

# 10 Fun Spelling Games for Your ESL Class

**WHETHER YOU TEACH ELEMENTARY ESL OR WORK WITH ADULTS, SPELLING WILL BE A PART OF YOUR CURRICULUM.**

When you are looking for a fun way to use or review these spelling words in class, try one of the following games with your students.

## TRY THESE 10 FUN SPELLING GAMES WITH YOUR ESL CLASS

### 1 SCRABBLE SLAM

With no preparation and a small financial investment, Scrabble Slam is a fun way for your students to practice spelling words in English. The game consists of a simple set of playing cards with one letter printed on the front and back of each card. Starting with any four letter word, students add one letter at a time on top of one of the original four letters to create a new word. Modify the rules slightly and take turns going around the table to see if each person can create a new word with each of his turns.

### 2 FREE FORM SCRABBLE

If your students are working with a specific spelling or vocabulary list, challenge them to fit all of their spelling words on a Scrabble game board. Each word must connect with one of the other words, and students only have the letter tiles which came in the game. Students may find it easier as well as more fun if they create their spelling word grid with a partner.

### 3 UNSCRAMBLLED EGGS

Another activity you can do with a given set of vocabulary words requires two sets of plastic eggs. For each egg, put the letters to spell a vocabulary word (use letter tiles, plastic letters or whatever you have on hand) and shake to mix. Make one egg for each spelling word for each team. Two teams then race relay style, each person opening one egg and putting

the letters in the right order to make a vocabulary word. The first team to unscramble all their eggs is the winner.

### 4 SPELLING PONG

For a fun, rainy day activity, set up a grid of cups on a table in your classroom. Each cup should have a letter written on the bottom of it. Students then take turns bouncing a ping-pong ball into the cups. Whatever cup the ball lands in, the player has that letter to use as he tries to spell a word. Students take turns until each person is able to spell a word from the letters he has collected. Either race to see who can spell a word first, or challenge students to make as many words as possible from the letters they earn. Make sure your students spell words with at least three or four letters as you play.

### 5 SPELLING BEE

A Spelling Bee is a classic spelling game which will help your students spell and review words from their vocabulary lists. Divide your class into two teams and have each team stand along an opposite wall of the classroom. Give one word at a time to each student, alternating teams. If the student spells the word correctly, she goes to the end of the line until her turn comes up again. If she spells the word incorrectly, she sits down. The last team standing wins. This game is a great way to review vocabulary or spelling words before a comprehensive test.

### 6 FIND THE VOWELS

Make a set of go fish cards using spelling words. For each spelling word, write the word on one card minus the vowels in the word (for example "H—D"). On another card, write the vowels which complete that word (for example, -EA-). Students play the card game go fish style by matching the spelling word with the vowels it needs to complete the word. You can add cards to the set as you add spelling words throughout the year.

### 7 INVISIBLE MAN

For a team spelling game, draw two stick figures on the board. Each figure should have the same number of parts. The goal is to make your team's stick man invisible before the other team does. Give each team a word to spell. If they spell it correctly, erase one piece of the stick figure. If they do not spell the word correctly, leave the stick figure unchanged. Then repeat with two new words. The first team to make his man invisible wins!

### 8 MAGNETIC LETTERS

Using a magnetic board and a few sets of magnetic letters (available in most stores), see which player can create the most words in a set amount of time, around five minutes, from his set of letters. After the five minutes is up, check the words and explain any unfamiliar vocabulary. The person with the highest number of words wins the game.

### 9 WORD SEARCH

A word search is a fun way for students to review spelling words. Give each person a sheet of graph paper and have him write the spelling words in the grid before filling in the remaining boxes. Have students exchange their word searches and see who can find all the vocabulary words first.

### 10 SPELL HOPSCOTCH

For an outside spelling game, have students draw a hopscotch board on the playground.

Give each person a word to spell as she jumps through the boxes. If she spells the word wrong, she must repeat that word on her next turn. The first person to get through the entire board wins.



