



ULIS CONNECT



SUGGESTIONS FOR WARM-UP ACTIVITIES

HANDBOOK

ULIS MIDDLE SCHOOL

Ha Noi, 2024

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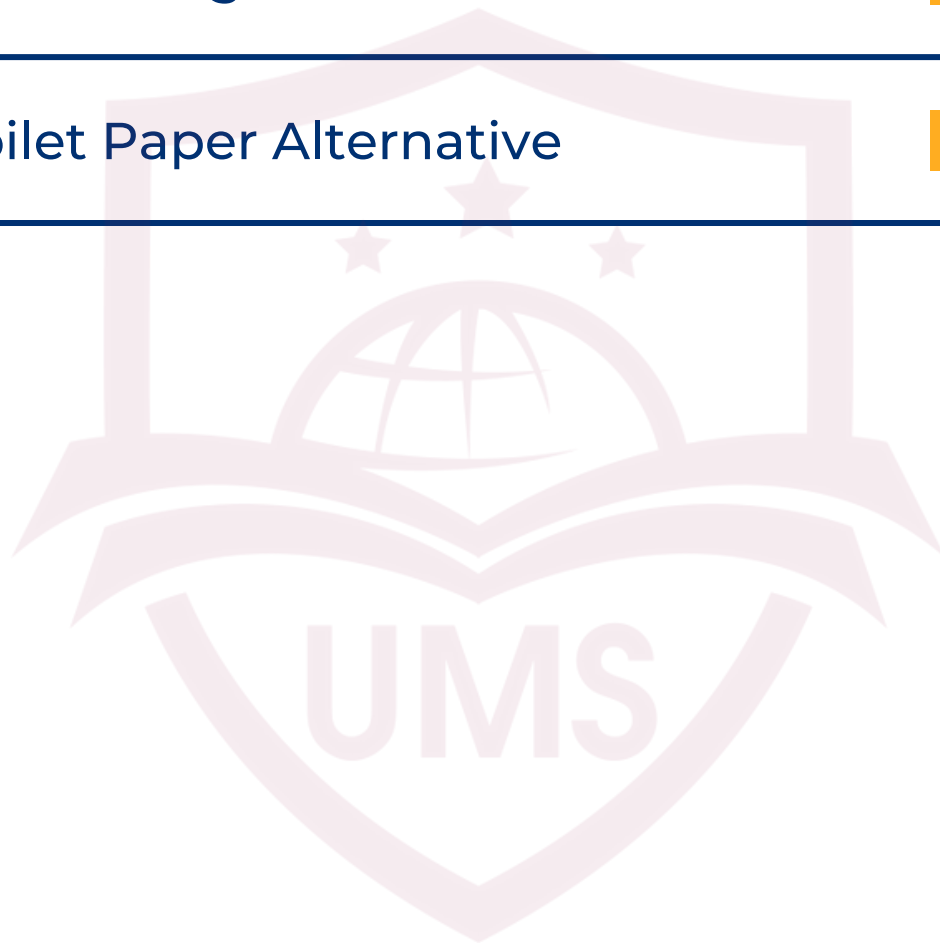
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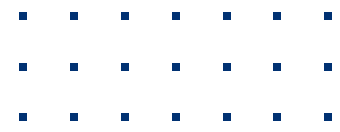
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Suggestions for warm-up activities



01

2-minute Square Dance



Inspired by 'Meaningful Musical Chairs'

Make a list of 6 discussion topics (i.e. home life, jobs, hobbies, favorite person, favorite food, etc.). Pair up the students and have one of them roll a die. The number showing decides the topic for the pairs to discuss for two minutes. Change up the pairs and repeat the process. However, if the same number shows, they must roll again.

JL Yokohama, Japan

02

A Strange New World

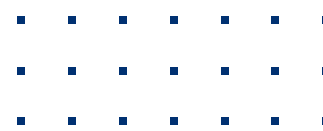


Inspired by 'Nazo's World'

Draw a circle on a piece of paper. Elicit what the students think it is. After hearing their answers, tell them it represents your world. Write 'My World' above it. Then write a few words and/or phrases inside the circle that represent some things in your life (i.e. 1994, green, 2). Have the students come to an agreement as to what the words/phrases mean. Once they tell you their ideas, give them the correct answers (i.e. 'I graduated in 1994', etc.). Next, have the students draw a circle, write 2 or 3 words/phrases in it and speculate about each other's 'worlds'. They can give the correct answers whenever they like or you can prompt them.

JL Yokohama, Japan

Suggestions for warm-up activities



03 ABC Jazz Chant

Good for the first week with beginners who may not know all the English Alphabet.

Use a Rhyme of your own or use something like mine;
I can see/ABCDEFGH Girls and men/IJKLMNOP
Me and you/OPQRSTU
Time for bed/VWXYZ
Try chanting in a definite rhythm. [3 syllables plus seven.]

You need to drill students many times so that they learn the names of the letters AND the order.

04 Acting Adjectives

Call students to the front of the class, mostly at random. (You might want to use a more outgoing seeming student first) Show the student an adjective, and they have to act it out for the other students to guess the word. No speaking allowed by the student doing the acting.

I mix together easy and difficult adjectives so the student talking doesn't know what kind he or she is going to get.

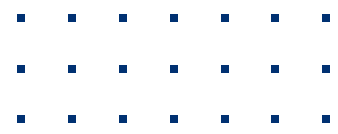
Easy examples - fast, happy, cold, sleepy, short

Difficult examples - wet, rich, lazy, late, smart

I've used this with students aged 12 to mid-forties and it works quite well. The students relax and get a good laugh out of it.

Eric Clark
Bangkok, Thailand

Suggestions for warm-up activities



05.

Advise

Inspired by 'New in Town'

Have your students take a moment to think about what they might tell a newcomer to their area about. Write the following on separate sheets of paper:

- *Places to visit/entertainment
- *Areas to live
- *Places to go shopping
- *Good schools to attend
- *Sports facilities in your town

Pair students up and give one of the sheets of paper to one of the students in each pair. Then have the students give advice for the topic written on their piece of paper. As they complete a topic, have them pass the sheets in a circle so that they get to work through all the topics.

JL Yokohama,
Japan

06.

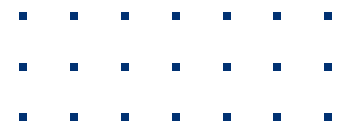
Alphabet Soup

This is a great activity for any age and gets people thinking quickly. It's also somewhat "active", so if everyone needs a good stretch it gets them off their feet. If teaching ESL, it's a good exercise in vocabulary.

Have participants/students divided by table or into small groups.

Tell them that you're going to give them a certain amount of time (2 minutes maybe) to find an item within the room (or their immediate surroundings) that begins with each letter of the alphabet, in order. They must form a collection on their table of the items, and cannot reuse an item more than once. At the end of the time allotted, ask each team how far they got (to which letter), and then go through the alphabet asking each team what they had for each letter and to hold it up. The team that got the furthest, wins!

Suggestions for warm-up activities



07

Animal Nicknames



This works best with intermediate to advanced kids (not so much english for the advanced ones)

Before class make up a sheet of paper with all of the students names on it with a blank line next to each name. Include your own name also. Hand these out to the students in class. Then tell them to look carefully at each of their other students. Tell them that their job is to think of what kind of animal that each of the students resemble and why.

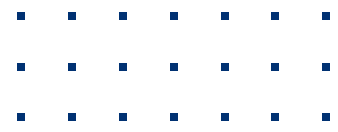
Make sure to tell the students to be very specific in their types of animals. Don't let them get away with bird or dog. It is good to have a feign language English dictionary on hand for this game/exercise.

After you have given them an opportunity to fill in the blanks, write each persons name on the board. Then ask each member of the class for what they thought about this specific person.

Eventually, you will have a list for each student. Then the class votes on the name they like best for that student.

This game had some of my students holding their sides in laughter and also allowed the students to feel much more comfortable with one another. Try to draw out of them what characteristics made them choose certain animals.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



08

Astounding Associations



This works best with large groups:

Start the group in a large circle while explaining the game.

Tell them that they must find others within the group which share their similarity. For example:

How many kids are in your family, including yourself?
(it is important to be specific or confusion will ensue!)

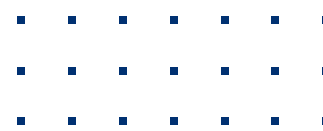
Initially they will wander around, looking for someone yelling out "2!" but eventually, it turns to a loud calling for "who else has 2 kids in their family?" It helps when the facilitator can start yelling "i have four kids in my family, who else does?" while holding up four fingers.

I like this game especially because once they found their group, they feel a sense of belonging... everyone else in their association group has something in common. Continue the game by having them introduce themselves to that group and explain something about the association... example: where in the birth order are you? for those who have no siblings, what is the best thing about being the only child? etc... continue with: how many pets? (then-- what kind) favorite color? (then-- why?) month of birthday? (what date?)

It is important for the facilitator to watch for those who might not have a group. Either locate their group, or extend a group to include that person. For example, if they have 9 kids in their family, perhaps make the group of those with 6 kids in their family be "6 kids or more". Have fun, be silly!

Marika
St. Paul, Minnesota

Suggestions for warm-up activities



09 Bananas----a quickie!

Ok, this one is simple, but it results in tons of laughter. (I used it for the beginning of a conversation class with students who already knew each other. Ages 13-17) Basically, the teacher picks someone to be "it."

