

# ETpedia™

Grammar

500 ideas  
and activities  
for teaching  
grammar

“ R  
adverb pronoun  
N A M ! H  
; & ( )  
tense noun  
F ?  
Q O ?  
verb

Daniel Barber and Ceri Jones

Series editor: John Hughes

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Pavilion **et**

# ETpedia

## Grammar

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# Contents

## Introduction

10 tips on using ETpedia Grammar .....	6
10 facts about the authors .....	7
10 techniques for teaching grammar .....	8
10 types of activities and games you'll find in ETpedia Grammar .....	11
10 types of activities and games you'll find in ETpedia Grammar .....	14

## The basics

1 The verb <i>to be</i> .....	16
2 <i>There is / there are</i> .....	19
3 Articles ( <i>a/an, the</i> , zero article) .....	22
4 Possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns and possessive 's .....	25
5 Demonstrative adjectives and pronouns, <i>one</i> and <i>ones</i> .....	28
6 The imperative .....	31
7 Quantifiers and countable and uncountable nouns .....	34

## Pronouns and clauses

8 Subject, object and relative pronouns .....	38
9 Reflexive pronouns ( <i>myself, yourself</i> , etc.) and reciprocal pronouns ( <i>each other, one another</i> ) .....	41
10 Indefinite pronouns ( <i>something, nobody, everywhere</i> , etc.) .....	44
11 Relative clauses .....	48

## Adjectives and adverbs

12 Adverbs of degree ( <i>very, really, absolutely</i> , etc.) .....	52
13 Comparisons (1): comparative and superlative adjectives .....	56
14 Comparisons (2): <i>as ... as ...</i> , adverbs, nouns .....	59
15 <i>Too</i> and <i>enough</i> .....	62

## Present forms

16 Present simple .....	66
17 <i>Like, love, hate + -ing</i> .....	69
18 Present continuous .....	72

## Modal verbs (present)

19 <i>Can/can't</i> (ability, possibility, requests and offers) .....	76
20 <i>Can/can't, must/mustn't</i> (permission, obligation and prohibition) .....	79
21 <i>Have to/don't have to, must/mustn't</i> (necessity and lack of necessity) .....	82

22	<i>Must, can't, could, couldn't, may and might</i> (speculation) .....	85
23	<i>Should, must, could</i> (giving advice and making suggestions) .....	88

### Past forms

24	Past simple ( <i>to be</i> ) .....	92
25	Past simple: regular and irregular verbs .....	95
26	Past continuous .....	98
27	Present perfect (1): <i>ever, never</i> .....	101
28	Present perfect (2) <i>already, yet, just</i> .....	104
29	Present perfect continuous: <i>for</i> and <i>since</i> .....	107
30	Past habits: <i>used to</i> and <i>would</i> .....	110
31	Past perfect .....	113
32	Reported speech (1) statements and questions .....	116
33	Reported speech (2) reporting verbs .....	119
34	Modal expressions in the past (ability, permission and obligation) .....	123

### Future forms

35	Present continuous (future arrangements) .....	128
36	<i>Going to</i> (future plans and predictions) .....	131
37	<i>Will</i> and <i>won't</i> .....	134
38	Present tenses in future time clauses .....	137
39	Future continuous ( <i>will be doing</i> ) and future perfect ( <i>will have done</i> ) .....	140

### Conditionals

40	Real conditionals (1) zero conditional .....	144
41	Real conditionals (2) first conditional .....	147
42	<i>Would</i> .....	150
43	Unreal conditionals (1) second conditional .....	153
44	<i>Would have, could have, should have</i> .....	156
45	Unreal conditionals (2) third conditional .....	159
46	<i>I wish, If only</i> .....	162

### Other verb forms

47	Question forms .....	166
48	Indirect questions .....	169
49	Verbs followed by a verb with <i>to</i> or <i>-ing</i> .....	172
50	Passive voice .....	175
10	more useful grammar resources .....	178

### Appendix



# Introduction

# 10 tips on using *ETpedia Grammar*

## 1. Everything in one place

*ETpedia Grammar* brings together ideas, tips and classroom activities for a one-stop, quick and easy reference. It's organised into 50 units with 10 ideas in each unit.

## 2. Finding the grammar point you need

You'll find the grammar you need on the Contents page. The points are ordered in themed sets (eg 'present forms', 'modal verbs') and are loosely based on the order you might teach them on a course (eg the verb 'to be' in Unit 1). Within each unit activities are sequenced from easy to more complex, in terms of both tasks and language, and you can choose to approach the units in whatever order best suits the needs of your learners.

## 3. Planning a lesson

Every unit provides you with 10 different ideas and activities. You might be looking for a single activity to supplement your coursebook, an alternative context to present a grammar point, or to revise the grammar from the previous lesson. Or you may use the unit to build an entire lesson.

## 4. For new teachers and experienced teachers

If you are new to teaching, this resource will be invaluable for supporting you on your way. If you've been teaching for a while, this resource might both remind you of techniques and activities you haven't used in a while and offer you fresh new ideas to increase your repertoire.

## 5. Introductions for each unit

You'll find a short introduction to the grammar with information on when it's normally taught and why it's used.

## 6. Early tips for presenting

Usually the first couple of ideas in a unit offer ideas for presenting the key points of the grammar.

## 7. Plenty of practice activities

The main part of the unit provides you with activities to practise the grammar in a fun, meaningful way.

## 8. Photocopiable activities



Each unit contains one activity based on a photocopiable handout which you will find in the Appendix (pages 181–242).

## 9. Suggestions for homework and self-study



Point 9 is always a task for students to do at home. Rather than typical homework activities, such as gapfill exercises, they instead suggest motivating tasks such as noticing how grammar works in real life or taking photos related to the grammar and presenting them.

## 10. Common difficulties

Every unit ends with tips on the difficulties students often have with the grammar. Often it highlights the way a student's first language might impact on the students' use of the grammar or the reasons why students confuse particular uses. This is especially helpful for anticipating problems students might have.

# 10 facts about the authors

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1. We both live in the same southwestern corner of Spain.
2. We've both mainly taught in Spain: Ceri has also taught in the UK, Hungary and Italy, and Dan has also taught in the UK and Mexico.
3. We've both taught a range of levels, ages and course types, from beginner to advanced, from age 3 to 70+, from Business English to EAP.
4. We've both worked as Trinity TESOL Certificate and Diploma trainers, both face-to-face and online.
5. We've both been involved in writing various components for coursebook series for a number of publishers at a range of levels and for a range of contexts.
6. We both have teenage daughters who are very good friends.
7. We also have dogs who are great friends and love running on the beach.
8. We both travel a lot for work, though Dan packs a considerably heavier suitcase than Ceri due to his clumpy shoes.
9. Neither of us has climbed Mount Everest but we've both dabbled with rock climbing.
10. Neither of us could have written this book without all the ideas and inspiration from colleagues and students in all the classrooms and staff rooms, real and virtual, that we've worked in our combined 55+ years of teaching.

# 10 techniques for teaching grammar

Learning grammar (and teaching it) consists of two main stages: learning the meaning and form of each new structure, and putting it into practice. A variety of techniques are used in this book for both stages. Here are 10 of the most common and useful ones which feature in the book.

## 1. Boardwork presentations

For a quick and easy presentation of new language, the board is the obvious resource to exploit. Start by building a context. For example, a traveller's suitcase covered in stickers of places she's been provides an easy-to-establish context for the present perfect for experiences. Make sure you include on your board: the affirmative, eg a sticker saying 'Mexico' elicits *She's been to Mexico*; the negative, eg *She hasn't been to China*; and question forms and short answers, eg *Has she been to Malaysia? Yes, she has / No she hasn't*. Underline or use a different colour to highlight the structure, ie *has been*, contractions *I've / she's / etc.*, and aspects of pronunciation, eg *been = /bi:n/*. See Unit 18.1 and Unit 29.7 for examples of boardwork presentations of the present continuous and present perfect continuous.

## 2. Using the students and you, the teacher

A direct context for language can often be found in the lives and experiences of the people in the room. Personal contexts immediately show how applicable the grammar is, and can also be more memorable than stories of people from outside the students' worlds. Throughout the book we suggest activities where students talk about themselves, their experiences, their lives, their opinions. We also suggest ways that you can use stories from your own life to present grammar, for example in Unit 24.1 we suggest that the teacher use photos of themselves when they were younger to introduce *was/were*. Student photos can also be a great resource. Most students will have photos on their mobile phones that they can share with each other to support any number of practice activities.

## 3. Using realia

Bringing objects into the classroom or using the objects you find in the classroom can help bring a grammar point to life and create a physical memory hook. Realia can be used to create a context for the target language. In Unit 7.1, for example, we suggest using such things as a bag of rice, a glass of water, a balloon and a tea bag to introduce the concept of countable and uncountable nouns. It can also provide further practice. In Unit 4.6, for example, objects that the students have brought to class provide a talking point to present and practise possessive structures.

## 4. Dialogue building

This collaborative technique involves setting a scene and, with the students' help, writing a dialogue on the board including the language you want to focus on. In Unit 10.6, the teacher provides a framework for a dialogue between waiters and customers in a restaurant. This is a familiar situation in which the indefinite pronouns *something*, *anything* and *nothing* occur naturally. Students then either practise the dialogue in pairs as it is or with variations (eg different choices of food and drink, a different type of restaurant). A great way to push students towards memorising the language is to gradually erase the text, word by word, until the students are repeating the dialogue from memory.