# 7 Fun ESL Games to Practice Pronunciation

**LET'S ALL BE HONEST. PRONUNCIATION IS ONE OF THOSE THINGS THAT WE DON'T OFTEN TEACH EXPLICITLY.**

Of course, we correct our students' pronunciation when they make mistakes, when they're not speaking clearly or when they need to be a little more accurate. But do we devote class time to pronunciation practice on a regular basis? Don't feel bad if your answer is no. Instead, try playing these games to practice pronunciation. Your students will thank you for it, and you'll be relieved you can make pronunciation practice fun!

## 7 FUN GAMES FOR PRONUNCIATION PRACTICE

### 1 ODD ONE OUT

Prepare a list with sets of three to four words that have the same vowel sound, plus one somewhere in the middle that is different. For example, cut, but, nut and put. Divide your class into two teams and have them form two lines in front of the board. Write the first set of four words on the board. The students at the front of the line must read the set of words, race to the board once they have identified the word that sounds different and circle it. The first student to circle the odd word scores a point for the team.

### 2 HOMOPHONE GO FISH

This is a game that is best played in pairs or small groups – a really fun way to practice homophones! Make a list of the homophone pairs you'll use, and write each word on a separate index card or piece of paper. Make as many decks of cards as you'll need depending on the number of groups you'll have. Each group gets a set of cards, each student gets five cards. The remaining cards are put in a draw pile. The goal of the game is to find the matching homophone by asking another student if they have "a word that sounds like...". For example:

S1: Do you have a word that sounds like "plane"?

S2: Yes, I do. (hands over "plain")

Now, to keep the matching pair the S1 must use both words correctly in a sentence or two. If S2 does not possess the homophone he/she has to say, "Go fish!" And S1 takes a card from the draw pile.

### 3 PRONUNCIATION MAZE

In this game, students must connect words that have the same vowel sound. Take a look at this Pronunciation Maze as an example. Here, students must follow the path from boys to choice by following the words with the /ɔɪ/ sound. But you can create your own maze. Make a 10x6 table, add the words that have the sound you want to practice, then fill in the rest with others words that don't have this sound at all. You can have students take turns on one maze. Or print out several copies to see who reaches the end of the maze first!

### 4 FOUR IN A ROW

Here's a good one for young learners! Divide your class into groups of three to four students. Print out this Four in a Row worksheet (or make your own!) and cut it up into separate cards. In groups, students must work together to arrange the words into sets of four words that sound the same. The first team to complete all of the sets wins.

### 5 IPA BINGO

There are lots of pronunciation games you can play with IPA flashcards, but here's a great Bingo with a twist. You'll have to prepare several 5x5 Bingo sheets with sample words for each of the phonemes: students can play individually or in pairs. Take an IPA flashcard from a bag and say the sound: /ɔɪ/. Students must find the word that matches that sound on their Bingo sheet in order to cross it out: toy. If this is too hard, you can say

the sound and give them a sample word: /ɔɪ/ - toy. Students must find a word with the same sound: boy.

### 6 MINIMAL PAIR SLAP

There's no better way to practice those pesky little minimal pairs! Choose sets of minimal pairs and write down each word on a separate card/piece of paper. Divide the class into two teams and have each team line up in front of a desk: the first students in line must have their hands behind their backs. Present two cards: forty and fourteen. Say one of the words out loud: fourteen. Students must slap the right card. The one who slaps it first must use the word in a sentence to get a point for the team.

### 7 RHYMING PAIR MEMORY GAME

Make cards with words that rhyme, like name/game, box/fox, tick/stick, etc. Place them face down. Students take turns turning over the cards to find the pairs that rhyme.

### IT TAKES A LOT MORE THAN SIMPLE CORRECTION TO IMPROVE YOUR STUDENTS' PRONUNCIATION.

Take a few minutes of your class time every day to practice some phonemes, consonant or vowel sounds, or verb endings. And to add a little more fun to it, make a game out of it!



# What Is It? Top 10 Guessing Games for Young Learners

THE CROWD IS ROARING. THEY'RE GOING MAD WITH ANTICIPATION. EYES ARE WIDE OPEN. HANDS ARE UP. SOCCER FANS AT THE WORLD CUP FINAL? NOPE. A GROUP OF YOUNG LEARNERS TRYING TO GUESS THE RIGHT ANSWER.

