SOME
COMMON
ACTIVITIES

THE JET PROGRAMME

TEACHING
MATERIALS
COLLECTION
2013
INTRODUCTION

The most important thing that you can do is to engage with the students. To be successful you will have to build some kind of relationship, some kind of rapport with them. Remember when you were at school. How did you feel about boring lessons? Did lessons that you were not interested in seem irrelevant? It is vital that you do not fall into the same trap. Be interesting, be energetic, be yourself. A good rule is “provoke a reaction, grab their attention, focus their energy”.

In creating a classroom where language can be taught effectively you will find that a prerequisite is for the students to be comfortable making mistakes, experimenting and learning from their failures. If you can give them this alone, you will have helped them immeasurably.

The language activities in the next sections are aimed at helping to create an environment where students can participate without overwhelming fear of making a mistake.

They use different skills and have different objectives. They are listed roughly in order of level of suitability, beginning with junior high school, then moving onto senior high school, kindergarten, elementary and adult classes. Within these divisions, the activities are loosely grouped into spelling and vocabulary activities, listening activities, communication (including information gap) activities, writing activities and other miscellaneous activities. Please also be aware that many of these activities can be adapted to suit other target levels. For example, an elementary school activity can be adapted for use in junior high school, a junior high school activity can be used in senior high school, an adult activity may be suitable for high-level senior high school students, etc. Please feel free to use and adapt any of the following activities to suit the level of your students. Use your imagination, have fun and good luck!

Using the Activities

English is a living language. This may seem obvious, but it is something that Japanese students can lose sight of. Communicative activities should aim to give students a real need to communicate and show them that they can use a foreign language as a means of conveying ideas and information to each other. It is not solely the reserve of foreigners. Students generally have little practice in producing new language, as they tend to concentrate on the more passive activities of translation and grammatical analysis. Emphasis therefore needs to be placed upon active participation, listening for meaning rather than sound, and speaking in response to a situation rather than following drills. Speaking activities are a necessary means to the final goal of free conversation.

Some of the activities in the following sections can make good warm-ups, whilst others can make longer exercises. Please feel free to adapt the following activity suggestions to suit your own students.

Small Group Activities

Working in groups of two, three, or four, students can be required to use their language skills as a means of communication in completing set tasks or solving problems. Pair-work is probably the easiest to organise, and also means that all students must participate. In the slightly larger groups, certain students may prefer to “rest” and let others in their group do the work.

One great benefit of this type of activity is that the class size is not really important. In larger classes, all students have the opportunity of speaking during the same lesson. No one feels they have been personally picked upon and forced to speak in front of their classmates.

Preparing the Class

It may take a few weeks to establish the routine of small-group activities, but students should get used to it fairly quickly. When students are doing pair-work, you and the JTE should move around the room to make sure they are practising correctly.

Remember that the language needed for the activity itself must be pre-taught. To avoid spending a large part of the lesson teaching vocabulary and checking comprehension, make pair-work a complementary activity, a means of revising and reviewing previous lessons.
Some Common Activities

Make sure that students understand your language of instruction and commands. Try to be consistent. Teach such phrases as:

“Work in pairs/twos/threes.”
“Work with the person sitting next to you/behind you/in front of you.”
“Get/split into pairs (now) please.”
“If you want any help, raise your hand.”

Team-demonstration of activities is usually quite effective. As the students can actually see the procedure, less spoken instruction is needed.

Grouping

Probably the easiest way of grouping the students is to letter or number around the class “A, B, A, B…” (or A, B, C, A, B, C...). Make sure the students know their own letter or number and check by asking all As to raise their hands, then all Bs. Clarify your instructions by lettering yourself “A” and the JTE “B”, and illustrating the activity in front of the whole class.

Another way is to ask students to work with the person sitting near them. Be specific. Do you mean next to them, behind them, in front of them? Students will usually sit near friends. If you wish to vary the grouping in order to change the classroom dynamics, it often helps to be totally arbitrary. Ask students to line up quickly, from tallest to shortest, and letter off. Alternatively, line up according to birthdate, January 1 to December 31, and letter off backwards. If you have boys and girls together, check that the assignment is quite suitable and will not create embarrassment for either party. This would in itself be a barrier to language learning.

Cheating

This is the occupational hazard of small-group activities. Some students will try to cheat by using Japanese or revealing “forbidden” information. Move around the room so students are aware that they may be caught. Let them realise that although such activities are more relaxed and fun than their conventional lessons, they are not simply games.

One preventative measure is to place bags on desks as a barrier over which pairs must communicate information hidden from each other. Another is to have students sit back to back and speak over their shoulders to each other. Otherwise, suit your incentives to your group. Try introducing a competitive element, e.g. points for correct solutions or rapid completion of the task set.
Spelling/Vocabulary Activities

SHIRITORI

DESCRIPTION
One student begins the game by saying any word he or she can think of. The next student must make a new word using the last letter of the previous word as the first letter of his/her word, e.g., Help - Plan-Now-Wig-Gateball-Love. (Shiritori actually means “taking the end/bottom” in Japanese.)

