

Herbert Puchta's 101 Tips for Teaching Teenagers



Cambridge Handbooks for Language Teachers

This series, now with over 50 titles, offers practical ideas, techniques and activities for the teaching of English and other languages, providing inspiration for both teachers and trainers.

The Pocket Editions come in a handy, pocket-sized format and are crammed full of tips and ideas from experienced English language teaching professionals, to enrich your teaching practice.

Recent titles in this series:

Classroom Management Techniques

JIM SCRIVENER

CLIL Activities

A resource for subject and language teachers
LIZ DALE AND ROSIE TANNER

Language Learning with Technology

Ideas for integrating technology in the classroom
GRAHAM STANLEY

Translation and Own-language Activities

PHILIP KERR

Language Learning with Digital Video

BEN GOLDSTEIN AND PAUL DRIVER

Discussions and More

Oral fluency practice in the classroom
PENNY UR

Interaction Online

Creative activities for blended learning
LINDSAY CLANDFIELD AND JILL HADFIELD

Activities for Very Young Learners

HERBERT PUCHTA AND KAREN ELLIOTT

Teaching and Developing Reading Skills

PETER WATKINS

Lexical Grammar

Activities for teaching chunks and exploring patterns
LEO SELIVAN

Off the Page

Activities to bring lessons alive and enhance learning
CRAIG THAINE

Teaching in Challenging Circumstances

CHRIS SOWTON

Recent Pocket Editions:

Penny Ur's 100 Teaching Tips

PENNY UR

Jack C. Richards' 50 Tips for Teacher Development

JACK C. RICHARDS

Scott Thornbury's 30 Language Teaching Methods

SCOTT THORNBURY

Alan Maley's 50 Creative Activities

ALAN MALEY

Scott Thornbury's 101 Grammar Questions

SCOTT THORNBURY

Mark Hancock's 50 Tips for Teaching Pronunciation

MARK HANCOCK

Carol Read's 50 Tips for Teaching Primary Children

CAROL READ

David Crystal's 50 Questions About English Usage

DAVID CRYSTAL

Herbert Puchta's 101 Tips for Teaching Teenagers

Herbert Puchta



Consultant and editor: Scott Thornbury



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108738750

© Cambridge University Press 2021

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2021

20 19 18 17 16 15 14 13 12 11 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Printed in Great Britain by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon CR0 4YY

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-108-73875-0 Paperback

ISBN 978-1-108-73876-7 ebook

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

Thanks and Acknowledgements

viii

Why I wrote this book

ix

A: Motivation

1

- 1 An energy booster to start the lesson 2
- 2 Show your enthusiasm 3
- 3 Help learners see why learning English is important 4
- 4 Make deals 5
- 5 Turn the classroom into a special place 6
- 6 Gamify learning 7
- 7 Teach outdoors occasionally 8
- 8 Take your learners' learning seriously 9
- 9 Empower learners by asking them to teach *you* 10
- 10 Break routines 11
- 11 Use rewards artfully 12
- 12 Support learners who show self-doubt and negative beliefs 13

B: Classroom management

14

- 13 Activate your learners right from the start 15
- 14 Start the lesson with attention 16
- 15 Establish classroom routines 17
- 16 How to use the walls of your classroom 18
- 17 Enlarge your action zone 19
- 18 Arrange learners in groups for a reason 20
- 19 Use visual anchors 21
- 20 Make lessons flow 22
- 21 Establish an online learning buddy system 23
- 22 Make sure learners do what YOU want them to do 24
- 23 Don't let your voice become high-pitched or loud 25

C: Classroom culture

26

- 24 Create a classroom culture your learners want to belong to 27
- 25 Show learners you care for their physical well-being 28
- 26 Establish the ground rules together 29
- 27 Inject some light-hearted fun into the lessons 30
- 28 Help learners cope with stress 31
- 29 Deal with errors wisely 32
- 30 Help your learners learn from their mistakes 33
- 31 Ask for feedback 34
- 32 Take learners' emotions seriously 35
- 33 Make learners feel they are in control 36