Guessing games are engaging and make them think – the ideal way to practice key vocabulary and grammar.

## TOP 10 GUESSING GAMES FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

### 1 GUESS THE ANIMAL

Give students an animal flashcard or have them take one from a bag. They must give their classmates clues as to what animal it is: This animal lives in the jungle. It eats bananas. It's brown.

### 2 GUESS WHO?

This guessing game is very similar to the classic game Guess Who? Use the real board game if you've got it or print copies of this sheet (<http://busyteacher.org/8638-describing-people-guess-who.html>) to hand out to teams of two students. Separately print out strips of paper with the names. Student A draws a name from the bag. Student B has to guess who they are by asking questions: Do you have brown hair? Do you have blue eyes?

### 3 CELEBRITY GUESS WHO?

This game is very similar to the above. Simply use celebrity photos instead.

### 4 GUESS MY JOB

Print out a sheet of clues like this one (<http://busyteacher.org/8638-describing-people-guess-who.html>). If students guess the profession after the first clue they get three points, if they guess after the second they get two points and after the last clue they get one point. You may be using language your young learners may not use themselves, but they are capable of under-

standing a lot more than you think. In any case, you may adapt the clues to suit their level, and even use this pointing strategy for any type of guessing game.

### 5 LISTEN UP – AND GUESS!

A fun spin on the guessing game is playing short audio files and having students guess what it is. FreeSFX.co.uk has hundreds of sound files to choose from. Can your class tell the difference between a mouse squeaking and a bird chirping? How about a bear's growl and a lion's roar? Find out!

### 6 GUESS THE MYSTERY OBJECT

This is a classic in my young learner's classroom and one of my personal favorites. Take a big cloth bag and place one item in it. Students put their hands inside the bag and feel the object to guess what it is. You can do this with classroom objects, animals, toys or any piece of realia.

### 7 LANGUAGE HANGMAN

Who hasn't played this classic whiteboard game? But try this variation to help students review any expressions they've recently learned. Draw enough number of blanks to represent each letter of the words contained in the expression. For example, for "thank you" you'd draw blanks like this: \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ . You may choose to add the first letter or the last one to get them started, or a random letter in the middle. Students have to not only guess the correct expression or phrase, but also use it with a partner.

### 8 GUESS WHAT I BOUGHT!

Another great way to review vocabulary. Tell your class you went shopping yesterday and that they must guess what you bought. Describe each object in terms they can understand: It's warm. It's brown. You put it on your head (it's a hat). If they guess correctly show them a flashcard or magazine cutout of the item.

### 9 GUESSING RHYMES

Rhymes are great for practicing pronunciation. I'm thinking of an insect. It rhymes with sea (bee). I'm thinking of a fruit. It rhymes with beach (peach).

### 10 RIDDLES

Children love riddles so feel free to try some out in your ESL class. ESLMOBI ([http://eslmob.com/3i/a\\_riddles.htm](http://eslmob.com/3i/a_riddles.htm)) has a great list you can use. If some are too hard for students to guess, try giving them additional clues. These animal riddles are also great (<http://busyteacher.org/7139-animal-riddles.html>)!

#### BONUS GAME: I SPY

This is a classic that children love and has variations throughout the world in different languages. Choose an object that is clearly visible in the classroom. Or an object from a large illustration. Say, "I spy with my little eye something green/that you wear on your feet/that you use to write". The student who guesses correctly first gets to choose an object and continues the game by saying "I spy..."

#### ADDITIONAL TIPS FOR GUESSING GAMES:

- Divide the class into teams. Students take turns giving their teammates the clues so that they can guess for points.
- Allow them a limited number of clues, say three. If the team guesses with those three clues they get 10 points. If teammates still can't guess, they're allowed to ask additional questions, but each additional question subtracts two points.
- Switch roles! Have students give you the clues and guess what they are describing. You can have lots of fun with this. Pretend you have no idea so students are forced to come up with extra clues.