To play the game with individual players, have all the students stand. If a player cannot think of a word in the given time limit, he or she must sit down (sound effects for the “buzzer” are a big hit!). The last player standing is the winner.

OPTIONS
1) Divide the class into teams and have them race to write their word on the blackboard. Check for spelling later (Be careful if there is a teacher’s platform - they can be student killers!).
2) The team must write a sentence using all the words they have written.

MATERIALS
None, or blackboard & chalk.

REMARKS
Good because students know the rules. Good as a warm up or as a review of previously learnt vocabulary.

HOW MANY WORDS IN A MINUTE?

DESCRIPTION
Make each row of students one team. There should be six or seven teams. Give the first person in each row a piece of chalk and have them come up to the board. Give them one minute to write all the words they can think of beginning with a certain letter. The teacher calls out the letter and times the students. At one minute yell “STOP!” Give one point for each correctly spelled word. They sit down and the next set of students comes up to the board. Use a different letter for each set of students.

OPTIONS
This game may be played as a relay. One student writes a word and then runs back and hands the chalk to the next one in line. (It might be wise to move the desks back for this one.)

MATERIALS
Blackboard & chalk.
HOW MANY WORDS CAN YOU MAKE?

DESCRIPTION
A fairly long word, e.g. “DICTIONARY”, “SOUTH AMERICAN”, or “SURPRISING”, etc. is written on the blackboard. Players try to make as many other words as they can, using any of the letters in that word. They may not use any letter more often than it occurs in the original word (e.g. “DICTIONARY” has 2 “i”s so the new words may contain 1 or 2, but not 3 “i”s). Other suggested words are: GENERALISATIONS, DEMONSTRATE, or NATIONALISTIC.

OPTIONS
The winner may be judged by the total number of words alone, or extra points may be awarded to players who find a word that no other student finds.

MATERIALS
Blackboard & chalk, pencil & paper. (For more advanced students, and with a longer time limit, dictionaries may be used.)

REMARKS
Try it with seasonal themes (e.g. Happy New Year, Merry Christmas).

WORD ASSOCIATIONS

DESCRIPTION
Decide on a topic for any kind of word association, e.g. WINTER, SPRING, SUMMER, AUTUMN. You say a word associated with one of the seasons (e.g. swimming). A student should answer, “SUMMER.” This can be played using many examples and applying them to a sentence or grammar pattern.

Example: “Do you go skiing in the winter?”
“What do you do in the summer?”

OPTIONS
For high level students, you can give the topic (e.g. WINTER) and each student must give a word related to that season.
The topic can be changed for each row of students.

FIZZ-BUZZ

DESCRIPTION
This is a simple counting game. Instead of saying three, multiples of three, or numbers containing three, the student must say “fizz”. Seven is likewise “buzz”. A number like 21 or 27 is “fizz-buzz” (the latter is divisible by three and contains the number seven). Students count one after another, in sequence. It is advisable for you to write out the correct answers for yourself before the game!
Great for enthusiastic students.
CATEGORY GAME

DESCRIPTION
Divide the class into several small teams (e.g. each row, front to back.) Have the first member of each team stand up (e.g. first person in each row). Ask a question to which there can be many appropriate answers (see below for examples). Students raise their hands to answer and can sit down if they answer appropriately.
Set a time limit, e.g. 5 seconds. If they can answer within the time, their team(s) gets a point. Go on to the next group (the second person in each row). The team with the highest number of points wins.

REMARKS
Setting a short time limit speeds up the pace and ensures that each student has to participate. Counting 5-4-3-2-1 out loud and adding a loud “time’s up” buzzer sound effect adds to the fun.
Example: Name something you can read.
- newspaper, book, article, comic, calendar, letter, test, etc.
Name something that runs.
- person, motor, horse, clock, water, etc.
Name something on or in your head or face.
- eyes, ears, mouth, brain, hair, skin, pimples, etc.
Name a colour.
- red, orange, yellow, green, purple, brown, etc.

VEGETABLES & THINGS

DESCRIPTION
Have each student draw a box (see below) and a name or word with four different letters written across the top, one letter per box. The entire class uses the same letter across the top. Down the left side are four categories: fruits, vegetables, flowers and animals. The students fill in the boxes with words that begin with the letters at the top and are in the same class of nouns indicated on the left.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>T</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruits</td>
<td>cherry</td>
<td>apple</td>
<td>raspberry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables</td>
<td>carrot</td>
<td>artichoke</td>
<td>radish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flowers</td>
<td>carnation</td>
<td>azalea</td>
<td>rose</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals</td>
<td>cat</td>
<td>ape</td>
<td>rat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

OPTIONS
Be creative! Use different categories (e.g. countries, food, clothing, colours, transportation, etc.).

MATERIALS
Paper, pencil, and dictionary.