D: Listening	37
34 Teach learners to listen out for keywords	38
35 Use storyboards with narrative texts	39
36 Use various ways of dictating texts	40
37 The super statement challenge	41
38 Motivate learners to listen attentively to each other	42
39 Try Rogerian listening to improve communication in class	43
40 Use collective listening to raise learners' level of attention	44
41 Encourage learners to record their voice	45
42 Ways of supporting intensive listening	46
E: Speaking	47
43 Use substitution tables	48
44 Engage your learners in small talk	49
45 Use anecdotes	50
46 Ask the right questions	51
47 Deal with silence successfully	52
48 Do use drills	53
49 Engage learners in effective roleplay	54
50 Have five-minute activities ready	55
51 Encourage learners to speak personally	56
52 Motivate your learners to stick to English in class	57
53 Design engaging problem-solving tasks	58
54 Show me your stickers and I'll tell you ...	59
55 Use concentric circles to foster fluency	60
56 Use consensograms as a basis for discussions	61
57 Engage learners in gallery walk conversations	62
58 Encourage discussions about values	63
59 The role of the learners' own language (L1)	64
F: Reading	65
60 Create awareness of what's happening while reading	66
61 Vary the lead-in activities you use	67
62 Use motivating tasks in connection with extensive reading	68
63 Help learners become fluent readers	69
64 Use interactive reading ideas	70
65 Occasionally, ask learners to read while listening	71
66 Regularly revisit texts learners have read	72
67 Explore a story using all the senses	73
68 Scaffold learners' intensive reading (1)	74
69 Scaffold learners' intensive reading (2)	75
70 Scaffold learners' inferencing skills with the help of poetry	76
71 Engage learners in creating concept maps	77
72 Read texts out loud	78

G: Writing	79
73 Involve learners in writing short texts	80
74 Help learners get into a writing flow	81
75 Text transformations	82
76 Engage learners in silent dialogue writing	83
77 Use grammar poetry to make language more memorable	84
78 Mini-sagas	85
79 Write questions for an interview	86
80 Wacky lists	87
81 Use mentor sentences to inspire your learners' writing	88
82 Ask learners to write an eyewitness account	89
H: Behaviour management	90
83 Help learners find out how to pay attention best	91
84 Problems with homework? Don't give up!	92
85 Use specific language strategies to stop disruptive behaviour	93
86 Don't let conflicts escalate – make your learners think	94
87 Learners are shouting out the answer? Vary the expected response	95
88 Avoid conflicts around mobile phones	96
89 Help learners solve conflicts in constructive ways	97
90 Have strategies ready to deal with attention-seekers	98
91 Keep calm with difficult learners	99
92 When learners are verbally aggressive – go meta	100
I: Fostering maturity	101
93 Help learners to set goals and reach them	102
94 Help learners become responsible adults	103
95 Help learners beat procrastination	104
96 Inspire learners to become high achievers	105
97 Deriving pride from effort – and learning from mistakes	106
98 Coach body language clusters	107
99 Help learners develop growth mindsets	108
100 Teach efficient study strategies	109
101 Help your learners be happy learners	110
Appendix 1: Jonnie Peacock	111
Appendix 2: Poem	112
Appendix 3: Habits that help create happiness	113
Index	114

Thanks

I want to thank Scott Thornbury, the series editor, for his constructive and inspiring dialogue on the ideas in this book. A big thank you to Karen Momber and Jo Timerick at Cambridge University Press for their encouragement and patience, and to Alison Sharpe for her editorial precision and many positive comments. Thanks too to the anonymous readers for their suggestions, and to Caroline Petherick for her advice.

Acknowledgements

The authors and publishers acknowledge the following sources of copyright material and are grateful for the permissions granted. While every effort has been made, it has not always been possible to identify the sources of all the material used, or to trace all copyright holders. If any omissions are brought to our notice, we will be happy to include the appropriate acknowledgements on reprinting and in the next update to the digital edition, as applicable.

Text

Tip 62: Activities from *101 Young Adult Novels for Your English Language Class* by Christian Holzmann. Copyright © 2014 Helbling Verlag GmbH. Reproduced with kind permission of Christian Holzmann and Helbling Verlag GmbH; **Tip 70:** “The fireplace is cold, covered with thick ashes,” from *One Robe, One Bowl: The Zen Poetry of Ryōkan*, translated and introduced by John Stevens, First edition, 1977. Protected by copyright under the terms of the International Copyright Union. Reprinted by arrangement with The Permissions Company, LLC on behalf of Shambhala Publications Inc., Boulder, CO, www.shambhala.com; **Tip 95:** Excerpt from *Positive Discipline for Teenagers, Revised 3rd Edition: Empowering Your Teens and Yourself Through Kind and Firm Parenting* by Jane Nelsen and Lynn Lott. Copyright © 1994, 2000, 2012 by Jane Nelsen and Lynn Lott. Used by permission of Three Rivers Press, an imprint of Random House, a division of Penguin Random House LLC. All rights reserved.

