminder. You could allow students to help each other with words or ideas.

4. Correct me

Description

Students practise contrastive stress by correcting factually wrong sentences.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	Students can use their own notebook and pen
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun speaking activity• To practise contrastive stress• To practise listening for detail

Procedure

Model the activity. Say: 'Listen very carefully.' Read out a 'wrong' sentence. For example: 'There are three colours in the rainbow.' Ask students: 'What's wrong?' Encourage them to say the correct sentence: 'There are **seven** colours in the rainbow.' Encourage them to use contrastive stress.

Repeat with other examples, like the ones below, or use other sentences personalised to your students. Each time, make sure students use contrastive stress when they correct you:

Bangkok is the capital of France.
You eat breakfast in the evening.
Elephants are very small animals.
Football is a really interesting food.

For extra support, display the sentences as you say them.

Divide students into pairs or small groups. Set the task: 'Write five "wrong" sentences.'

The sentences could be 'wrong' general facts (as in the previous examples) or personal ones, for example *My name is ... I'm ... years old. My teacher is called ...* or other facts particular to your lesson, for example: *It's sunny today. Yesterday we watched a video in class. There are 10 students in this class today.*

Join pairs to make groups of four. They take it in turns to read their sentences to a partner who listens, and corrects the sentence. Alternatively, pairs can take it in turns to read their sentences for the whole class to correct.

5. Compare it

Description

Students work together to compare pictures.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	Pictures of things to compare (see examples in Materials – Activity 5)
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun group activity• To practise comparative structures

Procedure

Model the activity: show two pictures (see **Materials - Activity 5**). Say: 'Compare the pictures.' Write an adjective on the board (*friendly*). Elicit a comparative sentence, for example, Cats are friendlier than tigers. Write it on the board, and draw students' attention to the grammar.

Divide students into pairs. Display the next two pictures. Students work together to think of a sentence to compare the two pictures.

When they are ready, they can raise their hand. When all students have their sentence, ask them to read them out. Students get one point for a correct sentence, plus an extra point if no one else had the same sentence as them.

Repeat with other pictures.

To add challenge: You could ask students to make two comparisons between the pictures. Or three! Encourage them to use unusual adjectives for extra points. You could set a time limit. Use unusual pictures to make comparing them more of a challenge.

For extra support: Suggest adjectives, or provide a list of adjectives for students to choose from.

Materials - Activity 5



6. First letter, last letter

Description

Students think of words beginning with particular letters to make a word chain.

Time required:	10–15 minutes
Materials required:	None
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun, collaborative activity• To review vocabulary

Procedure

Students work in pairs or groups, or you could do this as a whole-class activity.

Decide on a running order for students in the group (or ask them to do this) by assigning numbers.

Student 1 in the group starts by saying a word. Student 2 has to say a word beginning with the last letter of that word. Student 3 has to say a word beginning with the last letter of student 2's word. For example:

Student 1: *'friend'*
Student 2: *'dream'*
Student 3: *'maybe'*

If students can't think of a word, they can pass.

To add challenge, set a time limit. Tell them they are not allowed to repeat the same word.

For extra support, you could write the words on the board to help students to remember which ones have been used already. Or, allow them to repeat words (lots of words end in 'e' for example, so learners might run out of 'e' words quite quickly).

Students could work in groups of four (two pairs). Each pair takes it in turn to say a word, giving them the opportunity to support each other if one of the pair can't think of a word.

7. Sentence race

Description

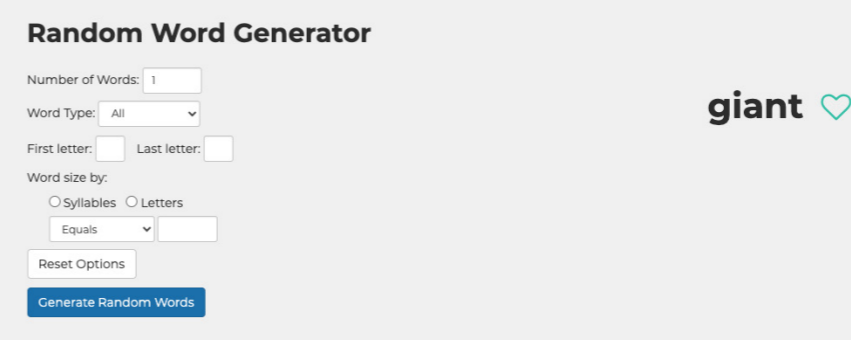
Students mime animals for each other to guess.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-tech option – random word generator• Low-tech option – prepare a list of 20 words from the units you have covered in the coursebook, then number the words from 1 to 20
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To review vocabulary• To engage students with a fun, collaborative activity• To practise building sentences

Procedure

Divide students into pairs. Use the **random word generator** to generate two words. Alternatively work with vocabulary from the units you have already covered in the coursebook.