The main goal of "It" is not to laugh or smile. Then the students in the class ask "It" questions, but "It" can only respond with the word "bananas." (They shouldn't be yes/no questions!!) For example: "What is your girlfriend's name?" Answer: BANANAS! "What is your favorite sport?" --Bananas Its a great warm-up for class. My kids laughed hysterically

10 Basket-case teacher

When I have a new group of students coming in, I love to get them guessing as to who I am instead of me doing all the talking.

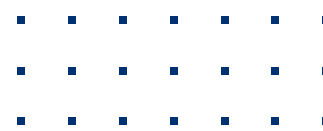
On the first day of class I take along a huge basket filled with items from my house that can tell them something about me (family photos, an atlas, souvenirs from places visited, something in my favourite colour, jewelry, tapes, VCDs, etc)

When class begins, apart from my name in English and in Chinese, I don't tell them anything. It is up to them to guess! I allow students to each choose something from the basket and leave them at their tables to discuss the possible meaning of the weird hodge-podge I have thrown in.

After a reasonable time I begin to ask them what they have guessed about me from the items, and then we talk about each thing they find out about me. eg. and atlas might lead them to where I come from (South Africa) but it might also tell them where I have travelled (all over Asia).

I also like to take piles of photos along with me and round off the time by letting them look through the photos at their tables and calling out questions which I then answer for the whole class.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



11.

Beyond introductions

This is an exercise that has worked well for me so far at Univ. de Bourgogne in Dijon, France, where it is hard as ++++ to get the students to talk. If you use the regular, worn-out interview pairs followed by introductions/present-your-partner scenario, this is a sort of fun follow up.

Have the pairs then use the same interview questions to create a fictitious person. Then they present that person to the class in the same way that they presented each other. Then, put two of the groups together and ask them to come up with a 15 to 20 line dialogue between the two fictitious persons. Sounds too simple? Try it! It's really quite fun...

12.

Birth Order Icebreaker

Level: Intermediate to Advanced

Preparation:

Make four signs labeled (in big letters) "First Born (Oldest)" "Middle" "Last Born (Youngest)" and "Only (No Brothers or Sisters)."

Put one in each corner of the room (or one on each table, if you happen to have four tables).

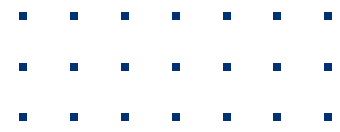
Do this before any students have come to class.

Procedure:

As students come to class, ask them questions to help them get into the correct groups. ("Do you have any brothers or sisters? Older or younger?") Once most of your students have arrived, they can get started.

Tell each group to let each person speak briefly about what it was like to be a ____ (first born, last born, etc.) in their small groups. Tell them that they will later report back to the class as a whole about the advantages and disadvantages of being in their birth order. As the teacher, you can either join the group or go around to the different groups.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



12.

Start with the "first borns." Ask them to tell the rest of the class about what it's like to be a first born. Encourage 2 or 3 people from the group to speak.

Birth Order Icebreaker (cont.)

Next, have the other groups comment on what they know about first born children. Go through each group this way: first the group itself speaks, then the other groups speak about them.

Next, share the following information about birth order personality characteristics with your students. You could make a handout or overheard, or else read a description and let them guess who it describes. (These lists come from Dr. Kevin Leman's "The New Birth Order Book," a great resource on this topic). Go over any unfamiliar vocabulary in the process. (Alternatively, you could put some of the words on cards and ask the groups to categorize them into the four birth order groups, and then see how they do with it).

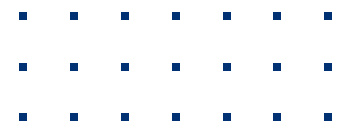
First born: perfectionist, conscientious, list maker, well-organized, hard driving, natural leader, critical, serious, scholarly, logical. Doesn't like surprises; loves computers. Often compliant: has difficulty saying No."

"Middle Child: mediator, compromising, diplomatic, avoids conflict, independent, loyal to peers, many friends, secretive, unspoiled, has reasonable expectations."

"Youngest Child: manipulative, charming, blames others, attention seeker, tenacious, people person, natural salesperson, precocious, engaging, affectionate, loves surprises."

"Only Child: little adult by age seven; very thorough and deliberate; high achiever; self-motivated; fearful; cautious; voracious reader; black and white thinker; uses "very" and "extremely" a lot; can't bear to fail; has very high expectations for self; more comfortable with people who are older or younger."
(The New Birth Order Book, page 15).

Suggestions for warm-up activities



12.

Birth Order Icebreaker (cont.)

Next, each person can speak about these characteristics. A good way to do this is to have each person talk about one characteristic he either agrees with or disagrees with. Ask the student to give an example. As you go around the room doing this, you (and the students) will get to know a little bit more about the students.

If a lot of students complain that the personality characteristics don't fit, explain that other factors can affect personality. For instance, if there is a big age difference between siblings, sometimes these descriptions do not hold up; additionally, if a youngest or middle child is the first male or female amongst the siblings, that person may act more like a first-born child.

The last step can also be used as a brief writing activity.

13.

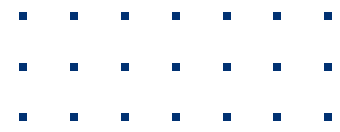
Breakdown first day barriers

My formula is simple, based on any set of circumstances when you meet someone you don't know and want to get to know- simply tell them something about yourself.

Write three subjects relating to you on the board - eg your favorite book, place, artist or an achievement or place you've been the students then ask questions in turn to find out what you're about.

Give the students 10 minutes to think of things and let them take it in turns.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



14

BRILLIANT first class warmer



This is a first. Reading all these great ideas gave me one. Have not tried it yet but it could be a winner. Please let me know how it turns out!

All your eggs in one basket.

Elementary up

Large or small groups

Need several strips of paper for each student.

Aim information gathering and presenting

Students write down information about themselves on separate strips of paper (e.g. married, ... university, tennis... etc) S's scrunch the strips of paper into eggs. Place all their eggs in a basket and distribute randomly. S's unravel an egg at a time and search out the author. Elementary and Pre-intermediate by asking questions. Intermediate and advanced by word association.

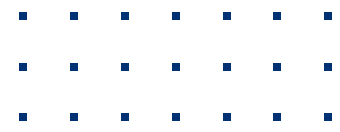
First student to finish wins a chance to share information that they learnt about fellow students.

Part II

Students are then given a name of a fellow student {C} (eg. the person sitting opposite them.) Asking everyone but C, gather as much information as they can and return Cs eggs while introducing C to the class. Students may ask more questions when the introduction is complete.

This is a first. Reading all these great ideas gave me one. Have not tried it yet but it could be a winner. Please let me know how it turns out. If it is any good I might try it myself :)

Suggestions for warm-up activities



15 Butcher Block Bios

Ages: teens to adults

Proficiency Level: adaptable to all

Class size: large or small

Purposes: integrated skills with emphasis on oral/aural and affective (getting to know classmates)

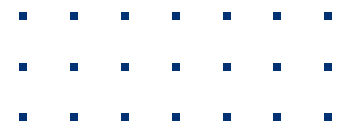
Materials: one sheet of large butcher block paper and colored markers

Pedagogical considerations: For beginners, provide simple questions; for intermediate, provide a few questions and ask students to also invent 2-3 more interesting questions and for advanced, give them latitude to create 5-7 interesting questions.

Procedure: Ask students to work in pairs to interview each other and take notes. Designate time frame (15-20 minutes) to interview each other. Ask the students to ask some creative questions that show the unique personality of their partner. After the interview, students write their Partner's Bio on the butcher block paper. Students should write the question and answer in large letters so that the entire class can see, esp. important for beginners. Accompanying illustrations and the student's name written in their native language writing system are also encouraged. The teacher then asks students to introduce each other to the class.

Comments: Many students may be inhibited the first day. By holding up the large paper and focusing communication on their partner, they feel less self-conscious and get to know a classmate, which lowers the affective filter. You will be amazed at the variety of creative "products" this activity unveils! There are many variations on this theme, e.g., Carousel Bios in which students have 5 minutes to write about each classmate and proceed to then next until time is up. This may take the entire class period since most students will be introducing new information about each of the others.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



16.

Call my Bluff

Tell the group that they will know 1 thing more about every person in the room at the end of this exercise!!

Ask them to individually to write down 2 things about themselves that the other in the group will not know about them - 1 true & 1 false.

You have these pre-prepared for yourself.

EG.

I am a twin

I can speak Spanish

Once everyone has done.

Starting with yourself (trainer) tell your truth and lie.

The next person then speaks their truth and lie then has to guess the lie or the previous person. You continue around the room in this manner.

As the trainer you can either guess the lie of the last person in the group or open it up to the group to guess the lie.

I have used this many times to great effect and remains one of my favorites.

17.

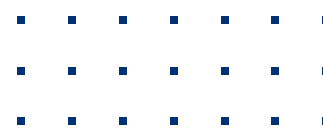
Cards and Crossword - Two Day Icebreaker

This is my ice-breaker from Summer Session 2000.

The first day, I used a deck of cards for my students to introduce themselves. On each student's turn, he or she had to take a card from a deck of playing cards. (I left the joker cards in). The instructions: use the value of the card to determine how many things to say about yourself.

If you pick the "ace," say one thing; two, say two things; a Jack is 11, Queen is 12, King is 13. If the student got the Joker card, he or she could ask me questions instead.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



17.

Cards and Crossword - Two Day Icebreaker (cont.)