Typeset

QBS Learning.

Why I wrote this book

I have given seminars on teaching teenagers in a great many countries. At the start of these sessions, I normally ask teachers to engage in three rounds of reflection on their own work with teens. First, I ask them what they find rewarding about teaching teenagers. Typical answers colleagues have come up with include: the opportunities a teen classroom provides for them to respectfully influence young people's development; the fact that teens have general knowledge that teachers often don't (the latest trends in popular culture, for example); teenagers' familiarity with modern technology; their spontaneity and the fun it can be teaching them; and the opportunity to talk about 'real' issues with them and challenge them by discussing solutions to real-world problems.

Following on from that, I ask the participants to list the challenges they regularly come across in their teen classrooms, to compare their answers in pairs and to categorise them. The outcomes of this second round are often amazing. My rough guess is that 90 percent of all the categories of challenges that teachers mention is not about language learning *per se*, or what is usually regarded as language teaching methodology. Rather, it is about the specific challenges presented by the facts that teenagers are going through a phase in their lives characterised by not just a desire to be different from parents and teachers, but also by their search for identity, and the worries, fears and insecurities that come with that. How should teachers cope with these challenges?

In a final round, I ask colleagues to list their specific questions about language teaching methodology in the teenage classroom. I usually get quite a few questions on how to teach the four skills, but also on how to help the learners apply efficient learning strategies and what we can do to help them become responsible adults who have learned to make optimum value-based decisions for themselves in life.

These fascinating and wide-ranging discussions with colleagues over the years have shaped the outline of this book. It is about the methodology of teaching teens – and here we are focusing on the teaching of the four skills. But also it is first and foremost about issues that go beyond language and that have a significant influence on learners' willingness

to learn, and the qualities and outcomes of their learning process. In particular, we are looking at motivation, classroom and behaviour management and how we can help foster our learners' maturity. Each of these nine chapters starts with an introduction to the relevant topic and the significance of dealing with it in the teenage classroom.

A look at the literature available on teaching English to teenagers shows that first of all it is scarce, in fact almost non-existent. Secondly, I know of no book that focuses specifically on the issues that quite a few colleagues would seem to need support with. There are, however, some excellent books on what Laurence Steinberg calls the 'New Science of Adolescence'. They deal with educational and psychological issues in the teenage classroom and provide insights based on recent neurobiological research into what goes on in teens' inner world and how that impacts their behaviour and their thinking and feeling.

My own work on teaching teenagers has been significantly influenced over the years by the writing of educational philosopher Kieran Egan. Egan makes the point that a person's intellectual growth happens naturally, through the acquisition of certain intellectual qualities (he calls them 'developments') deeply rooted in our cultural history. In order for an individual's intellect to grow appropriately, the development of certain 'cognitive tools' is essential. The most challenging of these processes is what he calls 'romantic understanding' – a beautiful name, but often a very difficult phase in a young person's life. This is the time when they are overwhelmed with emotions and don't know how to deal with them – with all kinds of consequences for their behaviour and their inner world. In order to move on to 'philosophical development', what is required is the maturation of higher brain functions. It is important to note, however, that these developments are not age-determined; in other words, some young people move into their philosophical thinking frame as late as their twenties or thirties (if at all!).

Fortunately, recent research into teenage development confirms that the teenage years offer great opportunities for us as teachers to influence our learners positively. The tips in this book have been written based on the belief that the problems we so frequently come across in the teenage classroom are challenges that we can overcome and that the changes going on in the teenagers' inner world are opportunities for us

to help influence them and guide them towards becoming mature and responsible adults.

I have been involved in teaching teenagers since I started teaching some 40 years ago, first as a teacher in Austria, then as a materials writer, teacher trainer and classroom researcher. Most of the suggestions in this book I have developed and used in various classrooms myself. Others I have learned over the years from colleagues and made ‘my own’ by adapting them so they fit my own personal style best. I hope you will do the same with the activities in this book that you find useful and want to use in your own classes. I believe they will work best if you too make them your own. This will then help you deal with the more difficult teen developments in a way that feels familiar to you, which will in turn enable you to influence your learners’ behaviour – and consequently the classroom dynamics – in the best possible ways.