REMARKS
Make the boxes big. Good activity for English clubs.
SCRAMBLED WORDS

DESCRIPTION
This is a spelling game in which the students are given lists of words, but with the letters scrambled. The students must rearrange them to find the original word.
If the class has been working on a certain category of vocabulary items, such as food, furniture, or parts of the body, or a season or holiday is coming up, you may want to concentrate on this area for review purposes.
Example:
Parts of the Body:
- KALEN (ankle)
- STRIW (wrist)
- RULEHODS (shoulder)

- THRAE (heart)
- WOBLE (elbow)
- WEREOBOY (eyebrow)

- GIRENF (finger)
- CHOMATS (stomach)
- SITAW (waist)

SCRAMBLED SENTENCES:
me the in works shop girl for flower.
The girl in the flower shop works for me.

REMARKS
Fun to use as a review. Good to use many times. Adapt vocabulary to make it relevant to the text.

CONCENTRATION

DESCRIPTION
First, get into a circle and demonstrate the following: rhythmically and slowly, strike your lap once with your palms, clap once, snap your fingers twice. Explain that everyone does the first two together, but on the snap, each person in turn must say a word loudly and clearly. If someone loses a beat, repeats a word, or cannot think of a word, they are out.
You can also try this with numbers. Have the students number off. In place of saying a word, the first student must say his number and another of his choice, e.g. snap-snap (1,6); snap-snap (6,13); snap-snap (13,17), etc. You may not call a number next to yours or the number of the person who has just called on you. After sufficient practice, you can eliminate those who make a mistake. Calling an eliminated number also means “out”.

OPTIONS
For advanced classes, limit the words to a category. The speed and verbal-only nature of this game can be a bit daunting for beginners. You may wish to write out the words, and tape them to the front of the desks so that everyone can see the vocabulary the others have. The written words will help the students remember what words they can use, but they will have to memorise a few of the words, because the speed of the game will not allow time for reading the words. Instead of eliminating the students who miss out, have them change seats so that they stay in the game and yet cannot just memorise one word and get by.
ALPHABET GAME

DESCRIPTION
Prepare a double set of alphabet cards (in two different colours if possible). Make two teams and give each student a card (give all extra cards out, too!). Call out a word, or even better, a short sentence. Each team must line up in the correct order to make the word or sentence. The first team to yell “Got it!” is the winner. Be sure to check for spelling and proper punctuation. Also, try to see that all students can participate in at least one sentence each.

Example: I like English.
    Do you like tennis?
    English is fun!
For this set of sentences you need:
    D(1) E(2) F(2) G(1) H(1) I(3) K(1) L(2) N(2) O(2) S(2) T(1) U(1) Y(1) !(1) ?(1) .(1)

OPTIONS
Push desks to the sides of the room, mix cards face-up on floor, blue in one area, red in another, and work from there. This works best in smaller classes. For large classes hand each student a card. It is also possible to play grade-against-grade in the gym.

MATERIALS
Alphabet cards. List of all possible sentences with that letter set. Two sets of cards preferably in two different colours.

FIND THE UNRELATED WORDS

DESCRIPTION
Call out a set of four words, e.g. dog, cat, paper, horse. The students must identify the unrelated word.
This can be adapted to all levels by choosing the appropriate vocabulary and categories.

Example: cow, horse, elephant, chicken (farm animals)
    green, hamburger, blue, red (colours)

OPTIONS
This can be played in teams with the first to call out (or run to the board and write) the unrelated word. Keep scores.

MATERIALS
Prepared list of word sets.
ENGLISH HAIKU/TANKA

DESCRIPTION:
This activity is suitable for intermediate/advanced level students.
As elementary students, many of us learned about the beauty of Japanese poetry. We tried our hand at it in English by counting out the syllables for each line.

5/7/5 Haiku
5/7/5/7/7 Tanka

Teach your students how to check the syllable count in an English dictionary if they’re unsure. Also, simplicity is the key to success!
Tell them to relax and use words that they know and understand (however, new words are fine).

OPTIONS:
Limericks: humorous; 5 lines; lines 1, 2, & 5 rhyme; lines 3 & 4 rhyme.
Diamond: 5 lines; line 1 and line 5 are antonyms; lines 2 and first half of 3 describe line 1; second half of 3 and line 4 describe line 5...

DULL,
GREY, LIFELESS,
BORING, MUNDANE, TINGLING, DYNAMIC,
THRILLING, VIVACIOUS,
EXCITING.

MY BOOK

DESCRIPTION:
Have the students write a simple story in English according to their ability (e.g., “My Life”, “My Dream”, fantasy tales, mystery, adventure, etc. Whatever the students wish to write about.)
Make illustrations on paper arranged as pages. Each page can have only a few sentences on it. Then make an eye-catching cover complete with title, author’s name, date.
Then, when each student has made at least one book, create a classroom library where they can read and enjoy each other’s stories.
A subtle way to get students to read extra materials other than the textbook!