I took notes on everything that everybody said, and then made up a crossword puzzle of student names. (To make it harder, you could use other information about the student, such as place of work or native country). They completed this the next time that they had class. This was a nice way to remind people of who their class members are and gave them material to start conversations ("Are you really from Transylvania?"). The activity goes more quickly if students have name tags out. I think it's better if they have to ask each other for information.

Caveats: Be sure to spell students' names correctly! (My sign-in attendance sheet was helpful here). Make sure that the clues you write about the students are accurate! Choose a boring clue if you're not so sure if something is true.

18.

Celebrity 20 Questions

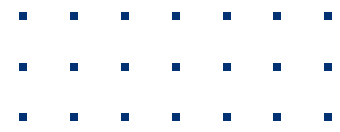
Materials: 20-30 A5 index cards tape

This is a pretty simple variation of the parlor game '20 Questions'. Before class, I take about the index cards and write names of celebrities on them with a magic marker.

In class, I explain to the students that they will have a name of a well-known person stuck to their back. They then have to stand up and circulate around the room, asking each person a maximum of 5 yes-or-no questions about who they might be. (I.E. 'Am I alive? Am I female? Am I a politician? Am I young?' Etc.) Hopefully they will be able to figure out who they are. The only problem I have encountered is when I use movie stars. I try to select people who my German students would know, but many don't frequent the cinema. But they always giggle at the person who 'is' Helmut Kohl or Pamela Anderson!

I like this game a lot, since it gets them out of their seats and makes them talk to a large number of people, often those who they wouldn't normally approach in the first lesson.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



19 Celebrity Info

Inspired by 'Famous people from !!!!'

Research celebrities in the country you are teaching in (i.e. sports figures, performing artists, politicians, etc.). Write 2 or three down on a piece of paper and ask the students to help you think of some more celebrities (of their country). Write these down. Ask each student to choose one person and tell everyone about him/her.

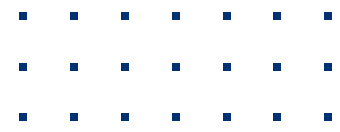
20 Change Identity Game

I haven't read all the activities on your list but an interesting one I have been using recently is the Change Identity game. The idea of the exercise is for the students to mingle and introduce themselves to each other. The moment they have finished introducing themselves they assume the identity of the previous person. That Keiko introduces herself to John. After that John is now Keiko and Keiko is now John. Now the new John and Keiko move on to other people. To add to this exercise you can add simple questions for them to ask. Stop the exercise after about ten minutes and call the roll. It is quite interesting some of the answers you get and some you don't get. Anyway it works for me.

21 Class Heart Throb

A team building activity I like to do on the first or second day of class with my high school students (ESL and other classes alike) is to form a circle, outside weather permitting, and hold hands. The object is to see how quickly they can "heart beat." They pass the beat by squeezing the hand to the left after they receive it from the right. We try it again throughout the year and see if we get faster. It is a lot of fun and the kids are usually cheering when we break our previous record. Some are squeamish about holding hands but with prompting I usually get 100% participation. Only once has someone refused and I felt it important to honor his discomfort and didn't force him to join.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



22

Coats of Arms of Yourselves



This is a great first day (or what-am-I-going-to-do-today) activity. The basic idea is to get students to talk about who they are and what they think is most important about themselves.

If you don't know what a coat of arms is, it looks like a shield and usually contains pictorial or symbolic designs that tell something about the bearer of the shield. Most countries/provinces/cities have coats of arms. In the classroom you simply have to explain the term and perhaps demonstrate a real life example to show how ideas and information can be represented by colors and pictures. (You could use flags instead—think 50 stripes and 50 stars with the red blood of freedom.) It also helps to give 4 to 6 categories (history, hobbies, family, job, likes, dislikes, things/ideals you hold as important) to help the students start creating.

Have the students draw a large shield shape on their papers and divide it into six sections. They then spend 5-10 minutes creating their shield. (Make your own too!) After the drawing is completed the students can, in partners, guess about the meaning of each other's shield or explain it to each other. (Teacher choice) After that the students can explain their partner's shield to the class.

I find that this activity gets students and the teacher to connect at a more personal level than some of the more game oriented activities that I have used.

23

Common Ground

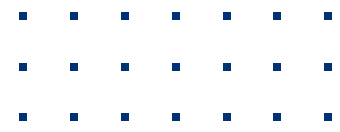


Inspired by 'Three things in common'

Pair off the students and have them find three views they have in common (i.e. political, social, economical, etc.).

This should be modeled with one of the stronger students first.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



24.

Crazy Basketball Madness

This is a good ice-breaker for the first or second day of class full of students who are too shy to participate or talk in class. I write everyone's names on separate sheets of paper, crumple them up into balls and hand them out at random to the students, so that each student will have a sheet with the name of another. I have the students clear out a place in the room and in the middle put a really small trashcan, box, etc and have the students throw the paper balls at it. The names that make it into the box have to come up, sing, dance, etc etc, just to try and get them more comfortable in front of the class. The students really enjoy having the chance of making their peers go up and participate instead of going themselves and it makes for a more open and relaxed atmosphere.

25.

Crystal Ball Prediction

This initial "getting-to-know" one another game loosens up your class with laughter and giggles.

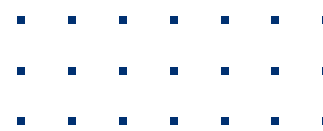
Supply the students with a list of topics to ask each other about. For example: name, pets, hobbies, favorite food.

Pair them up. One student is absolutely silent as the other asks them questions ("Do you have any pets?") and that same student predicts what the answer is by writing it down.

After finishing asking all the questions the interviewers take turns standing up and introducing their partner with their predictions as they are corrected by their new friend (which is the first time they are allowed to share the truth).

Now switch off the person being interviewed and the person predicting. Create unexpected topics and relax with this activities strange results.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



26 Draw conclusions

Give each student a page of blank paper and tell them to draw their portrait. This is usually met with nervous giggles but students will do it. Then ask them to write 4 or 5 key phrases or words connected to them, for example, 3 children. Pin the papers around the room and ask the students to amble around with a pen in hand and write questions under the information they read: for example, if a student reads 'science' they may want to write, 'are you a scientist?' or '@are you a science student?' When the students are finished the questions that have been posed should be answered, this can be done as a class or in smaller groups. It's good fun because the students are mingling and coming together from the beginning.

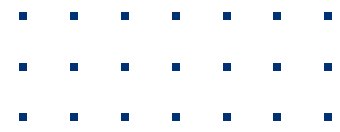
27 □ Draw your name

One way to get your students know your name may be this one, which they find challenging and funny:

1. Draw on the board as many objects as the letters that make up your name.
2. The name of each object should begin with one of the letters of your name.
3. Then, ask your students to tell you the names of the objects you have drawn and you write them next to each object.
4. Then, tell them to put the first letters of each object in the correct order so as to form your name.
5. Finally, students may do the same working in pairs.

Ex. I draw a ring, an apple, a car, an elephant, a glove, an island, a lemon and an ant. If you put in the correct order the first letter of the name of each object, you get my name Graciela.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



28

Everybody Has Secrets



On the first day of class, when you have introduced yourself and explained the guidelines for your classroom and you think that all of your students have arrived, hand out four or five small pieces of paper to each student.

Ask them to write a different aspect of their lives on each piece of paper (e.g. "I have a dog named 'Biffie'.") You should walk about correcting mistakes at random until they are all finished and have deposited their papers into a hat, folded every which way, it doesn't matter how. Then each student draws the same number of papers as he or she put in, taking care not to draw their own.

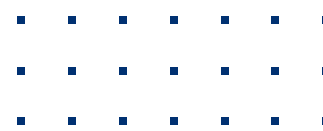
Upon completion of the draw, each student is required to find the writer of the papers in their possession. However, there is a catch. The students should do this in a polite fashion, starting with introductions, small talk and thus working around to learning the information they are seeking. Shouting out "Who has a dog named 'Biffie'?" does not fly.

By the end of this exercise, the class members should have met just about everybody. You can participate, too, but students may tend to avoid you as this is their first day and they are a bit wary as of yet. That's up to you.

Finally, in the ten minutes at the end of class, you should, one by one, call out each student's name and then hear from the four or five different people who chose their secrets.

This is a dynamite exercise, lots of fun and low pressure, and it will make everyone so much more comfortable with each other. And I thought it up all by my lonesome-- though I'm sure it isn't original with me.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



29.

Facts and Lies

Hi everyone! This is a simple first-day icebreaker that I've found works really well with both small and large classes: The students think of three sentences, two are facts and one is a lie. One by one, students introduce themselves and say their three sentences. The rest of the class has to guess which one is a lie. It's best for the teacher to go first, not only to provide an example, but also to let the students know that the teacher is interested in interacting with them

30.

Famous people from !!!!

I used this lesson when I first arrived in Korea. It's very simple. Write on the blackboard Famous Korean people (or whatever country your in). Get the students to come up and write one person on the board. You will find that the teenage girls only write singers while the boys write sportsmen. Make sure that you add some actors, politicians and historical figures. Then go around the class and get the students to describe one of them. You will find everybody will try to tell you instead of just the one as they get really excited. Its also good for you when you first arrive in a new country and don't know any famous people.

31.

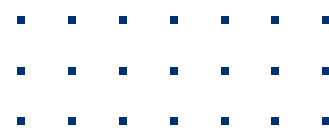
Fictional Language

This is an ice-breaker...

Call out 2 Ss to the front of the class, pair them as you will. They should start a conversation in English about anything, when someone yells "Change!", they switch from English to a fictional language they invent as they speak... Ss yell "Change!" and the pair continues the conversation, this time in English... After 1-2 minutes, change pairs.