For readers who would like to immerse themselves more deeply in the fascinating topic of teaching teenagers, I would like to recommend the following books. Not all of them deal with teaching teens directly, but they have had a great influence on my own development and they have informed my thinking and writing over the years.

Arnold, J. and Murphy, T. (Eds.) (2013) *Meaningful Action: Earl Stevick’s influence on language teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Egan, K. (1997) *The Educated Mind: How Cognitive Tools Shape our Understanding*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Egan, K. (2005) *An Imaginative Approach to Teaching*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons.

Faber, A. and Mazlish, E. (2006) *How to Talk So Teens Will Listen and Listen So Teens Will Talk*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

Meddings, L. and Thornbury, S. (2009) *Teaching Unplugged: Dogme in English Language Teaching*. Peaslake UK: Delta.

Puchta, H. and Schratz, M. (1999) *Teaching Teenagers: Model activity sequences for Humanistic Language Learning*. Pilgrims Longman Resource Books. Longman.

Steinberg, L. (2014) *Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

Stevick, E. (1996) *Memory, Meaning and Method: A View of Language Teaching*, Second edition. Newbury House Teacher Development series: Heinle & Heinle.

Streeck, J., Goodwin, C. and LeBaron, C. (Eds.) (2011) *Embodied Interaction. Language and Body in the Material World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Thornbury, S. (2005) *How to Teach Speaking*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.

Zull, J. E. (2002) *The Art of Changing the Brain: Enriching the Practice of Teaching by Exploring the Biology of Learning*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

A: Motivation

Teaching teens can be a huge challenge if they can't see how English will be of advantage to them in their future, nor indeed how the learning process itself can engage them and arouse their curiosity. The tips in this section are a balance of serious interactions and elements of surprise, fun and gamification. They will help you not only reach out to your learners through your own enthusiasm, but also create a warm and welcoming classroom atmosphere while you challenge and support them on their individual learning paths.

-
- 1 An energy booster to start the lesson
 - 2 Show your enthusiasm
 - 3 Help learners see why learning English is important
 - 4 Make deals
 - 5 Turn the classroom into a special place
 - 6 Gamify learning
 - 7 Teach outdoors occasionally
 - 8 Take your learners' learning seriously
 - 9 Empower learners by asking them to teach you
 - 10 Break routines
 - 11 Use rewards artfully
 - 12 Support learners who show self-doubt and negative beliefs
-

At the beginning of a class, teens can be sluggish. This activity usually raises their energy levels straight away.

I have frequently used this game as soon as the lesson starts, especially while I'm waiting for a latecomer; they can easily join in without disturbing the class.

- Ask the learners to stand up. Say you will ask them a question, and that those who know the answer can sit down. Although they can cheat by sitting down without knowing the answer, if you suspect that, you will ask them for the answer. If you're right, the game is over for them and they must take their chair to the front of the class and sit on it until a new game starts. If you're wrong, they are still in the game, of course.
- Ask the first question, usually about content from the previous lesson.
- In the first few rounds use some pretty challenging questions, so that not too many learners will get the opportunity to sit down straight away. Also, I don't usually ask a check question then. That raises the suspense and the level of fun for the learners.
- When learners sit down, look at them suspiciously. I do this in an exaggerated way and this usually creates quite a bit of laughter.
- Once everyone is seated, tell them to stand up again. Say that this time if they think they know the answer, they should tell their neighbour.
- Note which of the learners do this, then ask one of them for the answer. If that learner has got the answer right, they can sit down, as can any other learners who have got it right.
- As a follow-up, ask one of the learners still standing in the last round to take over from you and ask questions.
- In a very popular variation of the activity, ask questions about trivia instead of content.
- Yet another variation: one of the learners could ask the questions from the beginning of the activity. (This needs to be set up beforehand.)

We know that someone who yawns makes us yawn too. But it is less well known that the opposite effect can be used to boost our learners' motivation.

