

**ENGAGING ESL ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN: MAKING FUN AND
LEARNING EFFECTIVE.**

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Abstract: These activities can speed up child's learning because they are taught by expert instructors and provide more opportunities to practise communication skills in a group. However, it's still important to keep chatting, playing and singing. If children aren't interested then they won't learn. Games and activities are fun and if you can make learning enjoyable then everyone can win.

Key words: activities, children, opportunity, skills, play, sing, games .

A bit of guidance for keeping younger learners focussed while having fun and not losing control of the classroom, here are my top tips and ideas to help you achieve it.

1. Consistency

Routine is important in every classroom, not least for young learners. Students need to know what to expect and creating routine means no surprises and consistency. For example, setting up every class with a chosen student or students to write up the day, date, year and weather is a good way to review days, numbers etc., before you begin.

2. A warmer activity

With more lively groups I have taught, I find that a warmer activity on a piece of paper to be the best way to start things off. For me, a game or board activity at the start causes slight chaos as students come in bit by bit and don't know what's going on. For example, a puzzle, a crossword reviewing vocab, a spot the difference and activities such as these allow students to focus quietly on something meaningful to start the class.

3. Movement

Depending on your teaching style, you may find it very difficult to relinquish control and allow a little chaos into the room. (I certainly found this tricky!) But getting students out of their seats not only burns some energy but also appeals to many young learners as it is a kinaesthetic approach and a move away from more traditional seated activities. There are lots of ways to add some movement into your classroom, many which don't require planning such as

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charades, Pictionary and hangman. Even simple clapping games or throwing a ball and saying a vocabulary word in the order of the alphabet can add some fun and laughter to the classroom.

4. Positivity. Staying positive and encouraging all students regardless of their age is important in every learning environment but even more so with young people who may feel nervous and need that extra boost.

5. Technology. The world of technology is now at our fingertips in a way it wasn't when I was at school or even when I did my teacher training. But today's generation is used to phones, computer, and tablets and so on. For those with access to cell phones, Kahoot is an amazing resource which allows students to sign in and play a game displayed by the teacher on the whiteboard or projector while choosing their answers in real-time and receiving immediate feedback. For those with access to cell phones, Kahoot is an amazing resource which allows students to sign in and play a game displayed by the teacher on the whiteboard or projector while choosing their answers in real-time and receiving immediate feedback.

Some types of activities

Interactive Storytelling.

Stories have always been a captivating way to engage young minds, and they serve as an excellent tool for teaching ESL. Interactive storytelling involves more than just reading a story; it includes activities that make the narrative come alive.

Story Reenactment: After reading a story, encourage children to act it out. This helps with understanding plot, characters, and vocabulary. Costumes and props can add an extra layer of excitement.

Thematic Vocabulary Games. Vocabulary is a cornerstone of language learning. Games make the memorization of new words less tedious and more enjoyable.

Word Bingo: Create bingo cards with ESL vocabulary words. As you call out the words, children mark them on their cards. This game is excellent for reinforcing new vocabulary.

Pictionary: This classic game can be tailored for ESL learning. Children draw pictures representing words they have learned, while others guess the word in English.

Music and Songs

Songs are an effective and enjoyable way to learn a new language. They help with pronunciation, vocabulary, and understanding language rhythm.

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Sing-Along Sessions: Integrate popular English songs into the learning process. Choose songs with simple, repetitive lyrics that are easy for children to understand and memorize.

Conclusion: Teaching English to children requires a balance between education and entertainment. By incorporating play, interactive storytelling, multimedia learning, cultural immersion, and role-playing activities, educators can create a holistic and effective language learning experience for young learners. These approaches not only make the process enjoyable but also lay a solid foundation for future language development. Remember, the key is to make English courses for kids a fun and engaging adventure, where children are not just students but active participants in their language journey.

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