As an intro for this activity, you could have Ss vocalizing random sounds in English!

Suggestions for warm-up activities



32 Find Someone: an Alternative Version

This is an idea I got from one of Mario Rinvoluti's books. It's an alternative to the typical "Find Someone Who. . ." game.

Instead of giving the students a list, they have to write a list (you can choose the number; I find that 5 works well) which begins with "I want to find someone in this class who. . ." You can either have the students mill around like they do in the original version of the game, but I find with small classes it is very interesting as a whole-group activity. You learn a lot about your students, both from who they want to find and how they answer. One warning: I had one class of university students where some of the guys used this as a sort of personals column, but it was pretty funny.

33 Food names

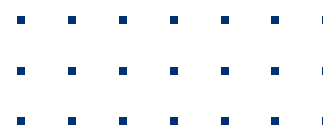
A funny method that we use here in order to get to know our students' names, is to ask them to tell their names plus the name of the food they like the best. At least here in Ecuador it is funny because of the names of food we have here. We can have students like "Pepe Caldo de bolas", "María Chugchucas", "Juan Seco de chivo", etc.

You can use it with any kind of food or maybe drinks. It's up to you.

34 Fortune Cookies

Take a few small pieces of paper and write on them short simple messages like "You will go to the cinema." "You will meet a famous person." "You will get 3 CDs for your birthday." Fold them so that the messages remain secret. Put all the scraps of paper in a box, shake them well and pass the box around for the students to take one and read it out and aloud. Make sure that they say "O-E, O-E ...what will my fortune be?" first! Provided you choose your messages wisely, you will provide the class with some interesting conversation topics and will find out a lot about your students and their interests (fave films, heroes, fave music etc.,) which should help you plan the course ahead accordingly!

Suggestions for warm-up activities



35

Free Speaking



My friend Denise came up with this one. It's just a way to keep free-speaking classes going on those quiet days. Each student must say ten things they've done that day. Anything - I ate breakfast, I put on a sweater, etc. The next student must do the same thing but they can't say anything the previous student has said. They find it funny (always a bonus) and gets them talking. It can also give you ideas for further discussion.

36

Frivolous Fun with Find Out Cards

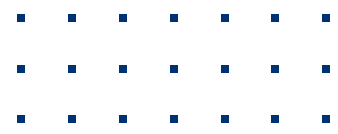


A good little game I've been using as a 'get to know you' activity is 'find out'. The game is not new but translates well to the classroom.

Write directions on cards such as: 'Find out the name of your partner's 1st Grade teacher.' The students then have to try to elicit the information from their partners without asking them directly. This is done by provoking a conversation where the answer comes out 'naturally'. I've been using this in private courses but the idea could be easily adapted to the classroom. Split the class into two teams which then decide collectively on how to elicit the response from the other team.

Most of the students I've been using it with (upper intermediate to advanced) enjoy the game because they find it challenging to think of different words and structures to those that are immediately obvious - and it usually generates a few laughs along the way!

Suggestions for warm-up activities



37.

This is one of the best icebreakers I've ever done. It gets students up and moving and also gets them acquainted with each other and relaxed very quickly.

Fruit Bowl

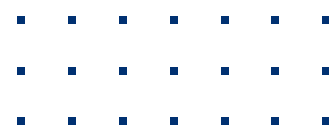
First, set up the class: move all the desks or chairs away from the center but arrange enough chairs for each student in the center of the class in a circle - like musical chairs. Have the students sit down. On the blackboard draw a picture of 3 pieces of fruit - your choice. I always draw an apple, a banana, and grapes. Ask the students what the name of each is and label each above the fruit. Then draw a bowl under the fruit and again query the students as to what it is. Label it "fruit bowl".

Go around to each student and give them the name of a piece of fruit and make sure they memorize it. So each student will be either apple, banana, or grapes. Explain to them that when you say apple - all the apples stand up and change seats. Same thing when you call bananas or grapes. Go over it once with them for a trial run. Then tell them when you say fruit bowl-everyone will get up and exchange different seats.

Now call a piece of fruit and let the students exchange seats. They'll probably all giggle thinking it's ridiculous. Now call fruit bowl. As the students exchange seats you sit down quickly in one of the chairs thereby leaving one student without a seat. Now tell the very embarrassed student that they must pay a penalty by either introducing themselves to the group or better yet - sing a song! If you teach Korean students they are natural hams when it comes to singing and they'll all sing and clap along.

Now it's the student in the center who must call a peice of fruit and now you must play along in the game. They suddenly become very competitive and eager not to get caught in the center. Your students will love it.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



38

Fun Method of Learning Student Names

When you have a new group of Students a quick way to learn their names is to get them to say their name and with the first letter of their name they choose something they like doing to fit that. For example my name is Shirley and I like Shopping. The next student starts with "Your name is Shirley you like Shopping, My Name is John I like Joking" this then builds up in a chain form around the class. At the end you do everybody's name through the chain and by the end of the class you 'll know everyone's name. Easy isn't it?

39

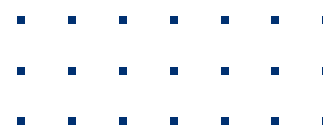
Getting older students interested

Get students thinking of why english is important and how they will learn it. Think up a few categories of things. Transportation, food, tools, clothing, rooms in house and feelings usually are good ones.

Next ask each student to get out a sheet of paper and a pencil.

As you name each category students must think of the thing in that category that makes him think of english class and why. For example in the category feelings: Scary because he might have to talk in another language. In the category room a student could choose the kitchen because there is a lot of interaction going on. The teacher then invites students to say their answer out loud and reason why he chose it. This helps the teacher to get to know his students and discuss their apprehensions, ideas and goals about the class. Students also get to know each other and find out that maybe they are not the only ones with those feelings. Teacher can follow up by explaining how class will proceed, what they'll do and what he expects from them.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



40

Getting Students to Speak Up



Ever have that problem with a new class - especially beginners - where the students mumble or whisper and won't speak up.? A nice non-threatening way I've found of encouraging them is by using the board eraser as if it was a TV controller/commander. IE pressing the button to increase the volume. It invariably invokes the right response and encourages other students to do likewise, where they may not feel like making a spoken request. Helps break the ice too!

41

Getting To Know You Game



AIM: 'Getting to know you' questions for a first lesson.

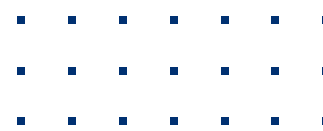
The following is similar to that of Rosamund, but takes the form of a Bingo game.

METHOD: As the students enter a new classroom and find a new face, they will be inevitably curious. As they begin to mutter or fire random questions, write the answers on the board. Write 16 answers then stop. Give them a quick moment to digest this. You can include things like 'I am a teacher.' 'Yes I do.' 'No I can't.' This gives them something to think about past closed questions.

First language offered is. 'I am a new teacher. You have many questions. Here are the answers. Please ask me the questions. You begin by going through the questions and answers so the students are familiar with it all. You then ask them all to draw up a grid 4x4. All the answers are written onto the grid in random order.

ADDITIONAL RULES: So that the games are not over too quickly, I set only 3 or 4 lines as the 'Bingo'. Anything not matching those lines are not winning Bingos. (ie, the top line is not indicated, so it is not a winning Bingo.) The students then call out the questions and the whole class marks off the answer on the sheet. I play in groups as the classes are quite large, so each group must write exactly the same cards out.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



42.

**gimme,
gimme**

Divide the students into teams of about 4-5 people. teacher will call out "gimme, gimme ____" and the students will scramble to find it in their possessions. the first team to run and bring it up to the teacher wins. you can also make write out a list of items the students need to find to make it longer. for example, "gimme, gimme 3 rubber bands" "gimme, gimme a pencil and a pen".

43.

Globe Ball

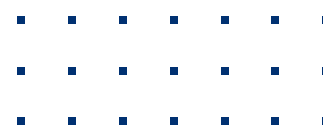
This is a a good ice-breaker for the first or second day of classes. Materials needed are an inflatable globe blown up, and dot stickers (available in stationary stores). Yellow is the most visible color. Students introduce themselves and give their names to the class. Have students stand in a circle.

Begin by throwing the globe ball to someone else and have the student throwing say the name of the person who is to receive the ball. (Teacher demonstrates first). If the student can't remember the intended receiver's name just ask the person to repeat his or her name and then say the name and throw the globe. Do this until the names are somewhat familiar then pick up the pace and throw faster.

When all names are familiar to all, stop and ask the students to take a yellow dot and place it on the glob on their hometown in their home country. (Don't put the dots on before throwing or they will fall off.) Discussion/Q & A can follow depending on level about each student's country, home town.

Also, comparisons of who lives furthest from their US city, who lives closest, and comparisons of US with student's own country. Good practice for contrasting asking another's name politely and informally, comparative/superlative adjectives (further /furthest), reported speech relating to information about students' countries could follow pair work exchange of information about individual countries.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



44 Guess Who

This 'recipe' works well after students have gotten to know a little about each other - perhaps the second part of the first class meeting or the second day of class. Distribute small strips of paper (1 or 2) to the students. Make sure the strips are all the same, that way no one will be able to guess by the size or shape of the paper. On the strips the students write one "fact" about themselves that the others do not know. Tell the students it shouldn't be something extremely obvious to guess. For example, one young blond headed student wrote "I have gray hair". Gather the strips in a hat or bowl and then have each student pick out a strip and read the fact out loud. The student who reads then has three guesses as to who it is. If the student does not guess after three times, the person who wrote the fact should say "It is me". It sometimes turns out funny. With the girl with the gray hair, no one believed and ended up looking through her head! Questions and further discussion spring from this as well.