OBSERVATION
Some Common Activities

DESCRIPTION:
This activity is suitable for intermediate/advanced level students. Draw some pictures of yourself, or bribe some creative, manga-crazed students to do the job. Divide the students into small teams and have them write lots of sentences about the picture. (You can determine the number of sentences according to ability.) Afterwards you can ask several students to describe the picture according to their sentences.

OPTIONS:
This can also be an oral exercise, where each student must make a statement out loud about the picture.

MATERIALS:
Pictures (either big enough for all to see or enough copies for all), paper & pencils.

MY DICTIONARY

INTRODUCTION:
With this activity the students get a chance to make their own English-Japanese dictionary using words from their lives inside or outside the classroom. In recent years there has been a major influx of English into mainstream Japan. This activity allows students to learn some of the new English words that they are constantly surrounded by. It is also one of the truest forms of a student-centred activity, allowing students to take control of and personalise their own learning. This activity can last for the duration of a term (semester).

PROCEDURE:
At the beginning of the term, make and hand out a dictionary worksheet. During class choose one or two students to introduce a new English word. The new word can be any English word that the student chooses and may come from any source (e.g. favourite song, TV commercial, advertisement, etc.) except from the textbook. At the end of the term administer a test using words that have been presented by the students.

THE DICTIONARY SHEET:
“Word” - the new word being introduced.
“Meaning” - the meaning of the new word in Japanese.
“Sentence” - an example sentence using the new word.
“Notes” - where the student found the word and any other notes about the new word that the students wish to record.

Miscellaneous
**SPELLING BEE**

**DESCRIPTION**
Divide the class into two teams. Have them stand in two lines facing each other. Stand at the front of the room between the two teams.

Reading from a prepared list of words, give the first student a word to spell. The student must repeat the word, spell it, and then repeat the word again. If the word is spelled correctly, the other team will be given a new word. If the word is misspelled, the other team is asked to spell the same word.

When a word is misspelled, that person must sit down.

A word may go back and forth several times until it is spelled correctly. The last remaining student represents the winning team.

**MATERIALS**
Prepared list of words.

**REMARKS**
Remind the students that capital letters must be mentioned when appropriate, e.g. “English” - “Capital E-n-g-l-i-s-h” – “English.” This is an excellent activity to review vocabulary from earlier lessons.

Good only for active, interested students; be prepared to change activities if it doesn’t work.

**WORDS FROM PICTURES**

- Using magazine pictures, select 5-10 fairly large and detailed pictures, i.e. pictures that show a great number of things. Mark the pictures A, B, C, etc.
- Divide the class into small groups of 8-10. It might be best to have them turn their desks to make a “table”.
- Assign each group a picture and put it where it can be easily seen by all group members.
- Tell each student to write down the names of things beginning with the letter marked on the picture. After a reasonable time limit, assign a leader to supervise the checking of word lists.
- The student with the longest correct list wins for each group.

**OPTIONS**
This can be played as a group effort, group against group. It can also be repeated by switching the pictures, or by changing the letter for each picture.

**MATERIALS**
Assortment of pictures, paper & pencil.
WHAT’S MISSING FROM THE TABLE?

Aims
To review simple vocabulary.

Materials
Teacher’s desk, various objects (e.g. pencil, pen, plastic fruit, etc...)

Explanation
Split the class into two teams. Put about twenty objects the students already know on the teacher’s desk. One member from each team comes to the front of the class. Without the students looking, remove an object from the table. Student A turns round and identifies which object has been removed. Student B in the meantime must sing the alphabet song as many times as possible. When the removed object is identified, student B stops singing. Student B’s team receives one point for every time the song is sung. The team with the most points is the winner.

OBSERVE AND REMEMBER

DESCRIPTION
(For first-year JHS students, use easy vocabulary. Keep it simple with about six pictures at a time. You can also show the students individual cards with a picture on one side and the word on the other to review the words before trying the chart.)

Play this game with either a collection of small objects or a chart with pictures of things the students can identify (in English). Place the objects or chart at the front of the room and give the students a set amount of time (maybe two minutes) to look at them/it. After they have returned to their seats, tell them to take out paper and pen, then either individually or in groups, have them write down the names of as many of the objects as they can remember. (The objects or chart should be covered at this time.) At the end of the set time limit (five minutes is good), let the students check their lists and whoever has the longest list is the winner.

OPTIONS
Another way to check the list is to hold up each item and have the students identify it in English. You can also have the students read from their lists and pull out each item as it is called.

MATERIALS
Chart (words or pictures) or a collection of small, easily identifiable objects, paper and pencil.

REMARKS
The number of items, the objects themselves, and the time should be appropriate for the class level. Beginners: 12-15 items; Intermediate: 15-20; Advanced: 25-30.
Listening Activities

FRUIT BASKET

DESCRIPTION
Have the students move the desks, and put the chairs in a BIG circle. Write four or five names of fruits on the board, practice the pronunciation of each, then walk around the circle and give each student the name of a fruit. Then call out the name of a fruit, for example, “APPLE”. All of the “apples” must switch chairs. Have one less chair than students, so that one student will be left standing. Have that person call out the next fruit name, and so on. If “fruit basket” is called out, all students must change chairs. Many students already know the game, so it won’t be difficult to explain.