Not long ago, I met someone who attended the first English class I ever taught. 'Do you still like Leonard Cohen?' he asked. 'Yes, I do,' I replied, intrigued. 'Remember when you brought one of his LPs to class? I was 13. You were so enthusiastic when you explained this song to us. My mum always said that we learn for life, not for school – and that was the first time I understood what she meant.' I thanked him for the compliment and felt quite embarrassed. Because, to the best of my memory, my first few years of teaching were filled with trial and error (with an emphasis on error); not a lot to write home about! But I have always shared my enthusiasm for the subject with my learners. A lucky strike indeed – from the very beginning I got something right that research now shows is essential for motivating learners!

Mercer and Dörnyei (2020) say that, 'If teachers are engaged and passionate about their work and their languages, then learners are more likely to be too.' So:

- Show your passion for your subject. Use books, songs, images, realia and anecdotes to make your enthusiasm tangible. You can even exaggerate a bit. Nobody has ever complained about their teacher being too passionate!
- I occasionally say, 'Oh, I love this word,' when writing a new word on the board. Then I repeat it as if tasting something scrumptious and suggest what they can do with it. Of course some teens will say things like, 'But you love *every* word!' or imitate your enthusiasm, which usually leads to laughter.
- Sometimes, when I teach a concept new to them, I tend to say things like, 'This is an important moment. Understanding this is important for your future lives. Not many adults understand this.'

Mercer, S. and Dörnyei, Z. (2020) *Engaging Language Learners in Contemporary Classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Kindle Edition.

Help learners see why learning English is important

As teachers we need to ‘sell’ our learners the idea that what we are teaching them will be of advantage to them.

One of the biggest problems for me as a young teacher in rural Austria was to help my learners find a satisfactory answer to the question, *Why am I supposed to learn English?* But these days, things have changed dramatically – many teenagers have contact with English outside their classroom through technology, social media and the web.

A good way of getting learners to reflect on their own motivations to learn English is a Consensogram. (For more on this, see the reference below.) Write up a series of statements or adapt these:

- If I succeed in learning English, I will have better opportunities to study and get a good job.
- People who have a good command of English are often admired.
- Once I’m at university, most of my reading will be in English.
- By learning English I might lose touch with my own culture and traditions.
- English is useful for playing online games.
- The better I can communicate in English, the more fun it’ll be to interact with people from other countries and cultures.
- The time spent learning English takes time away from other important subjects.

Ask learners to express their opinion about each statement by giving three points (*I totally agree.*), two points (*This is kind of important for me.*) and one point (*I don’t agree at all.*). Hand out coloured dots. Ask learners to stick them on a large piece of poster paper and create a rating scale in the form of a bar chart.

Ask your learners to work in pairs and discuss these questions: *What do you notice when you look at the data? What surprises you? What are your conclusions?*

Stobaugh, R. (2019) *50 Strategies to Boost Cognitive Engagement. Creative Thinking in the Classroom*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

If you offer a good deal to a class of teens – or to an individual learner – you are likely to impress them.

I guess it's with tongue in cheek that Nelsen and Lott (2012) say, 'Since teens can be so self-centred and expect the world to revolve around them, making deals can motivate them when all else fails.' But actually, whether it's teens' self-centredness or – as I suspect – that they feel surprised and respected when we offer them a deal, deals do work! Teens perceive deal-making as cool, something that normally happens between peers. But with a teacher? Wow!

A bad deal is something like, *We'll watch this film if you promise to prepare really well for the test.* We're giving them something now, and afterwards we have no leverage. And if the test results are disappointing, it's too late anyway.

So, offer time-sensitive deals: promise learners something if they do something by a certain time. *Last week you used your own language twenty-three times in my class. If you can get this down to a maximum of 12 by Thursday, we'll play X (the game they really like) or we'll watch a clip from Y (the movie or series they really like).* Or: *I'll do you a deal. We'll do a project about American rap music if you find another teacher who's willing to join us with their class.* You offer something motivating, and learners commit to taking action from the outset. By expecting them to persuade another teacher to join the project, you demonstrate your trust in them.

Sometimes it's good to write a deal down and have it signed by everyone. That makes the deal more 'official' and shows how seriously you take it (and your learners). Don't offer anything expensive; your offering a deal is often more important than what they actually get. Humour helps, too. For example, invite learners to lunch. On the day, put up a sign: '(Your name)'s restaurant'. Then have a picnic in the school grounds.

Nelsen, J. and Lott, L. (2012) *Positive Discipline for Teenagers 3rd edition*. Potter/Ten Speed/Harmony/Rodale. Kindle Edition.