## 5. Dictation

With grammar points where the written form is already familiar to the students, but where meaning needs to be explored in more depth, a quick and effective means of introducing the language is to dictate model sentences to the class. Dictation immediately gets students working with the language and tests listening skills and spelling, as well as grammatical knowledge. It also promotes conversation management skills, such as asking to clarify and repeat: *Sorry, could you say that again, please?* In Unit 9.4 the teacher dictates sentences containing verbs used with and without reflexive pronouns to start exploring the differences in meaning and use. Unit 33.3 involves another basic dictation to teach the meaning of reporting verbs.

## 6. Dictogloss

In a dictogloss, the teacher has a text prepared to dictate to the class, but instead of dictating it slowly to ensure students write a faithful copy, they read it at a more natural speed two or more times. Prepare a text of no more than 100 words (fewer for lower-level students). Read it out first for content, and check comprehension. Then tell students to write down keywords, such as nouns and verbs, as you read it out again. Explain that even though they will not be able to write every word, they should keep writing as much as possible. Using their notes, students in pairs or small groups reconstruct the text in complete sentences. The idea is not to reproduce the text verbatim, but to focus in on certain aspects of the language used. For example, Unit 30.6 is a dictogloss activity focusing on the use of *would* to talk about past habits. Others can be found in Units 14.3, 34.2 and 42.7.

## 7. Drilling

To help students pronounce new language correctly, get them to say it repeatedly so you can check for accuracy. By experiencing the movement of the mouth as they say it, students reinforce their learning in a different way from when they write it down and see it. Simple drilling can be either choral, ie all students repeat the structure at the same time, or individual. A suggested order is to let students practise chorally first, but to insist on individual repetition so that you can check everyone is pronouncing it correctly.

There are ways to vary drilling so that it doesn't get repetitive. Substitution drilling involves the teacher prompting students to substitute words for other words in a drilled sentence, for example:

T: *He's been working at the office.* → S1: *He's been working at the office.*

T: *they* → S2: *They've been working at the office.*

T: *at home* → S3: *They've been working at home.*

T: *watch TV* → S4: *They've been watching TV at home.*

See a simple substitution being used in Unit 9.1. Drilling can be *disguised* as a game, as in the circular drill in Unit 48.2, where students inadvertently 'drill' each other. And although the board game in Unit 43.4 is not recognisably drilling, students need to repeat the second conditional over and over in order to win the game.

## 8. Songs

Another popular way of encouraging students to repeat structures as well as to make them memorable is through songs, eg *If I had a million dollars* by the Barenaked Ladies (see Unit 43.6). Choose songs that contain the target language multiple times and which contain a natural stress pattern for it, too, eg ***If I had a million dollars, I'd buy you a fur coat.*** Songs can be used to present the target language through listening tasks such as gap-fills or re-ordering the lines or words in the lyrics. They also offer repeated exposure to the language and, if your students enjoy singing, can also offer a chance to practise pronunciation.

## 9. Exploiting feedback stages

Feedback on activities is not just about seeing how many questions students got right; it is an opportunity to achieve several teaching objectives: to check understanding, correct persistent errors, share interesting information, revise rules and to draw conclusions. Other ways of exploiting this crucial stage at the end of activities include:

- ▶ reformulation: in Unit 25.2, students use questions to find out when their partners last did certain things, eg, *When did you last go to the cinema?* However, during feedback they must use affirmative sentences: *Lorena last went to the cinema on Friday night.*
- ▶ critical thinking: as well as asking students *what* they answered, we can also ask *Why?* In Unit 40.3, they are asked why they voted for their favourite slogans, for example.
- ▶ remembering/summarising: one way of carrying out feedback is to get students to work in pairs or groups to remember everybody else's answers, effectively drilling the target language.

## 10. Error correction

Students want and expect correction from their teacher. Choosing which mistakes to correct, when to do so and how, are complex questions. It's important, however, to remember that students who need the most correction may not be those that make the most or biggest mistakes. Lower-level or quiet, shy students may benefit from less correction so that they are not discouraged from using English, however imperfectly.

We correct students in the hope that they won't keep making those mistakes. To encourage them to think about their errors, let them try out new language, listening out for errors of use. Then point out the errors and show them the corrections. Finally, let them do the activity again, this time with those common errors fresh in their minds. In a shopping roleplay in Unit 5.3, for example, students can perform the roleplay first, you correct any errors, then they swap roles and try again.

# 10 types of activities and games you'll find in ETpedia Grammar

The aim of *ETpedia Grammar* is to provide you with a wide range of classroom activities that lend themselves to engaging practice with the most common grammar points taught in the English language classroom. In particular, you'll find some popular games that have been adapted to suit different grammar points. Here's a preview of what you can find – some of our favourite grammar games with suggestions for grammar points they can be used for. We're sure you will be able to think of more!

## 1. Bingo!

In traditional bingo, players have a grid with numbers, which they cross off when they hear them. In grammar bingo, the grid contains items of the language you want to practise, eg comparatives, question tags or irregular verbs. To save preparation time, students draw their own 3 x 3 grids in their notebooks (or 4 x 4 for a longer game) and fill them with items of their choice, picked from a list provided by the teacher. Before the game, write the list of items on the board. For a 3 x 3 grid, you'll need a minimum of 12 items on the board; for a 4 x 4 grid you'll need a minimum of 20 items. For example, if the aim of the game is to practise irregular past participles, write a selection of irregular past participles on the board (*seen, been, bought, etc.*). Students choose past participles to fill their grid. Next, prepare spoken prompts for the items on the board, eg *Have you BEEEP the new Kate Winslet film?* (where 'BEEEP' represents a gap where the past participle *seen* should go).

Read the prompts out, giving players time to cross off the corresponding item if it appears on their grid. The object is for a student to be the first player to cross off a line of three or four items in a row. The winner shouts 'Bingo!' to announce they have completed a row.

For more 'Bingo!' activities, see Unit 17.4 (short answers) and Unit 25.4 (irregular past verbs).

## 2. Rock, paper, scissors

This is a game for two people. Players use one hand to make one of three shapes at the same time, ie after 1 ... 2 ... 3 ...! The shapes are a sheet of paper (hand held out flat), a pair of scissors (two fingers held out apart) and a rock (a fist). Paper beats rock, rock beats scissors and scissors beat paper. If both players play the same shape, it is a draw.

In the classroom you can use the game to liven up peer testing. You can choose an exercise from your coursebook or workbook, or use a list of test items. Students play the game for each item and the winner tests the loser.

Here's an example of how it can be used to test knowledge of a set of time expressions that go with *for* or *since*:

Students play Rock, paper, scissors; A wins, so A tests B:

A: *Yesterday?*

B: *Since yesterday.*

A: *Correct.*

For an example of how the game can be used to practise past participles, see Unit 50.3.

### 3. Twenty questions

This game provides practice of *yes/no* questions. One player thinks of a person or a thing and the other players ask up to 20 *yes/no* questions to find out who or what they are thinking of. A variation is that each player thinks of the name of a famous person or fictional character and writes it on a sticky note, which they stick to the forehead or back of the player to their left. Everyone except the wearer of the note can see who they are. Players take turns to find out who they are by asking *yes/no* questions, eg *Am I a woman? Am I dead? Do I often appear on TV? Was I a singer?* etc. To practise past tenses, limit the people to historical characters; to practise questions with *Is it ...?*, ask students to guess a noun from a lexical set. Unit 1.7 provides an example of how it can be used to practise direct questions and Unit 48.4 for indirect questions.

### 4. I went to market ...

The object is to remember an ever-increasing list of items. The first player says, *I went to market and I bought some apples*. The next player repeats what the first player said and adds an item to the list, eg *I went to market and I bought some apples and a cabbage*. The third player further develops the list, eg *I went to market and I bought some apples, a cabbage and a litre of milk*. Play continues until a player cannot remember an item or says items in the wrong order, in which case they are out of the game. The last person still in the game is the winner.

In its classic form, the game is good for revision of vocabulary, but as it stands it can also be used to practise quantifiers (*some, a/an, a few, a kilo of ...*). Adapt the game slightly to activate other grammar areas. For example, *Last summer, I ...* gets students using past tenses (*I went to my grandmother's house, I swam in the sea, I learnt how to ride a horse ...*). Complicating it by saying why you went to different places gets students practising the infinitive of purpose: *I went to the greengrocers to buy some bananas, I went to the garage to fill up the car, I went to ...* See Unit 7.4 for an example of how it can be used to practise quantifiers.

### 5. Kim's game

To prepare this memory game, find 15–20 small objects that students know the name of in English, eg classroom stationery, food items or things you take on holiday. Arrange the objects on a tray and hide them under a cloth. Show the objects and tell students they have 60 seconds to memorise them. After 60 seconds, cover them again. Working individually or in pairs, students write down what they remember. Elicit the items one by one before finally uncovering the objects for students to check their answers. The student or pair who has remembered most objects wins. A variation involves removing one item at a time, and asking students to tell you which item you have removed.


This game can be used to practise *There is/are/was/were* (see Unit 2.2) and prepositions of place (see Unit 24.3).

## 6. Pelmanism

Before the lesson, make between 8 and 20 pairs of cards containing the target language (see Units 9.3, 33.8, 38.2 and 47.8 for examples). In some cases you may want to ask your students to prepare the cards. Pairs might be individual words, eg *take – taken*, or two parts of a sentence, eg *They have been married for ... – ... 30 years*, depending on the grammar you wish to practise.

The object of the game (also known as the Memory Game and Pairs) is to win pairs of cards by matching them up. Cards are spread out face-down on a table. Players take turns to turn over two cards in the hope that they match in the specified way. If there is no match, the player turns the two cards face-down again and play moves to the next person. As the game progresses, players try to remember where cards were so they can make pairs successfully. The winner is the player who holds the most pairs when all pairs have been found.