OPTIONS
This can be adapted to any category, for example, “Body Basket”, “Colour Basket”. Full sentences can be used, instead of fruit names or colours, for more advanced students.

Example: All girls who like natto.
All boys wearing white socks.

MATERIALS
Chairs, in a BIG circle!

REMARKS
This is a good way to end a class.

TRUE/FALSE

DESCRIPTION
Write YES and NO (or TRUE and FALSE) on the board or attach signs. Divide the class in half and have them move their desks to the side or back of the room. Give the first person at the head of each line a piece of chalk. Ask a YES or NO question. For example: “Is today Friday?” or a true/false statement: “I am a boy.” The first person to circle the correct answer wins a point for his/her team.

This game can be made very simple for beginners (e.g. “This is a book” or “Is this a pig?”) or it can be made more difficult for advanced students (e.g. “Is the capital of England New York?”). Useful for practicing recently acquired vocabulary.

OPTIONS
Try minimal pairs such as cap/cup, bat/bag, rabbit/racquet, etc. Instead of YES and NO, use TRUE and FALSE. Have students sitting. They raise hands to answer. The first to do so can give the answer.

MATERIALS
Blackboard & chalk.
CIRCLE THE WORD/NUMBER

DESCRIPTION
Write the names of classroom objects, animals, fruit, minimal pairs, etc. (according to class level) on the blackboard. Give the student at the head of each row a piece of chalk. Call out a word on the board. The first to circle the correct word wins a point for his/her team. You can also try giving hints. For example: “I ___ to school at eight”. The word “come” should be circled. For minimal pairs it is better to say the word.
This game teaches students to identify objects’ names, and associate sounds with spelling.

OPTIONS
With higher level classes, use minimal pairs and use the time as pronunciation practice as well. Instead of words use numbers. With some classes you can mix the numerals with spelled-out numbers (e.g. 1, 2, 3, four, five).

MATERIALS
Blackboard, chalk & imagination

NUMBER GAME

DESCRIPTION
Prepare a number diagram and make enough copies for all students. Call out the first number (next to the starting point). Have the students circle (or otherwise connect) the numbers as you call them out. Have them guess, at any time, what the picture is. Make certain that the rules are clear. Give an example on the blackboard demonstrating how to check for the proper number (look on all sides of the previous number.)
This is a good listening comprehension test of minimal number pairs such as 30 and 13, etc.

MATERIALS
Enough copies for all students, pencils & erasers.

REMARKS
This is a very effective seasonal game. Especially good for elementary and junior high school students.
Make the picture interesting for the students.
**ENGLISH KARUTA**

**DESCRIPTION**
Divide the class into several teams of five or six members. You need a set of cards containing words or pictures for each team. Each set of cards must be identical.
The students should spread the cards out so that every member of the team can see them. Then you call out a sentence or word and the students must find the corresponding card.
In the case of beginners, you will want to write the word underneath the picture and write the first letter of the word on the back of the card. With more advanced students use cards that have only the picture on them.
You can also call out a letter and have students find the card whose picture begins with that letter.

**OPTIONS**
You can make this a team competition or individual competition. The former involves awarding points to the first team that finds the card, and the latter, awarding points to the individual who finds the card (in other words, there is a “winner” on each team).

**MATERIALS**
Picture cards.

**WHISPER DOWN THE ALLEY**

**DESCRIPTION**
Divide the class into teams by rows. Try to have teams of equal numbers. According to the students’ level tell them a word, phrase, or sentence - starting from the back of the class. Say the word or sentence to the last person in each row. Repeat it two or three times - BUT, say it quietly so the others do not hear. Better still, take the kids out in the hall when explaining the sentence; this will prevent the other kids from overhearing it, and create a sense of anticipation and curiosity with the remaining students that will improve the game atmosphere. They, in turn, must repeat it to the person in front of them, and so forth. The student in the front of each row then writes down what he or she heard. Scoring may be judged by speed and accuracy.

**OPTIONS**
You can incorporate vocabulary words into your sentences, choose minimal pairs, tongue twisters, etc. Make the sentences fun and interesting!
e.g. Last Saturday I met a man with nineteen noses, six eyes, a red hat, and a pet pig.