GUESSING GAMES LIKE THESE ARE GREAT WARMERS OR FILLERS, AS WELL AS A FANTASTIC WAY TO END THE CLASS ON A FUN NOTE!



# Can't Play or Dance? Top 9 Sit-down Activities for Young Learners

## AH, YOUNG LEARNERS JUST LOVE TO MOVE.

They're not as self-conscious as teens are – not afraid to look silly as adults are. They'll dance, race and jump with gusto, relishing in the sheer energy that is coursing through their veins. But what happens when we have no room to jump and dance? What happens when there are simply too many students and no space left to play? What if you are told to keep the noise level down and can't have as many high-energy activities as you'd like? There is no need to despair: there are several sit-down activities that young learners will enjoy just as much.

## 9 BEST SIT-DOWN ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG LEARNERS

### 1 WHITEBOARD GAMES

There are plenty of whiteboard games students can play from the comfort of their own seats, including Pictionary, Tic Tac Toe and Hangman.

### 2 STORYTELLING

Children love to be told a good story. If you have enough room, get the children to sit in a circle on the floor. Use big, bright storybooks with lots of pictures. Ask them questions as you go along – pause, what do you think will happen next? Get them involved in the story, and they'll enjoy it a lot more. And don't forget to make faces and use different voices!

### 3 YOU'RE THE TEACHER!

Show students a series of flashcards and practice the same kind of question: what's this? what color is this? etc. Students take turns standing in the front of the class and being the teacher. They must ask their classmates the same question. The element of repetition helps boost retention.

### 4 CRAFTS

Crafts and art work are great, quiet sit-down activities that don't always have

to be as dull as having them sit working in silence. Give them each a set of materials they must arrange and glue on a sheet of paper by listening carefully to your instructions. For instance, give them each one red square, one green triangle, one brown rectangle, one green circle, and a smaller brown rectangle. Give them these instructions: Put the red square at the center. Put the green triangle above the red square. And so on till they complete a picture of a house and tree.

### 5 COLORING AND DRAWING

Similar to the activity above, you can give your class a picture to color but give them specific instructions: color the hair brown, draw a blue square and draw a green circle in the square. These are great exercises in paying attention, listening carefully and following instructions.

### 6 GUESSING GAMES

You can play this game by having students sit in a circle on the floor or at their own desks. Place an item in a bag that is not see through – it can be any real object or toy. Walk around and students take turns putting their hands in the bag to feel the object. They must guess what it is. You can also hold a flashcard towards you and describe what you're seeing to have students guess. Guessing games are great for keeping students engaged – and keeping them sitting quietly.

### 7 ACTIONS – SITTING DOWN

Who says they can't do some actions while sitting down? There are plenty of songs you can sing while students move their arms and hands. They can chant and clap. They can even stomp their feet. If you have limited space for movement around the classroom, see what they can move while sitting at their seats.

### 8 BOARD GAMES

Whether you have a small group or a large group of students you have to

divide into smaller groups, board games are the ideal sit-down activity. Have them sit together on the floor or push their desks together. Give each group a copy of the same game or different games – they can then switch! Use this template for Snakes and Ladders (<http://busyteacher.org/9177-snakes-and-ladders-blank-template.html>) and adapt it to suit your needs – review vocabulary or a particular grammar point.

### 9 PASS THE BALL!

And who says you can't play with a ball while sitting? If students are sitting at their desks, they can simply hand it over to another student. If they're sitting on the floor in a circle, they can toss it to each other. Play spelling games, Q & A games, count or say the letters of the alphabet.

**SIT-DOWN ACTIVITIES CAN BE YOUR BEST ALLIES WHEN YOU NEED TO TAKE A BREATHER OR GIVE YOUR YOUNG LEARNERS SOME TIME TO RELAX AND SETTLE DOWN. THEY DON'T HAVE TO BE BORING – YOU CAN MAKE THEM AS MUCH FUN AS ANY RACE OR TPR ACTIVITY.**

If you have to teach a large group of young learners in a classroom that is not big enough for activities with movement, I strongly suggest taking them outside, if possible, as often as you can (maybe a couple of times a month) or perhaps to the school gym, cafeteria, or any large space where they can be more active. It'll be a change of pace and your students will definitely appreciate it.