Students have to race to make a sentence using both words. The only rule is that it has to be grammatically correct. For example, below the two random words are *giant* and *text*:



The screenshot shows a 'Random Word Generator' interface. It includes a 'Number of Words' input field set to 1, a 'Word Type' dropdown menu set to 'All', and fields for 'First letter' and 'Last letter'. There are radio buttons for 'Syllables' and 'Letters' under 'Word size by:', and a dropdown menu set to 'Equals'. A 'Reset Options' button and a 'Generate Random Words' button are also visible. The word 'giant' is displayed next to a heart icon.

randomwordgenerator.com

Elicit or model:

*The **giant** sent a **text** message to his mother.*

*I wrote a **giant text** on the wall.*

***Giants** are known for spelling their **texts** wrong.*

Generate another two words. Give students some time to write their sentence, then elicit ideas. Give a point for a grammatically correct sentence.

Alternative low-tech version: Prepare a list of words, and number them from 1 to 20. For each 'turn', ask students to shout two numbers between 1 and 20 – these are the words for the game.

To add challenge: You could specify the type of sentence you want students to write, for example, past simple, first conditional, a question. Or you could give more points for a sentence using a conjunction. The more unrelated the words are, the more difficult it will be to create a sentence.

For extra support: Students work in pairs. If the two words are too difficult, skip them and generate another two random words.

1. Don't say it

Description

Students play a game to convey the meaning of words/phrases through mime, drawing or description.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	A dice (or use an online dice)
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage students with a fun word game • To review vocabulary • To develop spoken fluency by giving definitions and examples to convey the meaning of particular words

Procedure

Divide students into groups of 4–6, according to where they are sitting. Each group chooses one student who will start.

Secretly show a word to the students who are starting. Don't let anyone else in the group see. You could ask them to close their eyes or turn their backs.

Roll a dice, or roll a virtual dice (if you have a smartboard). The number determines how the students will convey the meaning of the word for their group to guess:

1 or 2: they have to **describe** the word.

3 or 4: they have to **mime** the word.

5 or 6: they have to **draw** the word.

Make sure you choose words that can be drawn or mimed!

Add a competitive element by awarding a point for the first team to guess correctly, or make it collaborative by giving all groups 1 minute. Any group who guesses correctly within that time gets a point.

To add challenge, include phrases, sentences or even idioms. Let students think of their own words.

For extra support, choose simple, concrete words. You could get students to brainstorm words and write them on the board for them to choose from when they are guessing.

2. Yes/No game

Description

Students ask questions to try to make their classmates say 'yes' or 'no'.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	None
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage students with a fun speaking game • To practise asking closed questions and giving more conversational answers in response (rather than just 'yes' or 'no')

Procedure

Model the activity: Tell students the aim is to try to make you say 'yes' or 'no'. For example:

Student 1: *Are you happy?*

Teacher: *I'm very happy!*

Student 2: *Are you a woman?*

Teacher: *Absolutely!*

Student 3: *Do you like ice cream?*

Teacher: *I do! Do you?*

Divide students into groups of 6–8. They decide who is going to go first. The rest of the group takes it in turns to ask this student questions. If the student says 'yes' or 'no', it is the turn of another student to answer the questions.

To add challenge, tell students they can't repeat any of their answers. For example, they can't keep saying '*Absolutely!*' instead of 'yes'.

For extra support, give students thinking time before they start. Or you could have two students answering questions, to add a little support.

Alternative: You can do this as a whole class or in smaller groups.

3. Alphabet stories

Description

Students think of words beginning with different letters of the alphabet.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	None
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage students with a fun speaking activity • To review vocabulary • To activate useful language for telling a story (for example, narrative tenses, adverbs, different types of connectives) • To listen for detail

Procedure

Write letters A to Z on the board. Point to the letters in turn, asking students to call out words that begin with each letter. Write one word next to each letter on the board. Encourage them to think of different kinds of words, e.g. verbs, adjectives, adverbs, nouns. For example:

A – affectionate
 B – baron
 C – chocolate
 D – distance

Tell students that they are going to create a story as a group, by taking it in turns to say a sentence. They have to:

- Include the 'a' word in the first sentence, the 'b' word in the next sentence and so on.
- Try to continue the story logically. It can be a silly story, but the grammar should be correct.
- Listen carefully so that they know which word they have to include in their sentence.

They can choose to include more than one word in their sentence, if they like.

For example:

Student 1: 'Once, there was a very **affectionate** cat who lived with a **baron**.'

Student 2: 'The cat's favourite food was sardines and **chocolate**.'

Student 3: 'The baron travelled for long **distances** to find the best sardines and the best chocolate for his cat.' etc.

Tick the words as they are mentioned.

Group work option: You could do this activity in groups of 4–6, if you prefer. You could also ask one student in each group to write their story to share with the rest of the class when they have finished.

To add challenge: Encourage students to suggest unusual words in the initial brainstorm. These will be more challenging to integrate into the story.

For extra support: If a student can't think of a sentence that includes the next word on the list, tell them they can say any sentence to continue the story. The next student has to try to include the word that was missed.



4. Just a minute

Description

Students speak for 1 minute about a topic.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	None
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun speaking activity• To develop spoken fluency• To practise listening for detail

Procedure

Write numbers 1–6 on the board. Ask students to suggest six topics that they would like to talk about. Write these on the board.

