

USING GAMES IN THE LOW LEVEL CLASSROOM

The students work so hard and concentrate on the lessons so much that they never relax. Learning English is hard work and it requires concentration, but it can also be fun.

For learning the alphabet we play the grocery game. I go to Giant Eagle (for example) and I buy apples, (next person) I go to Giant Eagle and I buy apples and bananas, etc. The students review the alphabet, learn verbs (go, buy), as well as nouns (apples, bananas, etc.), and help each other remember.

For learning numbers we use playing cards. Deal one card to each player - they tell the number, then add a second card - add those two numbers together, etc., etc.

For our vocabulary lesson we play our version of Wheel of Fortune. One student thinks of a word (hopefully from our weekly list) and writes the spaces C S S on the board. One student asks for a letter - if it is in the word, the writer fills in that letter and the same player continues until they don't find a letter. The next person continues etc. until someone figures out the word, then that person becomes the writer. This can also be used for prizes.

Scrabble Jr. is very good for a smaller group. Again, the directions are a good vocabulary lesson. We play in teams of two or three people, and even this is somewhat difficult.

Scattergories is a great game, but it must be simplified. Here's my holiday version, as well as a published one.

A great thinking game is "Categories Race" from Hands On English, Vol. 14, No. 5.

Categories - Things That Are:

	Yellow	Black	Gray	Green	Red
S	<i>SUN</i>				
P					
A					
C					
T					

We play this for Christmas and Chanukah:

		Things in the House	Things to Eat	Colors	Boys Names	Things I Like	States (w/only one H)	Countries
C	OR	C						
H		H						
A		R						
N		I						
U		S						
K		T						
A		M						
H		A						
		S						

These are a few fun ideas that relieve the pressure of learning. Of course, be sure to make a mistake. (I don't have to plan one - they just happen!) Then the teacher is as vulnerable as the students. Remember, most of us haven't done what they're doing so laughing is the best relaxer.

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