# 7 Terrific Telephone English Activities for Adult ESL Learners

**FOR THOSE WHO SPEAK ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, SPEAKING ENGLISH ON THE TELEPHONE CAN BE ONE OF THE MOST CHALLENGING AND FRUSTRATING TASKS.**

On one hand, listening comprehension proves to be more difficult on the phone. On the other hand, it is sometimes absolutely necessary for those who do not live in English speaking countries to communicate with others in English – and on the phone.

So, for most adult ESL learners, speaking on the telephone in English is an essential skill. Fortunately, it is one that may be improved, if you give your students fun, interactive activities to help them practice. Here are some great ways to practice speaking English on the telephone.

**TRY THESE 7 TELEPHONE ENGLISH ACTIVITIES WITH YOUR ADULT ESL LEARNERS**

## **1 LEAVE YOUR MESSAGE AFTER THE “BEEP!”**

Have students practice leaving each other messages. First, try to gather as many recording devices as you can: MP3 players, digital recorders, laptops with microphones, or even your students' own cell phones (there's no need to actually make calls, just use notetaking software like Evernote or any other that may be used to record voice notes on cell phones).

If you have a large class, have groups of two or three students share one device. Have students record their outgoing messages, then students take turns leaving messages for their classmates. This works best if you give each student a specific reason for calling.

## **2 COULD YOU REPEAT THAT, PLEASE?**

Students practice asking the other speaker to repeat or clarify something they did not understand. Divide stu-

dents into pairs and assign the roles of caller (Student A) and non-native speaker (Student B). Student B pretends they speak very little English so that Student A has to ask B to repeat everything they say. Variations include adding background noise, static, or having Student B speak very softly. You can also give them specific instructions/complications, like a difficult name to spell, or asking for directions.

## **3 I NEED TO CONFIRM YOUR DETAILS.**

When conducting some transactions on the phone, we are quite often asked to supply personal details to confirm our identity. Give your students this situation or a very similar one: Student A wants to purchase an item on eBay, but is unable to make the payment. Student B works in Customer Support and will help Student A complete the transaction. But before they can do that, Student B asks Student A a series of personal questions, from address to phone number, ID number to mother's maiden name. A fun twist is to ask Student B to ask as many questions as he/she can, including ridiculous things, like a pet's name!

## **4 PLEASE HOLD. I'LL CONNECT YOU TO THE RIGHT DEPARTMENT.**

This is a great way to have students practice their reason for calling over and over again. Give Student A a reason to call Customer Support. Student B takes the call, but then connects Student A with another department (Sales, Technical Assistance, Accounts Payable, etc.) Student C then connects A with D and so on. Student A must repeat the reason for calling each and every time.

## **5 MIMIC THE CALL**

This works great with beginners who are not yet familiar with common telephoning expressions and their appropriate intonation. Play a telephone conversation while students read and

mimic the call as it plays – the goal is to follow the rhythm and copy the intonation to match the speakers in the audio. Play the audio track again, but this time lower the volume, and then a third time with the volume even lower. Play the track as many times as needed, till students are able to act out the situation comfortably without listening or reading.

## **6 THE VANISHING CALL**

Write out a complete telephone conversation on the whiteboard. Have students take turns reading it out loud. Then, erase one or a few words, depending on how long the conversation is. Students once again read it out loud and include the missing word(s). Continue erasing words, a few at a time and having students read the conversation, until all of the text has been erased. Students must then say it completely from memory.

## **7 WHAT DO YOU SAY NEXT?**

Print out role play cards that include a variety of reasons for calling (making/changing appointments, asking for someone on the phone, a problem with a bill/invoice) and proper responses to these situations (“The doctor is available Tuesday morning”, “He's at a meeting right now. Would you like to leave a message?”, “I'll put you through to Accounts Payable”). Student A picks up a Reason for Calling card and calls Student B. Student B has to choose the appropriate response from the set of Response cards.