## 7. Snakes and ladders

 Make one copy of the board on page 235 for every three to five players. Prepare at least 20 *Challenge!* cards testing students on recently learnt grammar. There are examples of *Challenge!* cards which test the passive voice on page 236, but you needn't write them yourself; simply copy items from grammar practice activities in coursebooks, such as gap-fills, word ordering activities, etc.

The object is to be the first player to reach the finish. Put students into groups and hand out one board per group. Students take turns to toss a coin (they can use small objects from their pockets as counters). They move forward one space if they throw heads and two spaces if they throw tails. If players land on a square at the bottom of a ladder, they move up the ladder. If they land on a square at the top of a snake they slide down the snake. All other squares are *Challenge!* squares. When a player lands on a *Challenge!* square, the person to their left picks up a *Challenge!* card and reads it out. If the player answers correctly, they can stay there. If they fail to answer correctly, they go back to their original square.

## 8. Grammar Casino

Write eight or more sentences including the target language on separate cards or prepare them as a slideshow. At least half of the sentences should contain an error (see Unit 49.8 for examples). Prepare plenty of tokens so that each team has at least 20, and make more for yourself to distribute to the teams during the game. These can be as simple as small scraps of paper, or you might want to use toothpicks or similar small objects.

The aim is to identify whether sentences are correct or not, and to win tokens by betting on the answer. Students work in teams of two or three. Each team makes two cards: one with a big tick and one with a big cross. Show the first sentence for 10 seconds; on card, a mini whiteboard or in a slideshow. Give the teams time to discuss whether it is correct and to place their bet. Teams place between one and five tokens in front of them on their desks, depending on how certain they are about whether the sentence is correct or not.

On the count of three, teams vote by showing either the tick or the cross (voting must be simultaneous). Elicit the answer and a correction if necessary. If the teams are right, they double their tokens. If they lose, they lose their tokens. Nominate an assistant to help you distribute tokens. Continue with the next sentence. The team with the most tokens at the end is the winner. Use this game to raise awareness of common errors around a single grammar area or a variety of recently learnt areas.

Alternative procedure: instead of betting, students bid as if in an auction against each other to buy sentences. The winning team is the one with the most correct sentences.

## 9. Swap seats if ...

The object is to swap seats without losing a seat. This is a way to wake up a sluggish class and reorganise the seating plan, as well as to practise many areas of grammar. Arrange the seats in the classroom in a circle. Tell students that they have to move to a different seat in the circle if the statement you read is true for them. For example, to practise the present perfect, say *Swap seats if you have eaten sushi*. Everyone who has eaten sushi stands up and moves to a different seat. For the present continuous, say *Swap seats if you are wearing blue jeans*. You'll need to write at least 12 sentences like this before class. Add a competitive element by taking away a seat each time so that someone will be left without a chair and will be out. When you have run out of *Swap seats if ...* sentences, invite students to take turns making up similar sentences for the rest of the class. Unit 27.7 provides an example of how this game can be used to practise the present perfect with *never*.

## 10. Table tennis

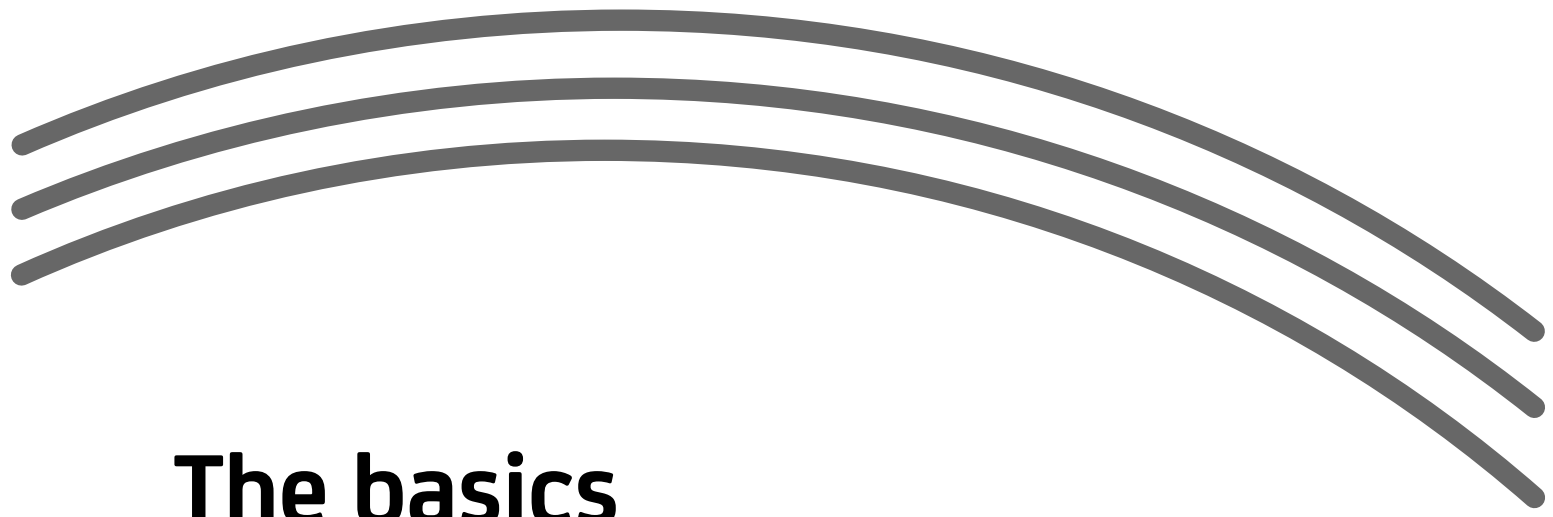
The aim is to win 'rallies' by being the last player to contribute to an exchange of some sort (see Unit 27.5 for an example). The students stand up and face each other as if across a mini tennis court. The first player says a word or phrase and mimes a tennis serve; their opponent has to (1) respond correctly and (2) say a second word or phrase, miming a return shot within a maximum of five seconds. The first player responds similarly. For example, to practise the interrupted past continuous, the 'rally' might go:

A: He was running in the park ...

B: ... when a dog bit his leg. We were having dinner at a restaurant ...

A: ... when we saw a famous pop star. She, er ...

B: Time's up! I win!



# The basics

# 1 The verb *to be*

The verb *to be* is usually the first verb that students learn, and it should be recycled throughout beginner and elementary levels. In this unit we look at the verb *to be* in the present, starting with first and second person, and then moving on to include third person as well.

## 1. Are you Italian?

To practise questions with *Are you ...?* and the short answers, *Yes, I am / No, I'm not*, elicit or teach a set of 12 or more nationality adjectives. Make small flags or write the nationalities on strips of paper to make a set of 12 cards for each group of students. Place the cards face-down on a table in the middle of each group of four students. One student takes a nationality card and hides it from the rest of the group. The other members of the group ask *yes/no* questions to guess the nationality. If they don't guess after five questions, the student 'wins' the card. If someone guesses correctly before the five questions are up, they win the card. The student with the most cards at the end is the winner.

## 2. How are you?

Practise the verb *to be* using the question *How are you?* On the board, draw these numbered emojis and their corresponding phrases (or any alternatives you and your students prefer):

1. 😊😊😊 *Great, thanks!*
2. 😊😊 *Fine.*
3. 😊 *Not too bad.*
4. 😐 *Don't ask!*
5. 😞😞 *Not very well.*
6. 😞😞😞 *Terrible!*

Then write the question *How are you?* Throw a dice twice (or throw two dice) and elicit a three-part exchange based on the outcome. For example, if you throw a 2 and a 4: *How are you? – Fine thanks. And you? – Don't ask!* Drill the short exchange with the whole class. Throw the dice again to establish which response students will need to give in the next stage. Students mingle, asking each other how they are and answering with the appropriate responses. After a minute, throw the dice again. Students continue mingling, practising the new conversation. Repeat as many times as you want.

## 3. Where's that?

Elicit the question *Where are you from?* from the class. Reply giving a little-known place name (*I'm from X*). Elicit the question *Where's that?* and answer using phrases such as *It's a small town/village near the coast, It's in the mountains, It isn't far from here, etc.* Make a note of the questions and answers on the board. Then ask one or two students to name places in their area. Ask them *Where's that?* if you don't know, or *I know where that is, it's (in the mountains)* if you do. Add to the target phrases on the board. Students write the names of towns and villages in their area on strips of paper and put them in a box. One student takes out a strip of paper. Invite a member of the class to ask *Where are you from?* The student reads out the name and the student asks *Where's that?* or *I know where that is, it's ...* (If the student doesn't know, they can ask their classmates.) Continue as many times as you want. This can also be done in groups, with each group putting names into a group 'hat'.



#### 4. What's my line?

To practise questions with *Are you a/an?* and short answers *Yes, I am / No, I'm not*, tell students they are at a welcome party at your language school at the beginning of term. Each student needs a role as a new student, an old student, a teacher, or a member of the reception staff. Write these roles on cards and give one to each student. The roles are secret and there should be at least two students for each role. Explain that they need to meet at least one person for each role. Make a note of the roles on the board for students to copy into their notebooks and cross off during the mingle. Students mingle and ask each other about their roles, eg, *Hi, are you a new student? No, I'm a teacher.* The first student to find one person for each role (including their own) calls out or raises their hand and is the winner. Afterwards, working in pairs, students remember what role each of their classmates had, eg, *X is a teacher, Y is a new student.*

#### 5. This is my family

One of the easiest ways to present the third person forms of the verb *to be* is through the context of family (or a group of friends). Choose a family or a group of friends your students are familiar with – perhaps a famous family or some friends from a TV show. First, introduce the members of the family and make sure everyone knows all their names; eg, *This is the Pritchett family. This is Jake and this is Gloria. They are married. These are Jake's children, Claire and Mitchell, etc.* Then add more information about each person to highlight the affirmative and negative third person forms eg *He's 70; he's a teacher; she's Colombian; they aren't twins, they're sisters; he isn't tall, etc.* Afterwards, ask questions to check the students remember all the information about each person; eg, *How old is Jake? Is Claire Colombian? Are Alex and Haley twins?* Afterwards, students write similar questions in pairs. They ask their classmates to answer them, either about the famous family you chose or about their own families.