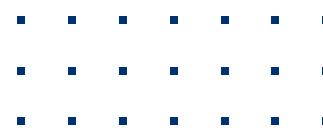
45 Hangless Hangman

This is useful for both breaking the ice and for encouraging language skills in students learning English.

Think up a word that applies to whatever lesson you have in mind. On the whiteboard, draw spaces corresponding to the letters, just as in the Hangman game. (For the word "game," for example, you'd draw: _ _ _ _.) Have the class guess at the letters...but instead of drawing a hanging man when they guess incorrectly, gradually draw a picture of what the mystery word describes. This will help them get it.

For students learning English as a second language, try including the word in both English and their native tongue. For example, to explain my free psychoeducational project to Spanish-speaking adults, I drew four spaces for "faro" and ten for "lighthouse." (My project's logo features a lighthouse, the one at Pharos.) The exercise isn't finished until they get both words.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



46

How well do you "know" the teacher?



Start the first class by telling the students your name only. No other information about the teacher should be shared. Then ask them to write down 5 questions they would like to ask you, the teacher, about whatever they may be interested in knowing about you.

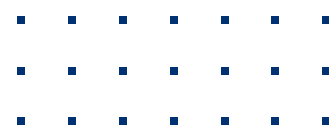
As they are doing this, write down each student's name on the board. Once they've written down their questions, ask one student to come to the front of the class and explain that this student will now play the role of you, the teacher, and will answer 5 of the students' questions, to the best of their guessing abilities. It is important to divulge the way the ice breaker works only after the students have finished writing their questions so as not to have any impact on the type of questions they will write down. Give a "point" to the student role-playing the teacher for each correct answer (or "close enough" answer) and an 'x' for an incorrect one.

Each student takes turns guessing the answers to the students' questions until each student has answered 5 questions. Encourage the students to re-ask questions which were previously answered incorrectly to gain more information about you, the teacher. Once every student has had a chance to role-play the role of the teacher, volunteer or answer the questions about you which were left answered incorrectly.

At the end of this activity, the students have accomplished many things. Firstly, they have learned a lot of info about you. Secondly, they have asked a multitude of different questions, learning new question-expressions from each other as they go along. Thirdly, they have been both asking AND answering questions, the key to any conversation class. Fourthly, it makes them more comfortable, since they aren't saying anything about themselves, which some students may be reluctant to do during the first class. Also, they are learning each other's names.

This is also beneficial to the teacher, as it puts the students at ease and makes them feel better about talking about themselves in later classes. Secondly, the students get used to doing most of the talking, some of which aren't used to this type of class dynamics. This can also set up another activity where the students learn about each other.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



47.

Imagining a Photo

In exchange for all the great ideas already posted, I feel I have to contribute one of my favorites. I teach ESL to adult students from various countries at a school which has weekly enrollment. I think it's important for new students to get comfortable a.s.a.p., but I hate the idea of formalized introductions. To get students to share information about themselves, I give each new student a blank piece of paper which is folded in half. I ask them to imagine that they have brought 4 of their favorite photos from home which represent events, people or places that are important to them for whatever reason. Students can then decide for themselves which information they want to relay to the rest of the class. The audience then has an opportunity to practice their questioning skills to find out more.

You'll find you learn a great deal about who your students are and what is important to them in, in a very short time. Cheers!

48.

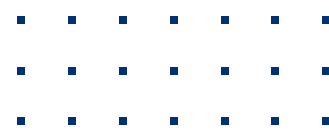
International Language Exchange

This activity works best with a large class, about twenty students, and with a diversity of languages. It is essentially a way for students to learn and teach greetings and basic expressions in their native languages. The key idea, however, is that they are explaining and asking questions in ENGLISH. Here are the procedures:

1. List basic greetings and expressions on the board.(Examples: Hello, hi, how are you?, excuse me, etc.)Elicit other expressions from students which they'd like to learn. Make sure you have enough to last the entire activity. They will teach and learn 3 expressions per group. (e.g. if you have 4 groups, you'll need 12 expressions)

2. Tell the students that they will be teaching each other, in English, how to write and say these expressions in their native language.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



48.

International Language Exchange (cont.)

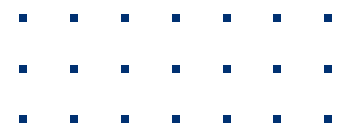
3. Divide class into groups of 3 or 4. Each group should have a mixture of languages. In my class, I happened to have 4 Spanish speakers, so I formed 4 groups and assigned only 1 Spanish speaker to each group. These Spanish speakers became captains. In any classroom, the language that has the most number would produce the captains.

4. Explain how the groups work. The captains sit on one side of the room and always stay seated. The other members of the group stay seated during one rotation, during which they teach and learn about 3 expressions. Each rotation is about 15 minutes.

5. Pass out one sheet of large newsprint paper to each group. Have the students make a grid, so that the left side lists the languages(e.g. Spanish, Korean, German) and the top part lists the expressions in English. They will be writing expressions in their native languages and phonetic spellings if needed(e.g. "An-young" is "hi" in Korean), under the correct heading.

5. In the next rotation, the members of each group except the captain move to another group. They teach and learn 3 new expressions. The same procedure is repeated until the students have met with every group. They get very excited about teaching what they know best and learning various expressions. It's a great exchange of languages! I've put up the newsprint paper on the wall as a constant reminder of not only how to say something in another language, but also the wonderful diversity we have in our classroom!

Suggestions for warm-up activities



49

Kindergarden Ice Breaker - Physical Humour

I've found that the best ice breaker for kindergarten classes is a little bit of Three Stooges style physical humor. Pretend you can't open the door when you arrive on the first day, trip over your chair, drop your books and cards as often as possible, lose your marker in plain sight, bump your head on something..

The kids will go nuts with laughter, they will relax, and you'll have their undivided attention. I've successfully used this in a class in Korea where 3/4's of the class burst into tears when I walked in for the first time. (They had never seen a foreigner).

50

Learning Student Names

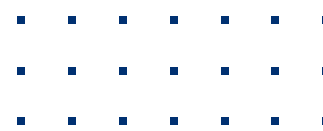
This is an idea for the beginning of school especially helpful for new for teachers who may have trouble learning new names. Put each student's name on a separate index card. Add info such as phonetic pronunciation, gender, preferred nicknames. Use when calling on students. Shuffle the cards after each round so students can't anticipate their names. Ask questions first, then say the name so all students listen to the question. This is also very helpful in assuring that you call on all students equally, not just the "stars." It also cuts down on the students who always want to be the one ones to answer first. You can use it as a way of taking attendance without taking time for that task. Just eliminate the cards of those absent and log it after class.

51

Lining up in Alphabetical Order

Heres a warm-up exercise to wake up a first or second class meeting. Have the students line up by alphabetically order. DON'T help them. DON'T organize it. Have the students ask each other their names and figure it out together. Then you check it. Write the names on the board. Round Two, line up by Last name, alphabetically. Then Check. Other variations. Line up by Birthday, Language, Distance from School, Size of family. Avoid obvious things like physical size, weight, hair color, etc..

Suggestions for warm-up activities



52

M & M's to speak



Pass around a bowl of M & M's and let each student take only one - and ask them not to eat it. Then announce that if they took a red one they have to say something about their family, a yellow one and they have to tell us their hobbies, etc. I usually make each student speak for at least a minute. I use this breaker at the university level and seems to be a hit.

53

Map of the World

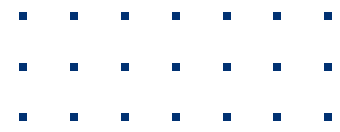


This is a good ice-breaker for the first or second day of classes. Materials needed are an inflatable globe blown up, and dot stickers (available in stationary stores). Yellow is the most visible color.

Students introduce themselves and give their names to the class. Have students stand in a circle. Begin by throwing the globe ball to someone else and have the student throwing say the name of the person who is to receive the ball. (Teacher demonstrates first). If the student can't remember the intended receiver's name just ask the person to repeat his or her name and then say the name and throw the globe. Do this until the names are somewhat familiar then pick up the pace and throw faster. When all names are familiar to all, stop and ask the students to take a yellow dot and place it on the globe on their hometown in their home country. (Don't put the dots on before throwing or they will fall off.)

Discussion/Q & A can follow depending on level about each student's country, home town. Also, comparisons of who lives furthest from their US city, who lives closest, and comparisons of US with student's own country. Good practice for contrasting asking another's name politely and informally, comparative/superlative adjectives (further /furthest), reported speech relating to information about students' countries could follow pair work exchange of information about individual countries.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



54.

On the first day of class I like to have my students do a fun activity that allows them to get used to working and speaking English in pair and group settings. This is a little activity that's a lot of fun.

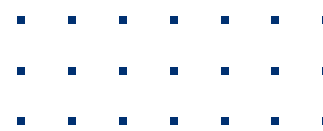
Maze Craze

First I find a relatively simple maze. Make sure that the maze is large with only a few turns. Before beginning tell your students that you are going to give them a really difficult activity. Pass out the Mazes and have the students complete the maze as quickly as possible. You may even make it a race. This should only take the students a few seconds. After they finish ask them if it was difficult. They will probably be confused because you told them earlier that this was a difficult activity.