**MATERIALS**
Paper & pencil.

**REMARK**
Try using the tongue twisters on the following page. On the spot sentences are less effective.
TONGUE TWISTERS

- Betty Botter made a bit of batter and thought it better to add a bit of butter, but the bit of butter didn’t make the batter better but made Betty Botter’s batter bitter.
- Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers. If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, where’s the peck of pickled peppers Peter Piper picked?
- Rubber baby buggy bumpers.
- Fred fled the flood in Florida.
- The rabbit eats red rice in the room on the right.
- She sits, she thinks, she sings.
- Let’s listen to the lesson and look at the letter.
- A noisy noise annoyed the noisy oyster.
- Red leather, yellow leather.
- Round and round the rugged rocks the ragged rascals ran.
- She sells sea shells by the sea shore.
- Sam sawed six slick, sleek, slim, splendid saplings.
- A swan swam over the sea. Swim swan, swim! The swan swam back again. Well swum, swan!
- Theodore Throstle threw a thimble into a thicket of thistles.
- I thought a thought, but the thought I thought wasn’t the thought I thought I thought. If the thought I thought I thought had been the thought I thought, I wouldn’t have thought so much.
- Whenever the weather is cold, whenever the weather is hot, we’ll weather the weather, whatever the weather, whether we like or not.
- Which witch went west when the weather was worst?
- How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood? As many chucks as a woodchuck could chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood.
- Oh really, Lily! You took Larry to the rally.
- This thick thistle thrived in that thicket.
- The sheik’s sixth sheep is sick.
- The fool pulled the full pail out of the pool.
- Good blood, bad blood.
- Three grey geese in a green field grazing.
- Mixed biscuits, mixed biscuits.
DRAW THE PICTURE

DESCRIPTION
Select one student to come up to the board. Give the other students a copy of a simple picture or drawing. By rows (or randomly), have each student describe one part of the picture and its location to the student at the board. The student must recreate the picture according to the class directions. For example:

1. There is a house.
2. There is a tree to the right of the house.
3. The sun is shining above the tree.

MATERIALS
Blackboard & chalk, enough copies of the picture for all students (except one!)

REMARKS
This is a good game, works well for intermediate-level students. If short on time, have all components of the picture drawn first. Then, if time permits, go back and refine the picture. For example, a student drew a 3-D house, but we can only see the front.

DRAW A FACE

DESCRIPTION
Explain the parts of the face and write them on the board (if necessary). For beginners, teach right/left, up/down, over/under, etc. Have one student come to the board and blindfold him/her. You draw a big circle for the face. Have a few students ask the student to draw the eyes, nose, ears, etc. Any student may join in guiding the blindfolded student by shouting out “left, up, down, etc.”

DRAW PARTS OF THE BODY

Similar to above, but have the students draw parts of the body. First teach them the basics, accept questions from them about parts of the body for which they want to know English (be forewarned this can be dangerous, and you may wish to prepare some appropriate dodges or euphemisms). Then, divide them up into teams, pick one person from each team, and have them draw based on your commands. For example, “Draw ten faces,” or “Draw a foot with ten toes”. At the end of the game, have the class vote on the weirdest or most creative.
BINGO VARIATION: INTRODUCTION BINGO

Here’s a chance for students to stretch their legs by moving around. This is also a great way to get to know their classmates! This definitely won’t work with low-level students.

Instructions
1. Each student asks lots of students in the class one question from this sheet.
2. He or she must ask each student a different question and write the students’ names and answers in the correct box on this sheet.
3. When they have filled in all the boxes, they should return to their seat.
4. When the teacher calls out the name of a student they have marked down on their sheet, they should put an “X” in that box. When they have 5 “Xs” across, down, or diagonally, they have won the game. The student should raise his/her hand and say “BINGO!” to let the teacher know they have finished.
5. Since several students may have the same family name, they should write the first letter of that student’s first name down with the last name.
6. When finished, they can keep the sheet to remember interesting facts about their classmates.

| Hobbies (Name) | Hometown (Name) | From which Junior High? (Name) | Favorite singer (Name) | Age (Name) |
| Likes English? (Name) | Can swim? (Name) | Been to Canada? (Name) | Can play the guitar? (Name) | Has a pet? (Name) |
| Favorite subject (Name) | Likes to dance? (Name) | Favorite book (Name) | How many sisters? (Name) | Favorite color (Name) |
| How many brothers? (Name) | Believes in ghosts? (Name) | Favorite place in Japan (Name) | Likes ethnic food? (Name) | Favorite animal (Name) |
| Favorite movie (Name) | Has an overseas penpal (Name) | Likes Natto (Name) | Can ski? (Name) | Likes to talk with foreigners (Name) |
Communication Activities

THE BUTTON GAME

MATERIALS:
A lot of old buttons, at least three or four for each student.

VOCABULARY:
Large, small, round, number of holes, square, thick, thin, all colours, with a rim, gold, copper, silver, bronze, fuzzy, felt, material, etc.

OBJECT:
To trade with a classmate and end up with four (or other decided number) buttons which are similar/identical.
Students must (in English, of course) trade among themselves and try to obtain 4 buttons which look similar. When trading, they must always trade one for one. Do not let them show their buttons to each other.

Example:
a: Do you have a big, red button.
b: Yes, I do.
a: What button do you need?
b: I need a gold button.
a: I’ll trade you a gold button for your big, red button.

Then, A and B move on to other people.

COLOUR CALL

DESCRIPTION:
Have the class stand in a circle. With a beanbag in hand, call out a colour and toss it to a student at the same time. That student must catch it and call out something of that colour. The student then tosses the beanbag to another and calls out a colour, and so on.