#### 6. Photo fit

Choose six photos of different people representing a range of ages and nationalities or ethnicities. Show these to the class (they need to see all six at the same time). Students work in pairs to write a profile for each person, using full sentences so that they practise the full third-person form. They should include information such as the person's age, nationality and occupation. When they have finished, each pair joins with another pair. Pairs take turns to read a person's profile while the other pair tries to guess who they are describing. Pairs discuss each other's assumptions about the people in the photos.

#### 7. Secret ingredients

Show the students a paper bag. Tell them that you have a particular kind of food in it and that they have to guess what it is. (The bag can be empty and the food imaginary, or you can choose to bring some food). Only allow *yes/no* questions and keep a count of the questions they ask, eg, 1. *Is it big?* – No, 2. *Is it a type of fruit?* – No, 3. *Is it green?* – Yes. After five questions, elicit a recap of the information gained so far, eg, *It isn't big; it isn't a fruit; it's green ...*, After 10 questions, give the class a clue. If they don't guess correctly by the time they've asked 20 questions, tell them what it is. Next, put the class into groups of four or five and ask the groups to repeat the game, thinking of a piece of food that

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could be in the bag. The student who guesses correctly then thinks of another food and the game continues. If after 20 questions no one has guessed correctly, the student who thought of the food item tells them what it is and nominates someone else to think of their own mystery food item.

## 8. Guess which?



Make one copy of the handout on page 182 for each group of four or five students. Alternatively, project the handout on your board and number the houses. The aim of the game is for each player to guess which house their partner has chosen by asking questions and answers with *it + to be*. You can play it as a class by you choosing a home and getting the students to ask you questions such as '*Is it big?*' You answer '*Yes, it is*' or '*No, it isn't*' until they guess the correct home. Next, students can play in groups of four or five and take turns to ask and answer.

## 9. Photo album



At home, students take photos on their phones and add captions or short audio recordings, eg, *Hi, I'm in the kitchen!* / *Hi, I'm in the park with my dog.* / *Hi, we're in a restaurant. The restaurant is in the new shopping centre. It's good!* They can show these photos during the next lesson, or share them on a class blog or social media group.

## 10. Common difficulties

Students' first languages might affect their use of *to be*. Some languages like Hungarian, Turkish, Russian or Arabic can drop the verb *to be* between the subject and a complement (eg, *He is nice* would become *He nice*). Students who speak languages where personal pronouns (*I, you, he, she, it*, etc.) aren't always included (eg, Spanish, Italian or Portuguese) have a tendency to drop the pronoun *it* (so *It's nice* becomes *Is nice*).

# 2 *There is / there are*

This chunk is an essential item in the beginner's language toolkit. In this unit we look at its use in the present and the past.

## 1. Classroom objects

Ask students to give you classroom objects (pens, pencils, books, etc.). Place them on a table, making sure you have some single items. Go through the items on the tray naming and counting them: *There are five books, There are two mobile phones, There's a black pen and there's a red pencil*, etc. Students repeat the sentences as you write them on the board. Highlight the verb, asking if it is singular or plural, and which object/s it refers to. Point out that the verb changes depending on whether they are describing something that is singular or plural. Ask questions about the objects using *Is there ...?* or *Are there ...?* eg *How many books are there? Is there a red pen? Are there any blue books?* etc. (some questions should be answered with a *no*). Students repeat each question and you write it on the board with a long answer, eg, *Is there a red pen? No, there isn't a red pen; there's a blue pen. Are there any blue books? Yes, there are six blue books.* Highlight the inversion of *there* and the verb *to be* in the questions, the contracted negative forms *isn't* and *aren't*, and the use of *a/an* and *any*.

## 2. Can you remember?

Give students a minute to memorise the classroom objects from Activity 1. Cover the objects. Students work in pairs to write five sentences about the objects using *There's a ...* and *There are ...*. Circulate, checking that the sentences are grammatically correct. When they have finished, uncover the objects so that the students can check that they remembered everything correctly. They award themselves one point for each correct sentence. They then write five questions about the objects (eg *How many pencils are there? Is there a rubber?*). Cover the objects again. The students read their questions to the class and answer their classmates' questions.

## 3. From one to five

Write the following sentence stems on the board: *There's a/an ..., There are two ..., There are three ..., There are four ..., There are five ...*. Working in pairs, students complete the sentences as quickly as they can based on things they can see in the classroom. The first pair to complete the challenge is the winner. You can offer a bonus prize to the pair that comes up with the most original sentence.

## 4. On the map

Find an aerial photo of your area or a simple street map, eg, the type tourists might use. Brainstorm a list of shops, buildings and other facilities in and around town, eg *café, school, market, park, hospital, bus station*, etc. Choose one of the items on the list and identify it on the photo or map, eg, *There's a school here on the corner near the park*. Write the number 1 next to the place you have identified. Then choose an item of which there are various examples, eg, *There are a lot of cafés here, near the market*. Write the number 2 next to them. Put students into groups and give them copies of the photo/map. They annotate them with as many places as possible. Groups take turns to present the photos/maps to the whole class, eg *Number 1, there's a school here. Number 2, there are a lot of cafés here and here*. The other students check their own maps or photos to see if they chose the same places.

## 5. Where's the supermarket?



Make copies of the handout on page 183. You will need one copy for each pair of students. Before the class, complete the grid following the rules on the handout as a model. In class, show it to the students and read the rules together. Model a few turns with the whole class (eg, *Is there a supermarket in A3? No, there isn't.*) Put students into pairs and hand out one copy of the grid to each pair. Give pairs time to place their buildings, without showing it to their classmates. Two sets of pairs play the game against each other. The winner is the pair who locates all the buildings first.

## 6. Is there a swimming pool?

Brainstorm facilities at a sports centre (eg swimming pool, tennis courts, weights room, sauna, dance studio, bar, etc.). You will need at least 10. Students work in two groups: the students in group 1 want to join a sports centre; those in group 2 work in different sports centres. Students in group 1 work individually to decide which five facilities they are most interested in using. Students in group 2 work individually to choose five facilities they have in their centre and make a note of them. Students from group 1 visit the students from group 2 (who stay in their seats), finding out about the facilities at each centre. Elicit some possible questions and answers before they start (eg, *Is there a sauna? Are there any tennis courts?* etc.) When all students in group 1 have 'visited' all the sports centres, each student decides which centre they think is the best for them and tells the class.

## 7. How many people were on the train?

This activity practises *There was ...* and *There were ...*. Choose a short video clip of a street scene (eg Rocky, in the film Rocky, running through the streets of Philadelphia and up the steps). Prepare a list of questions using *Was there ...?* and *Were there ...?*, eg, *Were there any dogs in the park? Was there a train on the second bridge?* Ask open questions, too, eg, *How many Italian flags were on the street?* Tell students that they are going to watch a short clip and that you're going to test their powers of observation. After they've watched the clip, read your questions one by one to the class. Students work in pairs to write their answers. Do not confirm answers at this stage. Watch the clip again. Ask students to call out when they see anything that answers one of the questions. Repeat the activity with another clip (you could search for clips of "walking around London", or similar for any other city). Students make notes as they watch, in preparation for writing questions in their pairs. Pairs come together in small groups to ask and answer each other's questions.

## 8. That was then, this is now

Find two photos of the same place – one from the past, and one from the present. It's good if this place has some significance for you or your students, eg, the town you grew up in or an important city in the students' region or country. Students work in pairs. Give them a time limit, say, five minutes, to write as many sentences as they can contrasting the two photos using *There is ... / There are ...* and *There was ... / There were ...*. When the time is up, students read out their sentences. They score one point for each correct sentence and five points for sentences that no one else in the class has written.

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## 9. 'On my way' commentary



To practise using the language outside the classroom, students record a voice message on their phone describing a short journey in real time, eg, from home to work or school, on foot or on public transport. They should use sentences with *There is ... / There are ...*, eg, *There are lots of people on the road today; There's a new shop on our street.* They can play these to each other in class and see if other students have commented on anything similar.

## 10. Common difficulties

*There*, as used in *There is ... / There are ...*, is a dummy pronoun that acts as the subject of the verb *to be* and refers to the noun phrase that follows, eg, *There's a bus stop round the corner.* Many languages have an equivalent structure, which may or may not vary according to the number of the subject (singular or plural), eg, Italian: *c'è* (*There is*) and *ci sono* (*There are*); Spanish *Hay ...* (for both singular and plural). In some languages, this structure comes at the end of the sentence, eg, Japanese: *Uma ga imasu.* ('A horse there is' = *There's a horse*). It can be useful to ask students to identify the structure in their own language and to notice any differences. The most common errors come from dropping the dummy subject (*\*Are eight people?*), or substituting with a personal pronoun (*\*They are eight people*).

# 3 Articles (*a/an, the, zero article*)

Beginners first learn articles in lexical chunks, for example, [*a/an* + occupation] (eg *a student*). Once students are familiar with the articles in common expressions, they can begin to contrast their different uses. Here we look first at the basic uses of *a/an, the* and the zero article.