5

Turn the classroom into a special place

Your learners spend a lot of time in the classroom. Make sure it offers a positive learning environment that they like coming into.

Success in the language class depends mainly on what goes on ‘... inside and between the people in the classroom,’ as Stevick (1980) pointed out. But other qualities – for example, whether the classroom itself looks and feels inviting – are important too, especially for teens.

- Giving learners a say and listening to their suggestions about changes you might make to their learning environment, even if they are small ones, can make a lot of difference. Have a suggestion box and encourage learners to use it to contribute ideas.
- Display a motivational quote on the classroom wall, e.g. *The happiest people don't have the best of everything; they just make the best of everything.* Leave it there for a few days before you ask learners to comment on it from their own point of view. Replace the quote with a new one after a week, or – even better – ask learners to find a new one.
- Ask learners to contribute to a ‘role model of the month’ project. Learners work in groups to prepare a poster on a special person who could be a role model. Ask them to research that person’s life story, and to state on the poster why he or she is a role model for them. Each group then presents their role model, and the learners vote to decide which of the posters goes up on the wall.
- Assign responsibilities (such as furniture arrangement, waste disposal, board cleaning) to individual learners on a rotating basis.
- Make sure the classroom is pleasing. Ask learners to help you decorate the room; for example, flowers can change the atmosphere significantly, and so can colours.

Stevick, E. (1980) *Teaching Languages: A Way and Ways*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.

We need passion and commitment from our learners. To instil those attitudes, add gaming to the learning.

Teens love digital games. They are all about being challenged and getting rewards, with elements of chance. Dopamine and endorphins are released. The excitement grows and the players feel good.

In an ideal classroom, all learners will be intrinsically motivated – they find learning fun, interesting and rewarding. But while our learners may be intrinsically motivated to do certain things, they won't necessarily be keen on English. So gaming elements can be helpful.

- Get a soft-tip/magnetic dartboard. Create question categories: content from previous lessons, sport, films, grammar, lexis, etc. Match each category with a section on the dartboard. For each category, write questions on index cards and points for the correct answer. Form pairs. A throws a dart, B draws a card from the respective pile. Play for, say, 10 minutes at the end of a lesson.
- Help learners gamify their home study. Write a to-do list at the end of a lesson, with points for each task. Before the next lesson, learners write their points on a wall chart. To add a chance element, draw a learner's name, then play *Paper, scissors, stone* with them and award points for beating you. That is hugely motivational.
- A chore can become a game. If studying a list of spellings, for example, they give themselves points: the faster they learn, the more the points. But they deduct points for using their phone while studying. This only works if they're honest with themselves!
- Establish two teams. Write/Project two choices on the board, one of them correct (e.g. spelling, *believe/beliefe*; or grammar, *she taught/she teached*), for the learners to call out the correct one.

'Games and Your Brain: How to Use Gamification to Stop Procrastinating', <https://buffer.com/resources/brain-playing-games-why-our-brains-are-so-attracted-to-playing-games-the-science-of-gamification>

You might like to surprise your learners by suggesting a lesson outside the classroom – but with a clear plan in mind for meaningful language work.

Tell your learners that you believe it's possible to focus on work outside the confines of the classroom (assuming parental and institutional permission). It is advisable to take your learners to a safe location that's not too noisy, e.g. a nearby park.

- Ask learners to take pen and paper with them. Tell them to walk round for about 10 minutes with an open mind about anything they notice. Give them questions to answer, e.g. *What did I notice? What did I see, hear, touch, smell?* Ask learners to find a comfortable spot and write a short text on their findings. In the next lesson, ask them to read out their texts to each other, and talk about them.
- Tell your learners a few days beforehand that you are going to take them to a place where they might meet a lot of English-speaking people; this could be, for example, an airport, a train station or a tourist attraction. Get learners to work in pairs and discuss questions they could ask people they meet there. Help them with language they need, especially on how to open a conversation and introduce themselves. You could also get them to film the interviews on their phones, but make sure they know how to ask permission to do that. Learners could then work on a report and present their findings to the class.
- If your learners have access to a class or school library, why don't you encourage them to pick a book and start reading it outside? Make sure they choose a place that will facilitate their reading process. This could be followed up with a discussion afterwards on whether their choice was a good one and what other favourite reading places they have.
- Tell learners to walk around in pairs and have a chat – on one condition only. They have to speak English, while the topic of the conversation is totally up to them.