Now the fun part. Give each student a new maze and assign partners. Tell one students to cover his eyes and their partner must give them directions (in English) to get through the maze. I usually explain this to my students and then with lower level classes we brainstorm some of the words and phrases they may need to use. Then make a race of it as students try to navigate the maze.

As an additional activity when all the students have finished the mazes you can make a real life maze in your classroom out of chairs or desks. Ask the students if they trust their partners. Then ask one student to wait outside the room. Arrange the maze and then bring the student back in the class with his/her eyes closed. His/her partner must give instructions on how to walk through the maze. This makes for a lot of laughs.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



55 Me Bag

Good for true beginners - I use this the first day of my German classes. Students learn some basic vocabulary for introductions, such as Hello, My name is, I come from, I like, I don't like, Thank you and Good-bye.

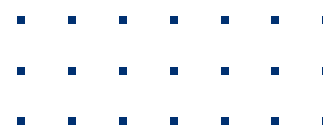
Their assignment for the next class is to bring in a small paper bag with 3 items that represent them. They must be prepared to say hello to the class, introduce themselves & tell where they come from, and name the three things they like, then say thank you and good-bye.

Variation: After saying the three things they like, they then describe what the item represents and tell the class a little about the item. For example, a student brings in a picture of their dog and tells the class about it in 2-3 sentences; or a baseball card and they explain that the Phillies are their favorite team; or a miniature soccer ball represents their favorite sport. For ESL students, this provides good practice.

56 Meaningful Musical Chairs

A fun way for students to mingle and learn about each other the first day of class is to play this version of musical chairs. Arrange chairs in scattered pairs, semi-facing each other. Play some upbeat music. Instruct the students that they are to mingle around the room to the music. When the music stops they must find a chair. Beforehand a poster has been displayed listing by number 12 topics for introductory discussion ie. Home life, Jobs, Hobbies, Favorite person, Favorite food etc... Now, the teacher rolls the dice and whatever subject the number corresponds to dictates what topic each pair will discuss (they must introduce themselves to their partner before discussing). When the music begins again they know to get up and mingle waiting for the music to stop and the next round of discussion with someone new to begin.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



57

My name on an apple (Tell me your name!)



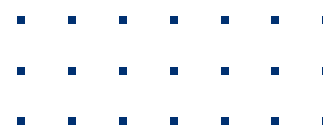
Copy the students' first names on 4x4 in cardboard squares and place them on top of apples by toothpicks or similar items (one apple per each student). Before that, you might have a demo with your own name and apple; then ask each student to come to the front, look for his/her name, tell him/her to pick up the apple with his or her name and tell it to their classmates; He or she has to say the name aloud like this: "God morning (afternoon or evening). My name is: _____ and I am _____ years old. Nice to meet you". The cards have two more questions on the back.

Eventually, by going in turns in the seat rows, each student will read the questions and provide the answers to the whole class. They could be for example: "What's your favorite music?", "Do you have a pet", "What kind of food do you like", "Do you like to dance", and so forth, eliciting answers. The other students have to take notes about the answers to eventually reply questions from the teacher or instructor. It's a very nice "icebreaker" activity.

Another variation could be having the students pick up a card with "likely" adjectives about them. They have to call them out and reply if they are like that. For example: "lazy", "cordial", "grumpy", "shy", "vivacious", "timid", "talkative", "friendly", "empathic", "extrovert", "empathic", "congenial", "sincere", "easygoing" synonyms and antonyms, and so forth.

The teacher will explain the basic meanings if the words are not familiar to the students. It's a good activity to learn new vocabulary. They have to ask the meaning each other or look for them on their dictionaries if unknown.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



58.

Perhaps this is an activity you've known for a long time, but this is the way I do it in class, and I hope you like it. It's the old "Getting to know your teacher" activity.

My teacher Isn't a Robot!

Students feel curious about the teacher, and we're always demanding information from them, but we never let them know anything about us, and believe it or not, they tend to consider us some kind of robots, who are locked in a wardrobe after the class ends! Let them realize you're a person and you have a life, and write on the blackboard your name, surrounded by words that are answers to questions they should ask. Write obvious ones and difficult ones, for them in groups to think hard and feel the challenge. I usually do it like this:

25 The Black Cat Eternal Myriam Green Norway Angel Sara 39
Spaghetti Beautiful 1

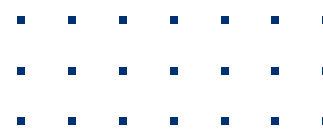
It seems easy, but can you guess everything? Well, 1 means 1 sister.

Myriam is my sister's name. that's easy. But what's 39? (I'm 26, by the way, and I represent my age!!) It's my shoe size. Beautiful is my perfume, Green is a color I hate.

My students had a good laugh! Don't be afraid to use personal info: they adore it. (of course without including intimate details)

Have fun!

Suggestions for warm-up activities



59 Names Out of a Hat

Have each student write their name. I then take off my baseball cap put all the names in the hat and have the students pick out a name. Then I call on someone and have them ask the person next to them "are you ____" usually one or two are lucky and the person next to them is the name they picked, but if it isn't I ask them to go around the room and ask different People "are you____," and they either say "yes I am" or "no I am not, I am ____". This can also be used for higher levels.

60 Nazo's musical chairs

The whole class sits in a circle. If the class size is too big, then you can make two circles.

There is ONE student standing in the middle of the circle who doesn't sit on a chair. That student says one sentence related to his/her life, family or hobbies. E.g., I have two brothers / I like chocolate a lot / I have a boyfriend.

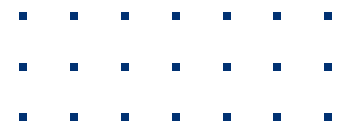
All the students in a circle who have two brothers have to exchange chairs with other students. SO the ones who have two brothers stand up and find another empty chair to sit on. The one who is not able to find a chair to sit on stays in the middle of the circle. This new person in the middle has to find a sentence related to him/her.

61 Nazo's World

This icebreaker is designed to get to know the teacher.

The teacher (T) draws a circle on the board and asks what it stands for. If students (ss) cannot guess, the T tells them that it is her/his world and writes MY WORLD on top of it. Inside her/his world the t writes some keywords related to her/his world. E.g., 37 / 1987 / Lucky / Tom etc. The Ss sit in groups of 3/4 and make their guesses, like 'You graduated in 1987' If the guess is correct, the T puts a tick on the keyword.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



62

New in Town



If you were going to advise someone who is moving to your home town, What would you tell the newcomer about:

1. Places to visit/entertainment
2. Areas to live
3. Places to go shopping
4. Good schools to attend
5. Sports facilities in your town

Make 5 groups and give the same color card to each member of the same group. Each group discusses one of the above questions. When done, regroup. A person of each group joins a new group. Each person reports findings to the new group.

Each group will write a letter to the newcomer as if the newcomer was: 10, 20, 30, 50, 70 years old. The group can type or handwrite the letter. At the end each group reports to the whole class.

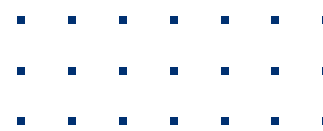
63

people bingo



This is a really easy first day activity. First of all using the same outline as you would a normal bingo sheet, fill in each block with questions. For example, find someone who has a brother or a sister, find someone who can play the piano, find someone who is crazy about chocolate, find someone who is head over heels in love with brad pitt. You can base your questions on students levels. All students receive the bingo sheet with the find someone who blocks, and they must go around the class and fill in the entire sheet with different peoples names. It is a great way for students to ask each other questions. Whoever fills out the bingo sheet first yells bingo. Michelle Lalande ILSC Montreal Canada

Suggestions for warm-up activities



64.

Picking Pictures

This is a good first day activity if you have a bunch of simple pictures on file, as many ESL teachers do. After each student has told the class a few things about himself/herself, have him or her choose a picture from an assortment of 15-20 pictures. The class has 3-5 guesses to try to figure out why the person chose the picture. If no one guesses correctly, then the student explains it. Some pictures I've used with this: a car, a ring, a TV, a baby, a bird... It's fine for the pictures to be simple because they will add more personalized meanings to it.

65.

Portrait Gallery in class

I learnt this activity in a course for adults, but I've tried it with all levels and age students and it works as well.

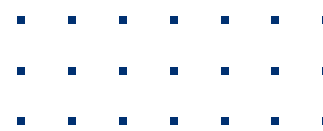
Give the students a piece of paper and colour crayons. Ask them to draw a self portrait -better faces only- on it in a freestyle way. Tell them that it is not necessary to get perfect ones: they can be cartoon-like, humorous, caricatures or very simple ones. They have to reflect the way they think they are. Don't write names! They will add three things they like and three things they don't in both sides of their portrait, for example, drawing the words "likes" and "dislikes" and write the things below each one. Finally, they can decorate it as they like.

When the task is finished, the teacher sticks each portrait on the classroom wall.

The students can walk around admiring the portraits and guessing who is who. The teacher can help to start conversations commenting likes and dislikes, looking for coincidences or contrasts, for instance "Ana and Elena like spiders, Why? Luis likes chocolate, but Susana doesn't. Can both of you explain why?"

I usually keep the portraits on the wall for a long time. The students ask me to do it!