## 1. Who's who?

To practise [*a/an* + occupation], brainstorm a list of jobs, including a few that start with a vowel sound (eg, engineer, English teacher, optician). You need at least as many jobs as there are students in the class, plus one for you. Check that students know when to use *a* and when to use *an*. Write the jobs on strips of paper while students write them in their notebooks. Take a slip and elicit the question *What do you do?* Give the answer and ask the students to write your name next to the occupation in their notebooks. Hand out a strip of paper to each student. They get up and mingle, asking *What do you do?* and write their classmate's name next to each occupation.

## 2. Can you pass me a board marker?

For a simple presentation of the basic difference between *a/an* and *the*, place three board markers of different colours on the desk in front of you. Ask one of the students to pass you one (*Can you pass me a board marker, please?*). When they pass you one, refuse it and politely ask for another colour. (*Thank you, but can you pass me the green marker?*) Elicit the two questions and write them on the board. Highlight the use of *a/an* versus *the* and ask the students to discuss why. (When you use *a/an*, you don't mind which thing you get, and when you use *the*, you are thinking of a specific object). Invite members of the class to ask each other similar questions.

## 3. I'd like a cup of tea

To help students practise the pronunciation of *a/an* and *the*, write these two pairs of sentences on the board. Ask the students to notice the difference between them. Check they understand the difference in meaning, ie we use *the* to indicate a specific cup of tea or cake that we can see in the context.

1. (a) I'd like a cup of tea with milk.  
(b) I'd like the cup of tea with milk.
2. (a) I really love the cake.  
(b) I'd really love a cake.

Read one sentence from each pair (eg 1b and 2b) at normal speed (do not stress the articles) and ask the students to identify which sentences you just read. Repeat the key chunk (*a cup of tea / the cup of tea; the cakes / a cake*) if they're having problems. After you've checked the answer to the dictation, drill the two sentences in each pair. First drill the key chunk and then incorporate them in the sentence. Highlight the fact that the articles are not stressed and so are pronounced as weak forms /ə/, /ən/ and /ðə/. Students work in pairs. One student reads out one of the two sentences in each pair and their partner tries to identify which one they said.

#### 4. Playing with rubrics

To explore the difference further, choose a list of simple rubrics from the coursebook or material you are using with your students. Make sure they include examples of both definite and indefinite articles, eg, *Work with a partner. Discuss the questions.* Rewrite them without the articles, eg, *Work with partner. Discuss questions.* Give your students a copy of the edited rubrics. Ask them to add articles where they think they are missing. They can check their answers in their coursebooks.

#### 5. Student-generated gap-fills

Make copies of a reading text you have recently used in class. Cut it into paragraphs or short chunks. Students work in small groups, each group with a different section of the text. They highlight all the articles in the text, then blank them out using liquid paper or a dark pen. The groups exchange texts and see if they can correctly fill in the missing articles. Circulate the texts until all the groups have worked with all the texts. Encourage discussion of why each article is used and clear up any doubts.

#### 6. I love chocolate!

Think of three things you love and three things you detest. Include a mixture of plural nouns, uncountable nouns and abstract concepts, eg, *early mornings, other people's laziness, sunsets on the beach, sweet tea, waiting for a bus, peace and quiet.* Write on the board:

[Your name] loves ....

and:

[Your name] hates ....

Ask students to copy these unfinished sentences as headings in their notebooks. Read out one of your likes or hates. Ask the students to decide which heading it should go under and write it in their notebooks. Continue with the rest of the phrases. Allow time between each item for the students to decide where to write it. When you have dictated all the likes and hates, call on volunteers to write them, one by one, on the board under what they think is the correct heading. Don't confirm answers immediately, but let students discuss things if there are any disagreements. When you have confirmed the correct answers, highlight the use of the zero article. (When we're talking about general likes and dislikes, no article is needed with plural nouns, uncountable nouns or abstract nouns). Students repeat the activity in pairs, expressing their own likes and dislikes.

## 7. When do you usually ...?

To practise articles with common time expressions, write these time expressions on the board:

*at night    in the morning    at lunchtime    in the afternoon or evening  
after dinner*

In groups, students write at least three different activities for each category. They can't repeat activities. Ask a representative from each group to call out one of the activities from the first category, using the phrase *We usually ... at night*. If the other groups have the same activity in their list, they call out *We do, too!* Every group that shouts *We do, too!* wins a point. The group who called out the activity wins a point for each *We do, too!* called out in the class. Continue until you have covered all three categories and all the actions. The group with the most points wins.

## 8. Where are my keys?



Make copies of the handout on page 184. You need one copy for each pair of students. Cut up the squares with the possible locations of the keys. Show the handout to the students. Tell them that it's your hall and you want to go out, but you can't find your keys. Ask for suggestions for where to look for them. Elicit phrases like: *Are they under the cushion? Which cushion? The big cushion.* Mime looking where they suggest. Do this three or four times and write the students' suggestions on the board, highlighting the use of the definite article, until you finally 'find' your keys. Next, students work in pairs. Give a copy of the handout to each pair, and give one student in each pair a slip that explains where the keys are. They must keep this secret. Explain that their partner must ask *yes/no* questions until they find the keys. When one partner has found the keys, the other partner asks for a slip of paper. Continue until you decide the students have had enough practice.

## 9. Article hunt



Ask students to look through the lyrics of their favourite English songs, or the English title of their favourite films, TV series or books, and find five different uses of the articles. Students can share their examples in an online space, or face to face in the next class.

## 10. Common difficulties

Problems usually arise when the students' L1 does not use articles in the same way as in English, or when it does not have articles. Some languages (such as Polish or Russian) don't have definite and indefinite articles, so students with these language backgrounds will tend to omit articles. Conversely, other languages may use an article where in English no article is needed. For example, Spanish uses the definite article for talking about abstract concepts. In such cases, students will tend to over use *the*. (They might say, for example, *\*The love is blind* instead of *Love is blind*.) Helping students to notice the differences between their first language and English can help.



# 4 Possessive adjectives, possessive pronouns and possessive 's

There are lots of accessible contexts for presenting and practising possessives: teachers often get students talking about who common objects belong to, both at home and in the immediate environment of the classroom. Students can also be given the opportunity to talk about families and family trees. Typically, possessive adjectives are presented at the same time as 's, with pronouns coming a little later.


## 1. Family snaps

Showing each other family photos is a natural and memorable context to present possessive 's and possessive adjectives. After teaching family vocabulary, show the class a photo of one or two members of your family. Let them guess their relationship to you. In your response, use possessive adjectives and 's, eg, *Yes, that's right. That's my sister. Her name's Ana Maria. And those are her children. They're Ana Maria's children. Their names are Lucia and Carlos.* Write the sentences on the board. Compare *her children* and *Ana Maria's children*. Contrast the possessive 's in *Ana Maria's* and the contraction of *is* in *name's*. Then students show each other their own photos in pairs or small groups. They ask each other questions about them, eg, *Is that your cousin?* and comment on them: *I like your brother's beard,* etc.

## 2. Family tree pictation

This pairwork 'pictation' (a dictation-type activity in which the teacher describes something and the students draw a picture of it) follows naturally on from Activity 1. Put students into pairs to take turns describing their family tree to each other. The listener must draw the family tree without showing it to their partner, the describer. When they have both had a turn, they show each other their trees and check that they are accurate. Put students into new pairs to dictate to their new partner their previous partner's family tree.

## 3. In a pair tree

 As a follow-up to Activity 2, to consolidate possessives with family vocabulary, make one copy of the handout on page 185 for every two students and cut them in half. Put students in pairs: one is A and one is B. Give each student one of the family trees, instructing them not to show each other their copies. Hold up the trees and point out that A has information that B needs and vice versa. Elicit useful questions for the activity, eg, *What's Lisa's brother's name? What's his job?* In pairs, students exchange information. When they have finished, they compare the family trees.

#### 4. Whose animals are whose?

Here's a puzzle to raise awareness of the three different pronunciations of 's. Across the top of the board, write:

*Molly's animals*

*Matt's animals*

*Mitch's animals*

Explain that these are three zookeepers who have lost their animals. Ask students to help them find their animals by calling out the names of animals. As they do, categorise them according to the pronunciation of 's after their names. For example, if they say *elephant*, tell them that the elephant belongs to Matt. Write *elephant* under the heading *Matt's animals*. The reason for this is that in *the elephant's ears/trunk/tail*, etc., the 's is pronounced /s/, the same as the 's in *Matt's*. For the same reason, the lion belongs to Molly ('s is pronounced /z/ in both *Molly's* and *lion's*) and the tortoise belongs to Mitch ('s is pronounced /ɪz/ in *Mitch's* and *tortoise's*).

Elicit the names of about 15 animals so you have around four to six in each column. Ask students to guess who they belong to, to see whether anyone has noticed a pattern. Offer support as needed, by emphasising the final sounds, underlining 's, and so on. When the students finally understand, drill the lists with a final 's on the end of each animal. You will find that Mitch has very few animals (because there aren't many animal names that end in a sibilant sound (/s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/ or /ʒ/). You may need to suggest a few for him, eg, *fish*, *horse*, *goose*, *tortoise*, *fox*, *rhinoceros* (but not *rhino*), *mouse*, *hippopotamus* (but not *hippo*) or *ostrich*.

#### 5. Roll-a-sentence

To give students some controlled practice of possessive adjectives, write the following on the board:

1 I      2 you      3 he      4 she      5 we      6 they

1 \_\_\_      2 \_\_\_      3 \_\_\_      4 \_\_\_      5 \_\_\_      6 \_\_\_

Ask students to think of objects or possessions and write one in each space, eg, 1 car, 2 house, 3 shoes, 4 bag, 5 glasses, 6 cat. Put students in pairs or small groups and hand each group a dice. Tell them to roll the dice twice to make a simple sentence with *It's / They are ...* followed by the possessive adjective that relates to the corresponding subject pronoun and one of the nouns. Do a couple of examples to clarify. For example, if you roll a 1 and another 1, you have to say *It's my car*, while a 3 followed by a 5 means saying *They are his glasses*.