Example:
player 1: Blue! (tosses the beanbag)
player 2: Sky! (’’’’’)… Green!
player 3: Grass! (’’’’’)… Red!
player 4: Tomato! (’’’’’)…

OPTIONS:
Colours may be repeated, but the answers should be different. In a large class this could be played in teams. Have each team stand facing each other instead of using a beanbag.

MATERIALS:
Beanbag or some other small tossing object.

REMARKS:
This can be played by eliminating each student who repeats a word, gives a wrong answer, or no answer. This is perhaps good only for “keen” students. Be careful, as some students may pick on the weak students.
WHERE IS SHE?

DESCRIPTION:
The JTE has students make name cards (in romaji) prior to the ALT’s visit. The ALT holds cards and asks “Where is ___?” The JTE tells the ALT how to reach the student, saying for example, “Go straight, turn left, stop, turn right, stop, turn around…” The ALT follows the JTE’s directions and when he or she reaches the student, he or she hands over the nametag. Student should attach it to his/her shirt. After a few tries, the students might be able to give the directions. Following the student’s directions, the ALT can give out all the tags. The JTE should stop the game every few minutes to review “directions” and to practice pronunciation (no katakana English!). This activity can be time-consuming, but fun. If there’s not enough time try switching to the option below.

OPTIONS:
Read out students’ names. They must answer, “Here.” Find them, hand them their nametags, and say, “Nice to meet you.” Shake hands. They must answer “Nice to meet you, too!” Do not change the style of greeting; keep things simple.

REMARKS:
Should names be said in Japanese? Be careful to specify first or last name.

WHAT’S MY JOB?

DESCRIPTION:
Teacher chooses a job. Students must ask Yes/No questions to guess the job. Pre-teach new vocabulary. Try to think of unusual jobs, e.g., sumo wrestler, robber, geisha, etc. By doing so, you can hold the students’ attention. A mark incentive or time limit works well.
JAPANESE IDOLS AND STARS

It helps tremendously to know the names of a few teen idol singers, stars, and sports celebrities. The students will be surprised and impressed that you know and are interested in the same things as they are. Even by just mentioning a few names, you can quickly inject some enthusiasm into a class. It is possible to structure whole classes by substituting the information you have on the stars for the usual textbook information. Or tap your creativity; dream up such possibilities as playing the “True/False”, or “Who Am I” games with data on the idols. One thing to remember is that the information should be current.

In any case, a quick search on the Internet can provide you with current pictures, posters, and information.

_Idol Game_

**Materials:**
Two large pieces of poster-board; markers (or blackboard and chalk).

**Procedure:**
First, divide the class into two teams. Choose one person from Team 1. That person must select one category, either Boys, Girls, or Cartoons. Then the same person selects one name from the category he or she has chosen. Lastly, the student must choose either a 10, 20, or 50-point question. Explain that 10-point questions are the easiest and 50-point questions are the most difficult. After selecting the question, the students listen while the teacher reads it out loud. Then, the team (as a group) can have a minute or two to discuss the answer, but the student whom the teacher originally chose should give the answer. If the answer is correct, the team receives the corresponding number of points. If it is not correct, the corresponding number of points is subtracted as a penalty.

**Variations:**
If one team is way ahead of the other, make the 50-point questions worth more. Make deals with the students. On the bottom of either the “Boys” or “Girls” card, enter your own name and make up some questions about yourself. After all, ALTs are stars, too! It’s a good way to see if the students understood your self-introduction.

**Application:**
This game works well with 2nd and 3rd year junior high school students. Use bright colours when making the cards. Be sure that they are legible. Pictures of the stars pasted next to their names make it even more fun. High school students are sometimes more interested in foreign singers and movie stars than Japanese idols. The game can also be made using foreign personalities.

Arrange the poster-board cards as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BOYS</th>
<th>GIRLS</th>
<th>CARTOONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUZUKI Ichiro</td>
<td>MAEDA Atsuko</td>
<td>Sazae-san</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARASHI</td>
<td>Kyary Pamyu Pamyu</td>
<td>Doraemon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HONDA Keisuke</td>
<td>YAMADA Yu</td>
<td>Anpanman</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## BOYS

**SUZUKI Ichiro**  
10 pts. Which team does he play for? (New York Yankees)  
20 pts. What number is he? (31)  
50 pts. For which team did he play in Japan? (Orix Blue Wave)

**ARASHI**  
10 pts. How many members are in this singing group? (5)  
20 pts. What production company represents this group? (Johnny's Entertainment)  
50 pts. What is the name of the group's eldest member? (Ono Satoshi)

**HONDA Keisuke**  
10 pts. Which team does he play for? (Cska Moscow)  
20 pts. What number is he? (7)  
50 pts. Is he right-footed or a left-footed? (left-footed)