**REMEMBER TO TEACH YOUR STUDENTS PLENTY OF EXPRESSIONS/RESPONSES, AND DON'T BE AFRAID TO REPEAT, REPEAT AND REPEAT SOME MORE.**

Most telephone conversations are based on a certain repetitive set of phrases for talking on the phone. The more you expose your students to and the more you practice them, the easier it will be for them to handle a variety of telephone situations.



# 5 Easter Games and Activities Your ESL Class Will Never Eggs-pect!

## ANOTHER MAJOR HOLIDAY ROLLS AROUND AND YOUR STUDENTS KNOW YOU'LL BE UP TO SOMETHING.

You've had special lessons for Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas, so they'll be expecting the Easter crafts, new vocabulary, and worksheets, as well as the reading, writing and speaking activities. They'll also be expecting the Easter games. They know full well that any games you play in class will be somehow related to an ESL component, that there will be some focus on grammar or new vocabulary. Because they know that in an ESL classroom, you rarely play games just for fun. Want to surprise your class? AND give them opportunities to learn? Try these Easter games, and you'll have your students eagerly lining up to play. And learn!

## 5 EASTER GAMES AND ACTIVITIES FOR YOUR ESL CLASS

### 1 EASTER BUNNY SAYS

Simon Says is a classic Total Physical Response activity, and one that young students enjoy, so why not play it for Easter but with a twist? Or with a hop, rather? First, get your students outfitted with some bunny ears (teach them how to make some and stick them onto plastic headbands) and bunny tails (make some of out cotton and stick with double sided tape). Some of the instructions may be:

- Easter Bunny says hop left/right!
- Easter Bunny says touch your bunny ears (make sure they touch the right ones!)
- Easter bunny says shake your cotton tail!
- Etc..

This is a great way to review the part of the body and introduce new Easter-related vocabulary.

### 2 EASTER FACES

This is a fabulous way to review face vocabulary and put their listening

comprehension to the test. This activity requires some previous preparation at home. First, you'll have to prepare some eggs. Make a hole on either end of an egg, blow out the inside, and rinse. In class, give each of your students an egg and tell them to get their markers ready. Give them step by step instructions on what they have to draw:

- Draw two big eyes.
- Draw a big nose.
- Draw a smiling/frowning mouth.
- Draw eyebrows/glasses over the eyes.
- Etc.

Walk around the classroom and check to see if they followed your instructions correctly.

### 3 ROLL THE EASTER DICE

Roll some custom made dice for a fun speaking task! Print out two copies of this dice template, available at SparkleBox.com. On each side of each dice write the usual one to six numbers plus a different word - include as many Easter-related words as you can, but add some interesting ones: bunny, eggs, basket, hunt, break, spring, hop, etc. Each student rolls the dice and has to say a sentence using the two words they rolled - if they succeed they get the number of points they rolled (the two numbers added). You may choose to make it a bit more challenging for older students. Give them more difficult words to use, or tell them they have to make short story based on those two words. The best story wins!

### 4 EASTER EGG AND SPOON RACE

A classic among relay races, you may choose to adapt this one to suit your students' ages. You may use uncooked eggs, hard-boiled ones, plastic eggs, or even chocolate eggs. Divide students into two teams. Each team member races to the finish line. The winning team has to come up with ten Easter-related questions that the losing team has to answer.

### 5 WORDY EASTER EGG HUNT

Do you feel that sometimes your students lack the words to say what they want to say? Here's your chance to provide some through an Easter egg hunt. First, write Easter related words in small slips of paper. Place each slip inside a plastic egg. Hide the eggs throughout the classroom or outside, if you can, and invite your students to participate in this exhilarating egg hunt. Once they've collected them all, they open their eggs and take out the slips of paper. Their task is to write a story using the words they found in their eggs.

## DO YOU WANT TO HAVE A FUN EASTER LESSON, FILLED WITH GAMES THAT ARE RICH IN LEARNING POSSIBILITIES? NO MORE EGGS-CUSES!

We've given you some great ideas for games that will not only keep your students engaged and thrilled to participate- they ensure they'll put on their thinking caps (or bunny ears!)