To use the same game format for possessive pronouns, just change the sentence to: *That car is mine, Those glasses are his*, etc.

#### 6. Whose is it?

To present possessive pronouns and questions with *Whose ...?*, find a bag or a big hat before the lesson. At the start of the lesson, ask everyone to take one item out of their bag or pockets, and to put it in the bag. Pull out an item and ask a student you know doesn't own the object: *Is this yours?* When they answer *No*, teach: *No, it isn't mine*. Then ask:

Whose is it? They may or may not know; if they know, help them formulate the answers: *It's Irene's lipstick* and *It's her lipstick*. Finally, show them that you don't need to repeat *lipstick* – you can say *It's Irene's* and *It's hers*.

Write this dialogue on the board for students to copy:

A *Whose lipstick is this? Is this yours?*

B *No, it's not mine, It's Irene's.*

Then empty the bag onto a table and tell them to write sentences about the other objects. When they have finished, invite guesses as to who owns each item, ending with the rightful owner of each item claiming back their item.

## 7. Stationery murder!

Explain that a murder was committed using something in the classroom. One of the students is the detective who must identify the murderer by interrogating their classmates about the ownership of the weapon. He or she leaves the room, and a non-descript item of stationery that belongs to a particular student (ie the 'murderer') is chosen as the murder weapon (eg, a ruler or rubber). The detective must interview every member of the class (*Is this yours? Whose is this? Is it Pedro's?*), who must all deny it. (*No, it isn't mine. I think it's hers.*) At the end, the detective must decide whose stationery item it is and who is therefore the murderer.

## 8. Her shoes, his shoes

Divide the class into two equal-sized teams and send one team out of the room for a minute. Tell each team separately to take off their shoes and mix them up. Bring the teams together. Explain that they must take turns matching the shoes to each opponent and the winning team will get their opponents all wearing their shoes again. They are allowed one guess each time, and can confer; for example, they might say: *We think these are Maria's shoes* and get the answer, *You're right!* or *Sorry, no, they aren't hers*. This silly activity can help create a fun and friendly atmosphere near the beginning of a course. If there are cultural barriers to taking shoes off in public, you could use any possession that everyone has, eg a pen.

## 9. Special objects



Ask students to choose three special objects from their house, photograph them and write about them, making sure that there are a minimum of three possessive structures in each description. For example, *This ring was my mother's. Her grandmother gave it to her ....*

## 10. Common difficulties

Students sometimes confuse possessive adjectives such as *her* with possessive pronouns such as *hers*. This can lead to errors like *\*That coat is her*. Getting word order right when using the 's may be difficult at low levels, resulting in errors like *\*father's Beth*, instead of *Beth's father*.

# 5 Demonstrative adjectives and pronouns, *one* and *ones*

If you've spent time in a place where you don't speak the language, you probably found yourself pointing at things and saying *That one, please. This, that, these and those*, and the pronouns *one* and *ones*, are invaluable survival tools for the beginner.

## 1. Introductions

Everyone stands in a circle. Introduce yourself and one person standing close to you in the circle: *Hi everyone, I'm Brenda and this is Jordi*. Introduce someone standing on the opposite side of the circle: *... and that's Karin*. Gesture the physical difference between *this* and *that*. Ask Jordi to do the same: *Hi, I'm Jordi and this/that is Byung Ho*. Alternatively, he can say: *Hi, I'm Jordi. I'm sorry, I don't know who this/that is*. In this case, the new person introduces themselves and the activity continues until the students know each other's names. (Unit 1.5 practises *this* and *that* when talking about family members.)

## 2. Not these pens, those ones

Use classroom objects to present *this, that, these, those, one* and *ones* and to teach polite requests. Ask students to empty their pencil cases on the desks in front of them. Go round and group objects together, eg, three pens, but make sure there are also single objects, such as an eraser. Sit on your hands. Ask a student to bring you an item of stationery, eg, *Birgit, can I have that pencil, please?* It might be difficult to know which pencil you are referring to, so teach the class *This one* or *that one?* Start with single objects, both near (*this*) and far (*that*), then move on to plurals (*these rubbers, those pens*), until you have all the objects.

Hand over to the students. In pairs, they do the same, asking their partners for things. At the end, write on the board: *Can I have **this/that** pen, please? Yes, this pen **one** or that pen **one**? Can I have **these/those** rulers, please? Yes, these rulers **ones** or those rulers **ones**?*

## 3. That shop roleplay

Collect lots of objects from the students: stationery items from Activity 2, bags, mobile phones, umbrellas, board pens, coats, etc. Students also sketch pictures of café items (cups of coffee, muffins, etc.). Create a shop or café, grouping items according to type and displaying them for customers. Set some goods back from the 'counter' while others can be near the customers. Remind students of the language they need to ask for things (see Activity 2). The students take turns at being the shop or café assistant and the customer.

## 4. This kiss, these keys

Raise awareness of the distinction between the short /ɪ/ sound in *this* and the long /i:/ sound in *these* with a pairs activity. Write two columns on the board as follows:

- |          |       |
|----------|-------|
| 1. kiss  | keys  |
| 2. chip  | cheap |
| 3. Tim's | teams |
| 4. this  | these |

Say one word from each row and ask students to raise their left hand if they think you said a word from the left column and their right hand if they heard a word from the right. Drill the words, pointing out the differences in vowel length and mouth shape, before letting them repeat the task in pairs to practise. Add pairs of words that your students know, eg, *eat – it*. Students write sentences using some of the words (eg, *Are these Tim's keys?*) and read them to classmates.

## 5. Walking, talking dictionary

On the board, write the questions below, but with all the words jumbled up. For example, the first one might look like this: *this what's English in?* Tell students that these are the most useful questions in English they will ever learn. Let them work them out and write them on the board correctly.

*What's this in English?*

*What are those things called in English?*

*How do you pronounce that again?*

*Can you spell that, please?*

The class now have 10 minutes to learn as many new words from you as they can using only the questions on the board. The winner is the student with most new words. Get ready for a busy 10 minutes!

## 6. Hollywood estate agent

Show students an aerial view of an expensive house or houses. On Google maps, for example, use 'satellite' mode to show an exclusive area near you, or visit Beverly Hills on Google Earth. Students imagine they are house-sitting one of these houses for a week. Tell them to close their eyes and visualise the interior. Help by asking questions, which they answer silently to themselves, eg, *What do you see when you open the front door? How many rooms are there on the ground floor? What's in your favourite room? What's in the garden? What's on the first floor? How many bedrooms are there? Where is your room?* etc.

Students then roleplay a situation in which they show each other around their houses, imagining they are really there. For example, they might say, *This is the living room, this is the kitchen, these are the bedrooms*. Encourage the guests to comment and ask questions, eg, *How big is the swimming pool? Can we use the private cinema?*

## 7. Topic of conversation

On a handout or projector, present students with these 'snippets' of conversation that use demonstrative pronouns to refer to things that may not be immediately obvious, so they have to 'read between the lines'.

- A. *I don't think this is working.*
- B. *Hmm, I agree. Let's stop for 10 minutes.*
- A. *Did you see that?*
- B. *Yes, I did. Amazing!*
- A. *I'm not having that woman coming here!*
- B. *But darling, how can I stop her? It is her house!*
- A. *That was a good one. Do it again.*
- B. *I don't think I can. Sorry.*

In pairs, they discuss what the topic of each conversation could be, and then extend the conversations for a few more lines to make it clear. Pairs then perform their sketches for each other and compare the different interpretations.

## 8. Restaurant roleplay



Explain that the classroom is going to become a restaurant. Elicit some typical phrases that waiters and customers say throughout a meal, eg, *Table for two, please?* [customer] *Can I get you anything to drink?* [waiter] *Anything else?* [waiter] *Just the bill, please* [customer]. Focus on language for discussing a menu which consists mainly of pictures of dishes: *What's this?* [customer] *That's chicken soup, sir* [waiter]. *I'd like that, please* [customer].

Organise students into 'tables' (groups of 2–4 customers) and waiters (one per table). Send the customers out of the room while the waiters prepare the tables and you put on some background music and show the waiters the menu handout (see page 186) and their menu key. Then open the restaurant and start the roleplay!

## 9. Sticky notes everywhere!



Students label objects around their house (*fridge, DVD player, shelf, cables, saucepans, dog!*). They then practise grammar and vocabulary as they walk around at home. Every time they see a sticky note, they say: *That's a shelf, These are saucepans.* To encourage them, you could video yourself doing it at home. They could video themselves, too. Once they're confident with the vocabulary, they do it without the sticky notes.

## 10. Common difficulties

Students should have no problem with the singular and plural distinction between *this* and *these*, but they might struggle with the conceptual differences, both physical and psychological, between *this* and *that*, and *these* and *those*.

# 6 The imperative

The imperative form is present from the very first day in class (*Look, Listen, Work in pairs, Ask a partner, etc.*). The form is very straightforward: students are quick to pick up on it and it's easy to practise and recycle in instructions, directions and games.

## 1. Classroom language

To introduce simple imperative forms, you can play a miming game with classroom language. Introduce five or six simple instructions with an associated gesture or movement (eg *Listen* (cup your ear), *Look* (place an open hand above your eyes), *Write* (make a writing gesture with your hand), *Open your book* (open both hands, palms up), *Close your book* (bring your palms together), *Repeat* (make a circular movement with your hand). Practise first by calling out the instructions for the students to mime the gesture. Then reverse roles: you do the gestures and the students call out the corresponding instructions. Students then work in pairs to test each other, taking turns to call out instructions and mime.


