

ETpedia

1,000 ideas for English language teachers

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10
Years of
ETpedia

2024 marks the 10-year anniversary of the launch of *ETpedia*! In that time, 6500 practical tips and ideas have been shared across 12 different titles! Each title in the *ETpedia* series is divided into units containing 10 bite-sized tips and ideas to give you real practical help with planning and preparing for your lessons.

To celebrate the 10-year anniversary, we are sharing 10 collections of ideas across 2024! Here, you can explore 10 practical ideas taken from a variety of different units across the very first title in the series, *ETpedia*. The original book is an encyclopaedia for teachers, with 1,000 tips and ideas across all areas of English language teaching, perfect for dipping in and out of as needed! Whatever your teaching context, *ETpedia* can help.

10 Ideas from *ETpedia*

Unit: 10 ways to start a lesson

Idea: 4. A quiz

Another way to refer to the previous lesson is to choose between 10 and 20 words that you taught in the last lesson or the last series of lessons. Before the lesson, write definitions for these words. In class, put the students into teams of three and hold a quiz. Read out a definition to one of the teams. If they guess the word, they receive a point. If they get it wrong, offer it to the other teams for a bonus point.

Unit: 10 activities for the topics of FREE TIME and SPORT

Idea: 8. Definitions match

This is a team game. Divide the class into two teams. Give each team a list of 10 different sports (or fewer, depending on time). Tell the teams to write a definition of each one, without mentioning the name of the sport. For example, for football, they might say *You play this with two teams of 11 players*. When both teams have prepared their definitions, they take turns to read them out and the opposing team must guess the sport. Give each team a point for guessing the correct answer and see which team wins.

Unit: 10 activities for the topics of SCIENCE and TECHNOLOGY

Idea: 1. Ranking inventions

One lead in to a lesson on science and technology is to write a list of famous inventions on the board such as: *the aeroplane, the telephone, the microchip, the petrol engine, the wheel, the printing press etc.* Put students into groups and ask them to discuss the question: 'Which is the most important invention in history?' Next, ask students to rank the items from one to six with one being the most important and six being the least important. The groups discuss the list and give reasons for their choices. You can also vary the task by having students answer other questions such as 'Which is the worst invention in history?' or 'Which is the invention which you use most?'

Unit: 10 free practice speaking activities with functions

Idea: 3. Surveys and questionnaires

Sometimes, surveys and questionnaires are an easy way to target certain language and they encourage repetition in an authentic way. For example, if you wanted to practise the language of expressing likes and dislikes, you could design a questionnaire like this:

Do you like ...	Very much.	Yes, a bit.	No, not much.	No, not at all.
football?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
tennis?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
golf?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
surfing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The students walk around the class and interview each other with their form. It's a simple but effective way of eliciting a conversation like this:

Do you like football? No, not much.

Do you like tennis? Yes, I like playing tennis very much.

Unit: 10 writing fluency activities

Idea: 3. Instructions for a paper plane

Give a piece of blank paper to students in groups of three or four. Ask them to make a paper plane. This task generates useful speaking and discussion as they try to agree and decide on a design. Once everyone has made their plane (and tested it), tell them to try to write a set of instructions to give to another group so they can make the same plane. Encourage them to use instructional language, such as imperative verb forms and sequencing words like *Firstly*, *Secondly*, etc. When they have written their instructions, they swap them with another group and try to reproduce the other group's plane. At the end, everyone compares their paper planes and comments on how clear (or unclear) the instructions were.