# 7 Thanksgiving Crafts and Games Your Students Will Be Thankful for

WE ALL HAVE HOPES, DREAMS AND DESIRES. BUT DURING THANKSGIVING, WE DON'T FOCUS SO MUCH ON WHAT WE HOPE TO HAVE, BUT RATHER WHAT WE ALREADY HAVE, WHICH WE SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR.

So, this Thanksgiving instead of having your ESL students hope and dream about more fun activities in class, give them some they can truly be thankful for!

## THANKSGIVING CRAFTS:

### 1 TUBE TURKEY

This project makes beautiful centerpieces for your students to take home for Thanksgiving dinner. You'll need to supply each of your students with a toilet paper tube and a copy of this template (<http://busyteacher.org/3423-turkey-paper-tube-zoo-project-for-your-young.html>). Those who finish their turkeys may complete the writing task and describe their animal: Where does it live? What does it eat? They may even create a story for it.

### 2 WAX PAINTING SECRET MESSAGE CARDS

Students will have the pleasure of finding out what a classmate is thankful for with this project they can later make into great Thanksgiving cards. Give each of your students some white poster board or card paper, and a white wax crayon. Students carefully write something they are thankful for with the white crayon – naturally it will be very difficult to read. Each student passes their paper to another classmate. Give them some diluted poster paint and a paintbrush. As they brush the paint over the paper, their classmate's message is magically revealed!

The messages are shared with the class (Maria is thankful for having so many great friends.), and each paper is then returned to its owner. They may fold the paper into a card, write Happy Thanksgiving on the front, and decorate it as they please.

### 3 THANKSGIVING SCRAPBOOK

There is no better time than Thanksgiving to not only count our blessings, but also share them with others. For this project, your class will create colorful scrapbooks to remember everything they are thankful for. Give your students plenty of colored paper, scissors, crayons and markers, plus lots of magazines they can cut pictures from.

For their scrapbook cover they will write the title, "This year I'm thankful for..." On the following pages they will add all of the things they are thankful for using magazine cut outs or by drawing their own pictures on each page. They may wish to add pictures of places they visited, sports or things they learned to play, or general good times they had with their families.

### 4 A BIRD IN THE HAND...

There's a popular expression in English that goes, "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush", which means we should be thankful for what we do have, rather than focus on the possibility of more. Ask your students how this expression can be applied to Thanksgiving. Then, show them how they, too, can have "a bird in the hand". Show them how to trace a hand on a piece of paper. The thumb will be the head and the fingers will be the feathers of their bird, which in this case will be a turkey. After they trace their hands, they draw other details and color their turkeys.

## THANKSGIVING GAMES:

### 5 THANKSGIVING YUMMY BINGO

Looking for a fun Thanksgiving Bingo to play with your class? Then, look no further! Download this Thanksgiving Yummy Bingo worksheet (<http://busyteacher.org/3222-thanksgiving-yummy-bingo.html>), kindly provided by Hallmark and have tons of fun with your class.

### 6 THANKSGIVING TIC TAC TOE

How about giving the ol' Tic Tac Toe game a Thanksgiving theme? It's as easy as pumpkin pie! Simply download this Thanksgiving full-color clipart file (<http://busyteacher.org/3736-kids-thanksgiving-clipart.html>) and print some into small Tic Tac Toe-sized squares – try to have at least five of each image you choose, for example five pilgrim hats and five turkeys. Draw the typical 3x3 grid on some poster board. Students use the images instead of the Xs and Os. For a bigger challenge, you may require them to answer a question correctly before they can place their card on the board.

### 7 PIN THE SNOOD ON THE TURKEY

What's that funny-looking thing that hangs below the turkey's chin? Why, that would be the snood, and won't your students have a grand, ol' time trying to pin it onto a turkey. Put up a poster of a turkey without the snood and have your blindfolded students take turns trying to pin it in the right place for some hilarious fun!

AND AREN'T YOU THANKFUL YOU'VE GOT A SITE LIKE BUSYTEACHER ON YOUR SIDE, ALWAYS SUPPLYING FRESH IDEAS WHEN YOU'VE GOT NONE AND NEW WORKSHEETS WHEN YOU'RE TIRED OF USING THE SAME OLD, SAME OLD?