## 2. Don't look!

As an extension of Activity 1, teach the negative form of the instructions by, for example, wagging your finger or shaking your head (*Don't look, Don't listen, etc.*). Highlight the two forms on the board; then repeat the miming instructions as above. This time call volunteers to the front of the class to call out the instructions for their classmates. Encourage them to use a mixture of positive and negative forms.

## 3. Simon says

This game is popular with younger learners, but it works with adults too. Establish a list of instructions before you start. Choose ones that will appeal to your students (eg drink a hot coffee, check your emails, take a photo, eat an ice cream). Explain the rules as follows: if you (the teacher) say 'Simon says' before the instruction, they have to mime it, if you don't, they should stay still. Students are eliminated if they mime an action when they shouldn't. Once the students get the hang of the game, they can play in small groups.

## 4. Stretching in the classroom

 Make two copies of the handout on page 187 for a class of 12. Each handout has two copies of the exercises. Cut the handouts into eight strips as shown. Introduce the activity with some statistics about how many hours a day we spend sitting down (it's generally reported as being about 7–10 hours for adults). Discuss why this is bad for us. Tell the students that you are going to teach them some simple stretching exercises that they can do sitting down. Check they know the words *wrists, shoulders, neck*, and the verbs: *make circles, lift, drop, turn (to the right/left), stretch*. Give them instructions for the first exercise below, demonstrating as you speak. Then describe the second exercise without moving. Keep explaining until everyone is doing it correctly.

Exercise 1: make circles with your right shoulder, first forward five times, and then back. Repeat with your left shoulder.

Exercise 2: turn your head to the left, hold for two seconds, then bring it back to the middle. Do the same to the right. Repeat three times.

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Put students into groups of three. Give each group one of the activities on the handout. If you have more than four groups, duplicate one or more of the activities. Students read their instructions and practise their exercises. They perform them to the class, who watch and try to establish what was written on the instruction slip.

## 5. Driving lessons

Tell the class that you have been asked to write the script for an English-speaking driving instructor robot. The robot teaches learner drivers during their first lessons in a simulator. The robot needs to give the learners very precise instructions. Their first task is to tell the student how to get in the car and to sit down ready to start. Elicit simple instructions from the class using imperative forms (eg *Put your hand on the door handle, push it down, etc.*). Follow the instructions to the letter, forcing the students to be very precise in their instructions. Tell them they have completed the task when you have successfully taken two steps following their instructions. Put the students into groups of three, making sure there is at least one person who knows how to drive in each group. The driver has to explain how to start the engine and move away in first gear, and then how to stop the car without stalling the engine. Ask one of the groups to demonstrate their instructions to the class. Discuss which instructions were most difficult to word and why.

## 6. Time travellers

This is a variation on Activity 5. This time the students need to explain how to use a simple function on their phone to someone who has travelled from the past. Tell the students you are a time traveller and that you have arrived from the 18th century. You are curious to know about everything you see. Ask them to explain what a phone is and ask them to show you how to make a phone call. Elicit instructions using imperative forms. Follow the instructions to the letter. Question any words or phrases that you think the time traveller wouldn't know. Students then work in pairs to act out a similar situation. This time they must show the time traveller 1) how to take a photo and 2) how to record their voice.

## 7. How do I get to the school?

Tell your students that you need to give a visitor directions for how to get to the school from the airport/train station/bus station (whichever is most appropriate in your context). Ask them what they think would be the best and quickest way. Elicit directions using imperatives. Encourage discussion of different possible routes. Then ask the students to name some interesting places in town that your visitor could go to while they're visiting. Write these on the board (you'll need as many places as there are students in the class). Students work in pairs or groups of three. Allot each pair or group two or three places on the list, making sure each pair or group has different places. They then write directions for the visitor to get to those places from the school. The groups read out their directions without giving the name of the final destination and the rest of the class identify the place the visitor is going to.



## 8. Dos and Don'ts

Write the title 'Dos and Don'ts' on the board, and explain what it means. Then choose a light-hearted topic (eg using a photocopier, eating spaghetti, getting a haircut) and elicit two or three dos and don'ts. Write these on the board. Then ask the students to think of other possible topics in pairs and to write them on a piece of paper. They give the papers to you and you redistribute them around the class so each pair is working with a new topic. Give them a few minutes to write up their 'Dos and Don'ts' lists. Display the lists around the classroom. Students read each other's lists and add more points if they can.

## 9. Simple instructions in the home



At home, students choose a chore or task they do frequently (eg loading the dishwasher, making a coffee, taking the rubbish out) and write detailed, foolproof instructions. In the next class they read the instructions out to the class, who mime doing the chore and guess what the instructions are for.

## 10. Common difficulties

Students have very few problems with the imperative. They may sometimes use *not* or *no* instead of *don't* in the negative, and some students want to supply the pronoun *you* before the verb. They may also find the imperative form of *be* quite strange initially (eg *Be good, Be careful, Don't be late*).

# 7 Quantifiers and countable and uncountable nouns

Quantifiers like *some, any, a few, and not much* are taught early at beginner or elementary level (A1) with *There is / There are, Do you have ...?, a/an and How much / How many ...?* More advanced quantifiers, such as *several and plenty of*, come later. Quantifiers are used in many contexts, but a common one is food and shopping.

## 1. Left or right?


To present countable and uncountable nouns, before the class collect a bag of rice, a glass of water, a tube of toothpaste, a balloon and a tea bag. Pick up the bag of rice and place it on the left-hand side of a table. Open it and place a handful of rice on the right. Put the glass on the left, but put a drop of water on the right. Continue with the toothpaste (tube left, toothpaste right), the balloon (indicating air on the right), etc. Keep asking: *Which side: left or right?*

Ask *Why are there two groups?* (Answer: we can count items on the left but not those on the right). Write *countable* and *uncountable* on the board and a *bag of rice* and *some rice* under each heading, respectively. Elicit phrases for the other items, introducing the quantifiers *a little (water)* and *a lot of (air)*. Pour a few grains of rice into your hand, and say *a few grains of rice*. Write the quantifiers on the appropriate sides of the board. Then present: *How much / How many?* by asking *How many bags of rice are there?* and *How much rice is there?* Elicit questions for other items (*How many glasses of water are there? How much water is there?* etc.) Students ask and answer questions about all the items on the desk.

## 2. Shopping list chant

This activity combines practice of quantifiers with work on sentence stress. Ask students to suggest shopping list items and write them on the board. Tell them to memorise the list by repeating it over and over. Get them chanting, eg, *Eggs ... milk ... cheese ... an apple*. Add in the following words, with the class chanting after each: *Eggs and milk and cheese and an apple; Some eggs and some milk and some ...; Some eggs and then some milk and then ....* Point out that less important words (*some, an, and, then*) are spoken more quickly usually with a weak form, ie /... ən ðen səm .../. Get a student to time how long it takes to say the first and last sentences. Although there are three times as many syllables in the last sentence as in the first, it shouldn't take three times as long to say.

## 3. Spot the differences in the fridge

 Make one copy of the handout on page 188 for every two students and cut it in two. Ask students to guess what you have in your fridge at home. They should ask things like: *Do you have any butter?* Then invite them to ask how much of each thing there is by saying, for example, *How much butter do you have? How many peaches are there?* Answer as truthfully as you like! When they have finished, ask them what they think you should have for dinner that evening.

Put students in teams of two: A and B. Hand out the fridge worksheets. Explain that there are a number of differences between the two fridges and, without showing each other, they must find them all before the other teams do. They should ask each other things like: *Have you got any cream?* and give answers such as, *Yes, I've got some* or *Yes, I've got two cartons. How about you?*

#### 4. I went on holiday ...

Say: *I went on holiday and I packed in my suitcase ... a few T-shirts*. Indicate to a student that they have to repeat what you have said and add an item to the list, eg, *I went on holiday and I packed in my suitcase ... a few T-shirts and some sun cream*. Ask a second student to repeat what they heard and to add a third item. When students have got the idea, put them into groups of four to six to play their own game. If a player can't remember the items or the correct order, he or she is out. The winner is the last person still playing. Adapt this for different lexical sets (eg, *I went to a restaurant and I ordered ...*, *I went shopping and I bought ...*).

#### 5. Lifestyle questionnaire

Practise *How much ...?* and *How many ...?* within the topic of health. On the board, write prompts for questions about a healthy lifestyle, eg, *exercise, sleep, sweets, stairs, kilometres, vegetables*, and the question starters *How much* and *How many*. In small groups, students write six questions to ask classmates. Reorganise the groups AAA BBB CCC → ABC ABC ABC to conduct the questionnaire. They then return to their original groups and report back. How accurate a measure of health and well-being do they think their questions were? What other questions could they ask? Follow this up with the homework task described in Activity 9.

#### 6. Guess the city

More advanced students need to practise quantifiers with more abstract concepts. Brainstorm good and bad points about cities. Build two lists on the board with their ideas: one of countable things found in cities and the other of more abstract aspects of a city that are expressed through uncountable nouns. Pair up countable and uncountable synonyms, eg, *parks – outdoor space; things to do – nightlife; museums – entertainment; pickpockets – crime; cars, buses – traffic; foreigners – tourism*. Use the city or town you are in to explore the different quantifiers by asking students to fill gapped sentences on the board, eg:

There's \_\_\_\_ (*some, a lot, a little*) traffic.

There isn't \_\_\_\_ (*any, a lot, much*) tourism.

There are \_\_\_\_ (*a few, several, a lot of*) parks.