Divide students into small groups of 3–4. Ask them to give themselves numbers 1–3 (or 4). This is the order in which they will speak.

Roll a dice (or a virtual dice, if you have a smartboard). According to the number rolled, student 1 in each group has 1 minute to talk about the topic. Display a countdown clock, or ask a student to keep a check on the clock. If they manage to speak for a minute, they win 2 points for their team. If they can't make it to one minute, student 2 continues for the rest of the minute and wins 1 point for the team.

To add challenge, tell them they are not allowed to repeat a word (except words like articles and prepositions).

For extra support, set the time limit at 30 seconds, or 20 seconds. You could allow them to say the word.

Alternative: You could play an example of people playing this game from the **BBC Just a Minute** website to introduce the game. Be aware that it is very fast and might be difficult for some students to understand. They also have extra rules: no hesitation, repetition or deviation. Set a listening task, for example: What are the rules of the game?

5. Two true, one false

Description

Students try to guess which information their classmates tell them is false.

Time required:	10–20 minutes (3 minutes for each person in a group)
Materials required:	None
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To engage students with a fun speaking activity• To practise asking and answering questions• To develop spoken fluency

Procedure

Give a model. Say three sentences about yourself. Write the sentences on the board. Tell them two sentences are true, one is false (factually, the grammar should be correct). They have 3 minutes to ask you questions to try to find out which one is false. You could display an online timer, or ask a student to keep check of the time on the clock.

Give students time to think and discuss in groups. Then elicit questions from different groups. You'll need to answer the questions about the false sentence convincingly! When the 3 minutes is up, give each group a minute or so to discuss which sentence they think is false. Ask each group to tell you, then reveal the truth!

Tell students they're going to do the same thing. Give them time to think of their three sentences. Then divide them into small groups of 3–4, according to where they are sitting. They take it in turns to say their sentences and take questions from the other group members for up to 3 minutes.

To add challenge, encourage students to summarise before they ask a question. For example: 'You said ... but can you tell me ...?'

For extra support, give students time to write their sentences. Give them time to think of questions to ask in groups before the 'challenging' part. Give examples of questions they could ask to see if you're telling the truth, for example: 'Ask me more about ...' Write some question words on the board to prompt different types of question.

Note: If the concept of creating a false story around something that isn't true is not culturally acceptable to any of your students, omit the questioning part, and just ask students to guess which sentence is not true.

For further practice of listening skills at home, share a link to the comedy panel game **The Unbelievable Truth**. This is a similar game, but contestants have to try to hide the truth among their lies.

6. Celebrity

Description

Students describe famous people for their classmates to guess.

Time required:	10–20 minutes
Materials required:	(Optional) pictures of famous people
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage students with a fun speaking activity • To develop spoken fluency skills • To listen for detail

Procedure

Ask students to think of three famous people and write them down. They should keep their people secret.

Divide students into groups of 4–6, according to where they are sitting. They take it in turns to describe one of their famous people for the rest of the group to guess. If they cannot guess, the students should reveal who their person is.

To add challenge, play ‘20 questions’. Students can take it in turns to ask one of their classmates closed questions about their person (e.g. ‘Is it a woman?’ ‘Is she alive?’ ‘Is she on the TV?’ etc.). As a group, they can ask up to 20 questions to help them to guess who the celebrity is.

For extra support, show pictures of famous people to inspire them, or for them to choose from. You could give examples of the types of famous people they might choose, like people from history, actors, singers, sports personalities, influencers, etc. Write these on the board, and ask learners to vote for which category they want to start with. They then think of famous people from that category. If you have time for a second round, they can vote again for the category for that round.

Students could work in pairs to think of and describe their famous people.

Alternatives: You could add a second round once students have guessed all the celebrities in their group. Students choose one celebrity that someone else in their group had, and say three words to help their classmates guess who it is. Alternatively, they mime the person.

7. Questions dialogues

Description

Students make up a conversation using only questions.

Time required:	10–15 minutes
Materials required:	None
Aims:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage students with a fun speaking activity • To practise asking questions

Procedure

Tell students they are going to have a conversation, but they can only ask questions. Give a quick demonstration with a confident student. For example:

Student: *How are you?*

Teacher: *Why do you ask?*

Student: *Is it a strange question?*

Teacher: *Have you never thought of that before?*

Divide students into pairs. They have their questions dialogues. The aim is to keep the conversation going for as long as possible, using only questions.

To keep the pace quick and lively, you could ask students to start again with a new question, or change partners (don’t move students, just get them to work with someone different who is sitting near them, e.g. sitting to their left, right, in front of or behind them).

To add challenge, don’t allow students to repeat any of their questions.

For extra support, allow them to repeat questions if it helps them to keep the conversation going. You could write some helpful questions on the board that can be used in many situations, for example: *Why do you ask? Did you hear that noise? Could you say that a bit louder?*

Alternative: Do this as a whole-class activity. Students take it in turns to ask a question to another student, who then turns to ask a question to another student.

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