# 5 Fun Games that Teach the Weather

**ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A FRESH WAY TO TEACH YOUR ESL STUDENTS COMMON WEATHER WORDS? ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A NEW WAY TO REVIEW WEATHER EXPRESSIONS AND VOCABULARY?**

Why not try one of the following games to add some energy to your class and fun to the everyday topic of weather?

## HOW TO TEACH WEATHER: 5 FUN GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

### 1 PIN THE TAIL ON THE GLOBE

After introducing or reviewing a list of weather terms, post a world map on your classroom wall. Take a few moments to introduce your students to the terms equator and pole and discuss what types of weather the residents at each place (human or otherwise) experience year round. Then, depending on the time of year, discuss with your students what the weather may be like in the Northern and Southern Hemispheres. Finally, review weather in specific areas like rain forests and deserts. Now it is time for fun. Give each student in turn a marker with either a pushpin or piece of tape or other adhesive. This is especially entertaining if you can take a picture of the student or have her draw a small self-portrait. Blindfold one student, give her three turns while she wears the blindfold, and then point her in the direction of the world map. The student should then place the marker somewhere on the world map. You can encourage her to aim for the type of weather she thinks she would enjoy. Then remove the blindfold and have your student describe the weather where she is on the map. Give each student a turn to place himself on the map while blindfolded and then tell the class about the weather at his location.

### 2 I'M GOING ON VACATION

Do you have a dream vacation?

Most people can imagine where they would like to go whether it is skiing on a dramatic slope or sunning on a peaceful beach. Give your students some practice with weather words by getting them thinking about their dream vacation. Have your class sit in a circle and ask a volunteer to start. The person who takes the first turn will also take the last turn in the game. With each turn taker, the person should first describe in about two sentences the type of weather he would like on his vacation, and then tell the rest of the class where he will go on that vacation. For example, "I like sunny skies and warm ocean water. I'm going on vacation to Hawaii." The second person, whoever is sitting to the left of the person that just went, will describe her dream vacation weather, and then tell the class where she is going on vacation. Then she must also repeat where the first student is going on vacation. The third student then tells the class about his dream vacation weather and then where he will go. He also says where student number two will go and then where student number one will go. Continue in this manner until you make it all the way around the circle to the first student who must say, in the correct order, where each of his classmates will take his dream vacation. Feel free to prompt students throughout the game if they are stumped, but do not be surprised if the students do it on their own. If you have the map on the wall from the previous game, you could also let your students put their markers on the globe where they said they would like to vacation after the game is finished.

### 3 TWENTY QUESTIONS

Here is a game that reviews not only weather words but also question asking. Have one student choose a location he would like to visit. You can supply a list of possibilities or just let him choose at random. The rest of the class takes turns asking questions about the destination trying to determine where the person chose.

Encourage your students to use questions about the weather at the beginning to narrow down the possibilities. If the class cannot guess after twenty questions, the student answering the questions wins. If they are able to guess before using all twenty questions, the class wins. Give each student a chance to be the question answerer. If you have a particularly large class, you may want to break your students into small groups to play the game.

### 4 CLOTHING RELAY

This game requires more preparation than the others and a small financial investment, but you can use the props anytime you teach about weather. Start by getting a collection of clothes that are appropriate for all weather conditions, bathing suits, hats, scarves, shorts, raincoats, sunglasses, etc. You can ask for donations from parents, friends or purchase some second hand items at a thrift store. Put them all into a large bin and place them at the front of the class. Then divide your class into two teams and have each team choose a volunteer to stand up front with the collection of clothing. The rest of the class should line up at the back of the room in teams. For each round, you will announce a weather condition and one person from each team should run up to the front of the room. They must then run up to the person on their team who is standing by the clothing and choose an item that is appropriate for that type of weather. The runner must then place the item on the other student without the other student's assistance. The first person to choose an appropriate item of clothing for his teammate and put in on the teammate appropriately scores a point for the team. Continue until everyone has had a turn or until you have used all your weather words. The team with the most points wins.

### 5 CLOTHING STACKER

This is another game you can play with the collection of all weather