Suggestions for warm-up activities



66 Poster for Small Talk

Living in Japan my one of my big problems is getting students to talk to each other rather than to the teacher. Things here tend to be rather teacher centered. I found one way to do it. I made a poster with common small talk questions on it. Things like "How was work today?" or "Did you have a good day at school?". At the start of each class I just pointed at the poster and left the room for 5 minutes. I stayed in the doorway to listened and the results were just what I was looking for. After about a week of not really knowing what to do the students started to have really good chats. I gave them a month to get used to the idea and then told them that they had to do it before class. I now have students who are chatting in English on the elevator on the way to class. That's something I never thought I'd see in my classes here.

67 Prediction

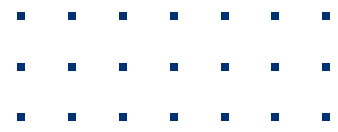
Inspired by 'Crystal Ball Prediction'

Supply students with a list of topics to ask each other about (i.e. name, pets, hobbies, favorite food). Pair students up. S1, 'subject'-student, stays absolutely silent as S2 asks S1 questions. S3 answers all the questions. After S2 has asked all the questions and S3 has answered, S1 shares their true answers with the class. This can be repeated as needed.

68 Psychiatrist

This is a good icebreaker for teenagers, and it often results in talking and giggling. To start, you choose a "psychiatrist" and send them out of the room. Then, the group has to quickly think up something that is wrong with them. For example, their left eye twitches whenever they are spoken to. Be creative. Next, you bring in your psychiatrist, and he has to walk around the room asking his patients questions about the problem. While he is doing this, the class has to continue their "problem" until he figures it out. It may take a while (and it can get really funny if it does) or just a short amount of time, but once your psychiatrist figures it out it always results in a much more relaxed class. If you want to play more, the psychiatrist gets to choose who gets to go next. You can play this as many times as you want, just be creative in what you think up!

Suggestions for warm-up activities



69

Putting Pieces Together



This activity is fun and works for all ages!

Objective: To "break the ice"

To encourage working as a group

To encourage natural conversation

Procedure:

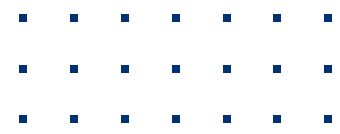
Cut one large square(about 8 in. x 8 in.) out of colored cardboard for each student. Cut each square into 8 smaller pieces of various shapes (rectangles, triangles, pentagons, etc.) Each square should be unique.

Divide the class into groups of 5 and give each group the scrambled pieces for 5 of the squares. Each member of the group must be given 8 pieces. Their job is to put the squares together again without talking.

Students cannot ask for someone else's piece. They can only take another student's piece without asking and give that student one of theirs. Students continue giving and taking pieces until everyone in the group has made a square.

This should take about 5-10 minutes. When they finish they can talk about what they just did. And they will have a lot to say! If the activity is successful and moving along quickly enough, have groups swap squares and repeat

Suggestions for warm-up activities



70.

This one worked well with my basic class of 4 students. First, you give them a list of 5 categories or so. I chose First Pet, Favorite vacation, Favorite book, Silliest mistake in college, Oldest Friend.

Quiz Program

You ask each student to circle the category they want someone to interview them about.

Next, you pair off the teams, one person is the interviewer and one is the interviewee. The interviewer asks as much and the interviewee gives as much information on the subject as they can in 15 minutes. (It's about the interviewee's first pet, or other category).

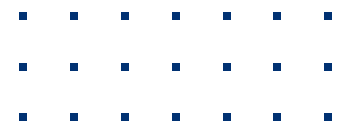
After time is up, the two people in the other group now interrogate the interviewer. He or she must answer all their questions about the subject correctly, even guessing if needed. There is a competition - who will get the first 10 points?

One point goes to the interrogators if they can stump the interviewer. Vice versa if the interviewer gets the answer right. The interviewee is the judge.

Sounds complicated, so the best thing to do is write the instructions on a sheet and give it to all members, then go over the instructions yourself with them.

It's alot of fun and can fill over an hour of class time with lots of talk and thinking in English!

Suggestions for warm-up activities



71 Reflecting

Inspired by 'What made you smile?'

Enter the class with a gigantic smile (just like you normally do). Ask the students what they think made you smile. After they answer, tell them something specific that made you smile and elaborate on it for a short stint.

Get the students to think about what has made them smile today. Pair them up and have S1 speculate about what has made S2 smile. After S1 is finished, S2 gives his/her answer. Switch the roles and have them do the same thing again so that each has a chance to speculate and to share the truth.

72 Say goodbye

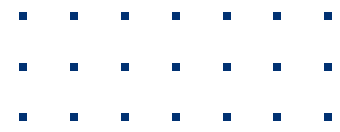
This icebreaker is an amusing way to start off your semester.

1. Instead of doing something really predictable, such as having students stand up and introduce themselves, tell them to imagine that this is the last class period, and they should stand up and pretend that they are saying farewell. If the students seem reluctant, help them with a few useful phrases such as "I'm going to miss you!" or "Promise me you'll stay in touch." Then have them mingle and say goodbye to at least three people.

2. Then tell them to sit down and write the three things they liked the most about this term. After they're finished writing, you can ask students to volunteer what they wrote and make a list on the board.

Rationale: This ice breaker helps reduce first day tension, and helps students to think ahead to what they hope to get out of the class.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



73

Snowballs!

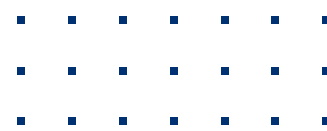


This is a fun way to get students relaxed while at the same time getting to know the students a little better. It also helps show them that learning (as they'll be learning about each other in this activity) can be lots of fun. And it's really easy:

- 1) Have the students write down at least 3 facts about themselves (or as many as you want to have them write down).
- 2) Instruct the students to crumple up the papers on which they have just written their facts on each other.
- 3) Then shock them by telling them that now, they get to have a one minute 'snowball' fight and let them stand up and throw the crumpled fact papers at each other for a minute.
- 4) At the end of the minute, students grab whichever snowball is closest to them. Reconvene the class and then you can either:
 - a) have the students read the facts on the snowball they have and have to guess which student in the class the snowball belongs to
 - b) Or have the students read aloud the facts on the snowball they have and whoever wrote those facts has to tell the class it's theirs, rather than having the students guess.

I've used this game as an ice breaker for 11th and 12th graders and they LOVE it because it's so completely different

Suggestions for warm-up activities



74.

Student Interviews

Instead of starting a class with all the students standing up and talking about themselves, which can be scary to some. Have the students pair up and interview each other and introduce each other to the class as, "This is my friend , Dave Sperling, he lives in California, etc...". Simple enough, but the variations are really fun.

Have the students interview each other and explain to the class the following topics: Their day, Their favorite book and magazine and why, Their favorite food, a memorable vacation, etc... My favorite variation? With an advanced class I tricked them with a simple topic to interview, but when it was time to deliver, I instructed them to FABRICATE fantastic stories about how they met their dear friend. Give a prize to the most outrageous. My favorite? "I met my dear friend were all true friendships are formed..in prison!".

75.

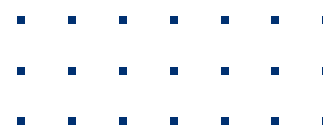
Stuffed Globe

I have a stuffed globe that I got at an educational store. It's about the size of a regular globe, only it's stuffed like a teddy bear. On the first day of class, I bring the globe in along with some colored map/common pins. I pass the globe around the class and ask students to introduce themselves:

- a) what's their name
- b) what country are they from
- c) what is their first language.

As they introduce themselves, they mark their country with a colored pin from the box of pins, then pass the globe and the box of pins to their neighbor. I model the exercise Note that I model the exercise first by introducing myself and marking my country - then I pass the globe to a first student. After the last person has introduced themselves, I write on the board the number of people from each country represented. We also, as a class, group the countries by continents. Finally, the globe makes its way around the room one more time, pins and all, so that everyone can get an overall sense of where everyone is from. It's a fun introduction.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



76 Talk to me... this way

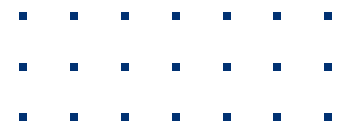
This is a good activity to start the class. Before getting started, write sentences on a post-it paper, like: "Ask me questions", "Laugh at me" "Be angry at me" , Disagree with me,"Ignore me, etc. according to the number of students you've got. Stick the paper to the student's back, so he can't see what is written. They must stand up and go around the class and talk in pairs. They must act according to what's written on their partner's back.If it's Tell me lies, they are supposed to tell lies.

The teacher can choose topics for them to talk like holidays, dates, pets, etc. They need to change partner's many times. At the end they are supposed to tell how people acted while talking to them to see if they can guess what 's written.

77 Teacher Photos

Students are usually very interested in the life of their teacher. A good way to share information about yourself is to bring your photo albums into class. I keep my photos in a binder so that the pages are easily removed (number them first). I let each student choose a photo. They then think of three questions to ask about each photo. I give them the answers and pair them up. They then tell their partner about the photo and exchange photos. They then change partners and share the information they learned about the new photo. You can change partners several times. It's fun to ask questions about the photos at the end of the session because sometimes the information the last student has is different from the information you gave out. This is a great way for students to learn about your family and experiences, even if your photos do take a beating.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



78

Team Mapping



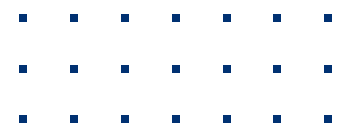
In an open area designate the boundaries a continent you happen to be on. For example, Bangalore City is next to the tree on the right. Mysore City is 15 feet away by the rock on the left. Kuala Lumpur is several more feet past the rock and Paris is a few feet beyond the tree, but not too many because you want people to be able to hear each other. If you are training indoors write BANALORE on one piece of paper, MYSORE on another, and put them on the floor 20 feet apart.