Unit: 10 activities using the objects around you

Idea: 7. Imaginative adjectives

Write on the board the rules for adjective order before a noun (object) with examples beneath like this:

opinion → size/shape → age → colour → origin/nationality → material → NOUN
useful large old red French metal

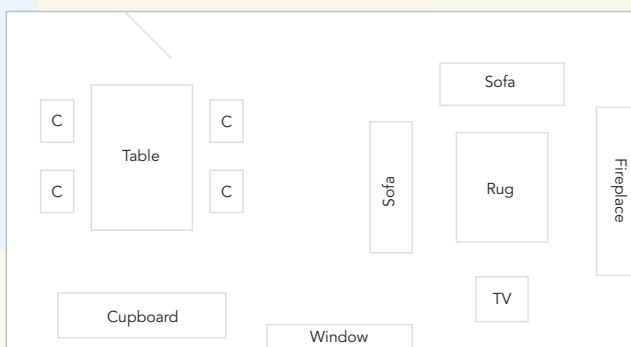
Get the students to sit in a circle. Hold up one object (ie. a hat) and say 'This is a hat'. Then pass it to the student on your left and they have to repeat the sentence with an adjective such as 'This is a brown hat'. They then pass it to the next student who repeats the sentence and adds another adjective such as 'This is a nice brown hat'. The hat continues being passed round the circle, with each student adding a new adjective to the sentence in the correct position. The aim to produce a sentence that contains as many adjectives as possible, such as 'This is a nice, medium-sized, new, brown, English, cotton hat'.

Unit: 10 activities for practising grammar

Idea: 4. Prepositions of place (*behind, opposite, in front of, between, next to, etc*)

Draw a diagram of a room on the board, like this:

Get the students to describe the position of the objects in the room. Help them with any words they need, such as *opposite, next to, between, etc*. Next, the students draw their own rooms and take turns to describe them to a partner. Their partner, without looking, must draw the room being described on a piece of paper. At the end, the students compare their rooms to see how similar they are.



Unit: 10 ways to develop awareness of phonemes


Idea: 7. Mouth the sounds


To focus the students' attention on the importance of the shape of mouth in pronunciation – and in particular on the lips – tell them you are going to spell the name of a famous person but they won't hear the letters so they'll have to watch. Choose a person who will be well-known to everyone in the class and spell the name using very exaggerated mouth movements so the spelling is very explicit. The activity is especially useful for demonstrating how the lips spread very wide on a letter of the alphabet like 'E' which is the /i:/ phoneme whereas the letter 'O' requires a rounded shape to produce the phoneme /eu/. Some letters are much harder to guess because they use phonemes which rely less on the shape of the mouth, but because you are spelling an entire name, the students can guess at some of the letters. At the end, ask them to say the name you were spelling. Next, ask students to think of a famous person, work in pairs, and take turns to spell the names silently to each other. This activity really forces them to use their mouth muscles.

Unit: 10 tips for teaching beginners

Idea: 2. The shape of the word

You can help your students to recognise a whole word by asking them to draw the shape of a word. For example:

shape → 

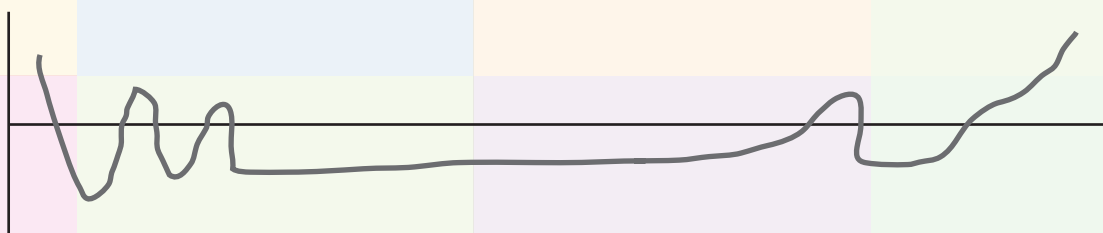
This exercise gives them a feel for the whole word. Later on, you can create gapfills with texts, but instead of leaving a blank gap for them to fill, draw the shape of the missing word, like this: The  of a ball is round.

Unit: 10 classroom observation tasks

Idea: 6. Talking time

Use this chart to monitor when the teacher is talking and when the students are talking. The middle line with the arrow represents the length of the lesson. The blue line goes above this middle line when the teacher is talking and below it when the students are talking. The blue line below is an example of a lesson where the teacher speaks at the beginning and end of the lesson but allows lots of student discussion during the class.

Teacher talking



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