There aren't \_\_\_\_ (*some, any, many*) buses.

Students choose a town or city they know well. They should keep their choice secret. Put them in pairs to guess their partner's city. To do so, they take turns asking *yes/no* questions; eg, *Is there much nightlife? Are there a lot of people? Are there many parks?* etc. They should answer briefly, but they can give a few details, such as: *The nightlife is better than here, but it isn't as exciting as ....* The winner is the student who guesses their opponent's city first.

## 7. Hotel breakfast board

Ask the class to imagine a breakfast buffet in an expensive hotel. Nominate students to tell you what they're going to have for breakfast. Then ask another student to say how much or how many of each thing they will eat (eg a *little muesli*, *two mangos*). Write answers on the board. Brainstorm 15 to 20 items. Include any quantifiers you want to practise, eg *some sausages*, *no mushrooms*, *a few slices of toast*, etc.

Ask the class to close their eyes while you 'eat' something. Wipe an item off the board. Ask them to open their eyes and to call out the name of the food that you 'ate' (ie by trying to work out what you have erased from the board). Whoever answers first gets to stand at the board and 'eat' another item (rubbing it off the board) while the class's eyes are closed, and so on until the board is empty. In pairs, students brainstorm everything that was on the board, writing the words and phrases in their notebooks. Variations on this activity could be based around such topics as: things I take with me wherever I go, things you see in the bathroom, things you pack to go on holiday, etc. Since these things can't be 'eaten', simply tell the class you are going to remove items from the list on the board while their eyes are closed.

## 8. I like any ..., I don't like some ...

For more advanced students, who are ready to cope with the subtleties of *any* being used in affirmative statements and *some* being used in negative statements, write the following four sentences on the board and ask the students to say which they agree with. They can choose more than one:

1. *I like any music.*
2. *I like some music.*
3. *I don't like some music.*
4. *I don't like any music.*

Ask them which sentence or sentences refer to: all music (Answer: 1), no music (Answer: 4), and certain kinds of music (Answer: 2 and 3). Highlight the use of *some* and *any* with both affirmative and negative verbs. Ask the students to substitute *music* with other topics, eg ice cream, action movies, grammar exercises. Ask them to choose the sentence that most closely applies to them for each topic. Then put students in groups to discuss their answers, encouraging follow-up questions such as: *What kind of music do you like? When do you eat ice cream?* etc. They report back to the class.

## 9. Food diaries



Students keep a food diary between now and the next lesson. Model it with one of your own. (Feel free to make it up!) You can be precise, eg *a pot of yoghurt*, or vague, eg *lots of meat*. At the beginning of the next lesson, students compare diaries to see who has eaten the most healthily.

## 10. Common difficulties

In many cases, certain words that are countable in the student's first language are uncountable in English. Abstract concepts (*advice*, *information*, *anger*), mass nouns (*furniture*, *hair*) and natural phenomena (*rain*, *weather*) are typical examples. This can lead to errors like *\*I'd like some informations, please*.



# Pronouns and clauses

# 8 Subject, object and relative pronouns

Students meet subject pronouns from the outset, with lessons that require them to use *I am ...*, *You are ...*, etc. Meaning is contextualised in images (for example, showing that *he* refers to one male person). Later, when object pronouns are introduced, students get an opportunity to see how the two types of pronoun are used together in a sentence, eg, *He loves her, but she doesn't love him.*

Relative pronouns (*that, which, who, etc.*) are usually taught with relative clauses from lower intermediate (B1) level onwards; however, many students at elementary (A2) level are already using them, so they are worth introducing early on.

## 1. Friend me!

Ask students how many friends they have on social media and how they have so many. Teach the verb *to friend* in this context. Ask what happens when a new person wants to friend them using the students in the room as examples, eg *When Roberto adds Claudine to his list of friends, Roberto **friends** Claudine.* Show how pronouns avoid repetition, ie *He friends her.* Use different students and groups of students to elicit all pronouns, eg *She friends them, They friend me,* etc. Underline the pronouns, using one colour for subject pronouns and another for object pronouns. Ask students to work out what the two different colours represent. Ask questions to highlight the grammar, eg, *Is 'Claudine' the subject or the object of this sentence? ... Is that 'she' or 'her'?*

## 2. Pronoun replacement therapy

Hand out the following text to students (or one adapted from the coursebook) and ask them to replace the pronouns where possible:

*Rita loves cooking so much, Rita thinks about cooking all day. Rita is very good at making 'tamales'. Tamales are small corn snacks wrapped in leaves. Rita makes tamales every morning for her family. Her family love tamales. Rita knows Rita is good at making tamales, but her father never says anything. Her father doesn't ever thank Rita. One day, Rita replaces the mild chillies in his tamales with hot chillies. When her father eats a tamal, her father turns red and her father runs to the bathroom. When Rita tells her father the reason for the hot chilli, her father gets angrier. Rita and her father don't say sorry and her father never eats another tamal from that day on.*

Stronger students can record themselves reading the text aloud, replacing the pronouns as they go. Struggling students can listen to you reading the original version, replacing the pronouns by hand in their own time. See page 237 for a suggested reworking of the text with pronouns added.

## 3. Cohesive texts

Use the text above but with its pronouns replaced, ie *Rita loves cooking so much, **she** thinks about it all day.* Make enough copies for the class. Model one or two questions on the board: 'Who is *she* in line 1?', 'What is *it* in line 1?' etc., and elicit the answers. Then put students in pairs to take turns asking each other similar questions about other pronouns.

#### 4. Ooooh, I love them!

This mingling activity practises object pronouns and helps students get to know each other better. Draw emojis on the board to indicate the love–like–hate scale. Elicit the verbs from the students:



I absolutely  
love ...



I love ...



I like ...



I don't mind ...



I don't like ...



I can't stand ...

Ask individuals a range of questions, eg, *Do you like chocolate? / pigeons? / cats / the Kardashians?* Make sure they use *it* or *them* in their answers. Students then think of five *Do you like ...?* questions to ask people in the class. When they have written their questions, they mingle, asking as many people as possible until one student has got all six answers for two of their questions. (Other things that may elicit a range of opinions include: blue cheese, Hawaiian pizza, peanut butter, high-heeled shoes, texting, Scottish bagpipes and Ed Sheeran.)

#### 5. Conversation fragments

Write the following dialogue on the board:

A: *What did he say when she told him?*

B: *That's just it – she didn't tell him!*

A: *So how does he know, then?*

B: *Because they came to his house last night.*

Put students in pairs to discuss the context and guess what's happening. After a few minutes, they share their ideas and compare with other students. Students decide whose ideas are the most interesting or likely. Still in their pairs, students write a similar four-line dialogue for other pairs to speculate about.

#### 6. Out of the room

This game is used to recycle vocabulary and practise subject and object pronouns. Before the lesson, prepare a list of words the students have learnt recently. It can include people, things, and singular and plural items. One student goes out of the room while the teacher tells the rest of the class the first word. When the student comes back in, the students take turns to give six clues. For example, if the word is *bunk beds*, students might say things like: *Children sleep in them; they are in bedrooms; they have a ladder; it's two words and they both begin with 'b'; my brother and I slept in them when we were children; etc.* The class gets a point if the student guesses the word. If the student doesn't guess the word, the teacher gets a point.

## 7. She's the one who ...

This activity introduces the relative pronouns *who*, *which* and *that*. Invite students to come to the board to contribute to a drawing of a party scene, with stick men and women talking in groups, holding drinks, dancing, eating cake, etc. Encourage them to show a variety of people, some tall, some short, some bald, some with long hair, etc., and to make sure each stick figure is wearing an imaginative party hat. Label each stick figure with a letter: A, B, C, etc.

Ask students to listen and write the letter of the person you're describing in the picture. Identify the people and hats using relative clauses; eg, *He's the man who's standing next to the very tall woman. It's the hat which looks like a banana.* Once you have described three or four of the people at the party, students compare answers, then reconstruct and write from memory your descriptions of the people. Point out the reasons for using *who* (people), *which* (things) and *that* (for people or things). They write more descriptions to read out in groups for the other students to identify.

## 8. It's a thing ...



Photocopy and cut out the cards (see page 189). Tell students to listen to some definitions, and to try and guess what you are thinking of. Read them out one by one, inviting suggestions after each:

*It's an animal that gives us something to make our beds comfortable.*

*It's also an animal that you can find in your bath!*

*It's an animal which flies, but not very far.*

*Daffy and Donald are two famous examples of this animal.*

Congratulate the first student to say 'duck'. Put students into teams of four and provide a dictionary for each team. Deal out up to eight cards to each team, which they should keep secret from other teams. Each team member writes definitions, or clues, for the objects so that there are four different clues for each object. Together, they decide on the order of their clues, from hardest to easiest. Set teams against each other. They take turns to read out their clues. Award 10 points to a team that guesses the word correctly after the first clue, 5 points if they get it after the second, 2 after the third and 1 after the fourth. They don't need to know the word in English; they can prove they have identified the item in L1 or by a drawing if necessary. The team with the most points at the end is the winner.

## 9. Street definitions



Students can practise relative pronouns outside class. They choose five objects or people that they see on their way to and from work or school, or during a short walk.

They have to define each one mentally, eg, *It's a person who collects the rubbish from people's houses.* They either record them on their phones in real time, or write them down when they get home.

## 10. Common difficulties

Students can confuse subject and object pronouns, eg, *\*We saw she at the café.* Choice of pronoun can be an issue for students whose L1 has noun gender (eg French): *\*She is a very big table.* Learners sometimes omit object pronouns, eg, *\*Ah, I love! \*Oh, I can't stand!* Activity 4 addresses these types of problems.