

# Activities for 1st English classes

## Activities for students of different levels.

The following activities are just some ideas for your first language lessons. You can, and you should, modify them to suit your individual teaching context

## 1. Wink first

*(from Laughing Matters. Humour in the Classroom. P. Medgyes, 2002)*

Students learn each other's names by attention-catching winks. (5-10 minutes)

Students stand in a big circle. Everybody lets their eyes wander over their classmates. When eyes meet, students wink at each other. They then go to each other (shake hands, though nowadays they just nod,) and say:

Student A (Ania) : Hello, my name is Ania

Student B (Marek): Hi, I'm Marek

Students all listen to the introductions and try to remember as many names as they can.

When everybody has introduced themselves to several partners, the game continues but, instead of introducing themselves, students greet each other:

Student A (Ania): Hello, Marek

Student B (Marek): Hi, Ania

etc.

## 2. First letters

Students stand in a circle (they can also be seated at their desks if arranged in a horseshoe).

You should invent your own strategy for appointing students who should speak (e.g. one on the left, one on the right, one in the middle, left again, right, the two next to the middle one, or so).

Ask students to introduce themselves. They have to use a sentence which includes their name and a word that starts with the same letter as their name. With higher levels you can ask for a noun, a verb, an adjective.

You should give an example: My name is Kate and I often lose my keys. / I'm Kate I never observe people through the keyhole/ Hi, I'm Kate, I have never flown a kite, etc.

After 4-5 people have introduced themselves ask someone to repeat their names and their sentences, e.g. this is Kate and she often loses her keys (with higher levels) or with lower levels: Kate-keys, etc.

You can also use the same method as in "I went shopping yesterday"

*This is an activity that helps teachers remember their students names.*

### 3. What's in a name?



Ask students to write down their names vertically. After that ask them to write a word starting with each letter that describes them best, e.g.

**K**ind

**A**micable

**T**olerant

**E**asy-going

Ask students to mingle and introduce themselves to 4-5 people.

My name is Kate, I'm kind, amicable, tolerant and easy-going.

After a few exchanges ask students to introduces one or two people to other class members, e.g. let me introduce Kate to you. She is ..... or This is Kate, she is .....

*As previously, this activity will help teachers memorise their students' names.*

### 4. An interview (for higher levels)

Either have a ready-made list or ask your students to suggest a list of topics that are of interest for them. I usually have a list of topics, such as family, friends, fashion, keeping fit, money, celebrities, health, politics, books and films, taboos and issues, etc.

Ask students to choose a topic they will feel comfortable to talk about. After that ask students to work individually. They write questions they would like to answer about the topic of their choice. They write 8-10 questions. Students exchange their questions with a partner and ask each other those questions. e.g.:

My topic is *Politics*, you choose *Health*. We exchange our notebooks/pieces of papers. As a result I have your questions and you have mine. When we talk I ask you your questions and you ask me mine, so we both feel safe and comfortable while answering those questions.

After completing the discussion students make notes about their partners' answers. As a follow-up or homework students write a short text (about 150 words) about the person they talked to.

If this is done during one of the first lessons with your students you get a picture of the group you are going to teach. You can also grade their writing (I guess the grades will be quite high).

## 5. Let me introduce my friend



*(modified from Quality Time ESL)*

Can be done with all language levels. The questions presented here are just an idea.

Students work in pairs. They ask each other questions, What's your name? Where do you live? Have you got a pet? Tell me about it., etc.

Option 1: Students ask each other question and make notes. When they are ready, tell them they will have to introduce their partner to the group. Give the following instructions:

1. You should talk for 20 seconds/30 seconds/1 minute.
2. Find an item that distinguishes your partner from the rest of the group.
3. Don't bore us with your presentation ( so they have to think of some miming, using intonation, etc.)

Tell your students they have 3/5 minutes to prepare their presentation.

Option 2: students stand in 2 circles, facing a partner. After asking each other questions, the inner circle moves clockwise, the outer circle moves anticlockwise.

- a) they tell their new partners about the person they were talking to,
- b) they ask and answer questions with their new partner.

When they move again, they can either talk about their first partner, or the second one (that's where the distinguishing thing comes at hand, e.g. Marek is the boy with curly hair, Anna is the girl in a red top, etc.).

This activity helps with remembering students' names.

Option 2 could also be done outside 😊

Please remember about social distancing and other precautions