After you have pointed out the boundaries ask the participants to go to the place that represents the location where you had your most memorable meal (best, worst, or most exotic).

As people rearrange themselves make sure no one goes so far away that they are out of earshot. When the traffic stops have people report where they were and what they had to eat. You will get some interesting stories and obviously this is a good activity to use just before lunch.

After you hear from everyone (or some people if the group is large) pose one or two more topics. Dream up anything that is pertinent to your group. It is best to start with less serious subjects such as a memorable meal before you ask more thoughtful questions.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



79.

The Appointment Discussion Game

This is a great multi-skill game that can be adapted for all levels. Give students an appointment sheet. The sheet should resemble a planner with seven or eight appointment openings (9:00 am, 10:00 am, 11:00 am, 12:00 pm, etc.). The object of the first step is to fill their appointment sheets.

You can model asking for an appointment. Students circulate around the room asking each other for appointments, until their schedules are full. If you have an odd number of students who cannot fill their sheets, tell them to sit down. When everyone has filled their schedules as much as possible, all students should sit down and listen to the instructions for part two.

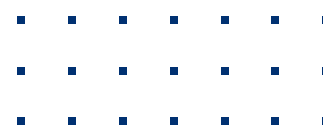
Ask students to find their 9:00 am appointment. Once they've found each other, they should discuss a level appropriate question.

For advanced students: "What was the worst day of your life?"

For intermediate students: "Who is your favorite person?" After several minutes of discussion, ask them to find their 11:00 am appointment and discuss a different question. Repeat several times with new questions and new partners. If you have an odd number of students, you can discuss questions with the odd one out.

I've found that this game builds more rapport in the classroom faster than any other icebreaker.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



80 The Talking Zone

To get students to talk during the first few days is far from easy. At a later stage, the really difficult thing is to keep them quiet! :) Anyway, let's begin at the beginning...This teaching activity revolves around four major topics: a) The Home, b) School Life, c) Jobs and d) Spare Time.

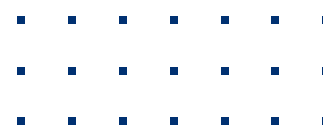
By answering a few simple questions and carrying out some easy tasks, students will get to know one another in a comfortable and co-operative environment. There is something for everyone and -hopefully- all of the students will have something to say.

Just ask your students to say a number between 1 and 40 and read the corresponding question. Do not ask for perfection right now. Building up everybody's self-confidence is much more important -and will prove more useful in the long run- so make sure that everybody joins in the talking.

A) The Home

- 1) Design the ideal home. Tell your classmates about it.
- 2) Describe your bedroom. Your classmates should be able to produce a detailed plan of the place, according to your description.
- 3) You have won 25,000 dollars in the lottery. How would you redecorate your living-room?
- 4) In groups, design the house of the future. Show the results on a poster.
- 5) Draw a plan of your neighborhood, show where your house is and explain how you go to the following places: a) the baker's, b) the supermarket and c) your favorite disco or pub.
- 6) Compose an advertisement to sell your house.
- 7) Give 3 reasons why you like/dislike your house.
- 8) Write a story about a house. Use between 120 and 150 words.
- 9) Would you rather rent a house or buy one? Discuss.
- 10) Write a list of the housework to be done in a house. Say who does each thing at your place.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



80

The Talking Zone (cont.)

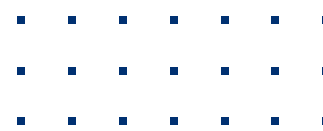
B) School Life

- 11) In pairs, list the qualities of the perfect teacher.
- 12) Say what your favorite school subjects are. Give reasons.
- 13) Are you a "good" student? Explain why/why not.
- 14) Design a suitable timetable for your class. Show it to your classmates.
- 15) Homework is necessary. Discuss.
- 16) Plan the activities for a special "Cultural Events Week" at your school.
- 17) Suggest an itinerary for an end-of-term trip.
- 18) Devise a short English exam. Try it and see what happens!
- 19) Tell your classmates a funny story/situation that has taken place in your school.
- 20) Imagine what a small child would write about his/her first day at school.

C) Jobs

- 21) Write a short paragraph about your present/past/future job. Read it out and aloud.
- 22) Tell your students 5 things you would do if you were not forced to work.
- 23) Write a list of 10 machines/devices that make people's work easier these days.
- 24) Tell your classmates about one job you would NOT like to do. Explain your choice.
- 25) Would you work if you were a millionaire?
- 26) Think of 3 people you admire because of their jobs.
- 27) Would you like to be a policeman/policewoman? Why? Why not?
- 28) Many people have not got a job. Suggest some solutions to the problem.
- 29) Think of one job. Let your classmates ask you questions about it (i.e. "Do you work indoors?", "Is your job interesting?" etc.) You may only answer "Yes" or "No". Can they guess the job you are thinking about?
- 30) How many different jobs can you name in 1 minute?

Suggestions for warm-up activities



80 The Talking Zone (cont.)

D) Spare Time

- 31) Summarize the plot of a book you have enjoyed. Can your classmates guess its title?
- 32) Tell the class about the worst TV program you have ever seen.
- 33) Are you sports-mad? Briefly describe the rules of your favorite sport.
- 34) If you could travel round the world, what countries would you visit?
- 35) Write a short paragraph about your favorite singer/band. Use about 70 words.
- 36) Tell your classmates about the (computer) game you like best.
- 37) Do you like reading comics? Which are your favorites? Why?
- 38) Think about your favorite radio program. Tell your neighbour, adding reasons why you think s/he should listen to it.
- 39) In groups, make a poster about your favorite singer/band.
- 40) Write the titles of the 4 best films you have ever seen.

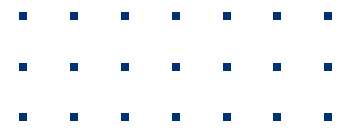
81 The Twister Game

This game is best to be played in a large group. Divide the ppl into groups of 3. However, 1 or 2 people must not be in a group, they are the extras. In each group, 2 persons will stand and face each other while holding each other hands. The 3rd person in the group will squat/kneel in between the 2 person. So basically the 2 persons who're standing up are called the "House", while the person kneeling in between is a "Human". The host of the game can shout either 1 of the 3 commands at 1 time:

1) Fire: Fire burns down the houses. so people who are the "house" must change partners to form new "houses", they cannot remain to be a "house with their existing partners. The people who are "human" must not move, they must remain in their existing place so that the people who are the "houses" can form "houses" over them.

2) Flood: Flood causes humans to drown. Therefore, the "human" must change to other "houses", they cannot remain in the same existing "house". The people who are the "houses" do not move this time.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



81 The Twister Game (cont.)

3)Twister: Everybody have to change their position. For the people who the "house", they can either change partners, or they can kneel down to become "humans" themselves. For the people who are the "human", they can either change to other "houses", or they can stand up and partner with someone to become a "house".

When the host shouts either 1 of the command, the 1 or 2 people who the extras must move quickly so that they can compete with the original players by partnering up with someone to become "houses", or by becoming "humans" and occupy the "houses". As a result, there will be either 1 or 2 people to be left out every time the host shouts a command. The host should take note of the people who are left out each time he/she shouts a new command. The person who is being left out the most number of times will be punished.

PS: To enhance the excitement, the host shouldn't wait too long to shout another new command. Besides, the host can shout 2 or 3 new command continuously so that players will feel extra nervous when they're changing their position.

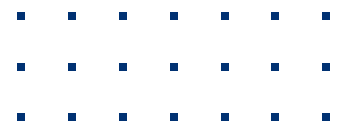
82 This gets everyone laughing!!

I don't know how many of you know how to blow up balloons and make shapes of dogs, cats etc etc with them but there are ways to learn it fast with pumps.

I have found that if I give everyone in class a balloon and have them try to blow it up (99% of the world cannot) it is just a great way to break the ice.

The balloons I use are designed for making shapes. Not just your everyday simple balloon. Try looking for Qualatex ballons on Google.

Suggestions for warm-up activities



83

Three things in common



This activity is for the first day of class with students who don't know each other. It requires no preparation. The students must ask each other questions until they find three things that they have in common. They must be things that are not obvious. For example, they can't say we both have black hair. It is easy to model the activity interviewing a student until you find three things that they have in common with you. Maybe choose a student you already know for this so you don't have to spend too long. Students can repeat this several times and then report back their findings to partners or the class.

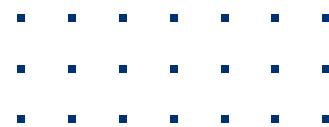
84

Toilet Paper Alternative



For those who would like to try the toilet paper fiasco, but would like to limit the toilet humor in the classroom, try this alternative: instead of asking the students to take sheets from a roll of toilet paper, pass around a bowl of small candies such as M&M's and ask the students to take as many as they would like, but not to eat them yet. Then ask each student to say something about themselves in English for every piece of candy that they have taken.

Sources:



1. ESL Cafe. (n.d.). Ice breakers. [eslcafe.com].

<https://www.eslcafe.com/resources/lesson-plans/ice-breakers>

2. Language Link Jobs. (n.d.). Your first English lesson. [Language Link Jobs].

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Contact:

Ms. Phạm Minh Huệ & Ms. Nguyễn Đoan Trang

ULIS Middle School, ULIS, VNU

2 Phạm Văn Đồng

, Cầu Giấy District, Hà Nội

<https://ums.vnu.edu.vn/>