## GIRLS

**MAEDA Atsuko**  
10 pts. Which band did she belong to? (AKB 48)  
20 pts. Which team did she belong to? (Team A)  
50 pts. What was her debut solo song? (Flower)

**Kyary Pamyu Pamyu**  
10 pts. What was her debut song? (PonPonPon)  
20 pts. Where was she born? (Tokyo)  
50 pts. What was her first job? (model)

**YAMADA Yu**  
10 pts. What is her husband’s name? (Oguri Shun)  
20 pts. Where was she born? (Okinawa)  
50 pts. What is her mother’s name? (Yamada Shintaro)

## CARTOONS

**Sazae-san**  
10 pts. What is her husband’s name? (Masuo)  
20 pts. How many children does she have? (One)  
50 pts. Who is the voice for her? (KATO Midori)

**Doraemon**  
10 pts. What is Doraemon? (Cat-like robot from the future)  
20 pts. What does he dislike the most? (Mice)  
50 pts. What is his favourite food? (Dora-yaki)

**Anpanman**  
10 pts. Who makes him? (Jamu Ojisan)  
20 pts. What is the name of Jamu Ojisan’s dog? (Cheeze)  
50 pts. What is the name of the girl he likes? (Melonpanna-chan)
FIND SOMEONE WHO

DESCRIPTION:
For this game, the students must find someone who can say “yes” to the questions on a questionnaire. When they find someone who says “yes”, they should have that person write their name on the list (next to the statement).
Rules: Students must ask the questions in English.
       One student may sign the same paper only three times.

MATERIALS:
Example:  A: Do you like ice cream?
          B: Yes, I do.
          A: Please sign my paper.

Example:  A: Do you like baseball?
          B: No, I don’t.
          A: Thank you.

_________________ likes ice cream.
_________________ likes professional wrestling.
_________________ has an older brother.
_________________ has been to another country.
_________________ is wearing blue socks.
_________________ likes English.
_________________ has a birthday in October.
_________________ wears glasses.
_________________ doesn’t like natto.
_________________ has a pencil case with no English on it.
_________________ likes baseball.
_________________ likes this game.
_________________ has climbed Mt. Fuji.
_________________ is a good cook.
_________________ has a cat.
_________________ watches sumo tournaments on TV.
_________________ likes to draw pictures.
_________________ doesn’t like mathematics.
_________________ has a younger sister.

REMARKS:
Set various limits to create different games: for example, use only “like” sentences or use only “have” sentences, etc.
**QUIZ GAME**

Divide the class into teams and ask the following questions, awarding points for correct answers.

**Japanese History**

- a) Name one ancient capital of Japan.
- b) Name the period that Japan was closed to the world.
- c) Who wrote the Genji Monogatari?
- d) What was the period between 794 and 1185 called?
- e) What title did Yoritomo give himself?
- f) What prefecture was the last to join Japan?
- g) Who is the person on the 1000 yen bill?

Answers: a) Kyoto; b) “sakoku”; c) Murasaki Shikibu; d) Heian 794-1185; e) “seitai shogun”, f) Okinawa; g) Natsume Soseki

**Sports**

- a) What game has 4 bases, a pitcher and catcher, a ball and a bat?
- b) What game is played with long sticks with nets on the end of them, small balls and a field?
- c) What game uses a flat disk which is thrown from person to person?
- d) What sport uses snowy mountains?
- e) What sport uses heavy weights and chalk?
- f) What sport is Akebono known for?

Answers: a) baseball; b) lacrosse; c) frisbee; d) skiing, snowboarding; e) weightlifting; f) sumo

**Animals**

- a) From which animal does beef come?
- b) From which animal does wool come?
- c) What animal does Harry Potter keep?
- d) What animal is black and white and eats bamboo?
- e) What animal is large, gray, and has a long nose?
- f) What is the tallest animal in the world? biggest?

Answers: a) cow; b) sheep; c) owl; d) panda; e) elephant; f) giraffe, blue whale

**Food**

- a) From which fruit are wines produced?
- b) What is cheese made from?
- c) Name one type of sushi that started in the U.S.A.
- d) Which fruit is red outside and white inside?
- e) In the U.S., what kind of meat is eaten on Thanksgiving Day?
- f) Which fruit is New Zealand famous for?

Answers: a) grapes; b) milk; c) California Roll; d) apple; e) turkey; f) kiwifruit

As an alternative play this game in the “Jeopardy” style i.e. give the answers to the students and have them think of the questions.
TALKING TO FOREIGNERS

DESCRIPTION:
Pre-teach the following phrases using a variety of examples:

What is mochi made from? “It’s made of...........”
What does Kodomo no hi mean? “It means...........”
When is the Tanabata festival? “It’s held on...........”
Do I have to take a gift? “You don’t have to...........” “You should...........”

Give the small groups a “talking to foreigners” board game. Students play in turn by throwing a dice. Another student adopts the role of “foreigner” and asks the question landed on.

MATERIALS:
Make up a simple board game with the following suggested questions:
What kind of food is served at an Izakaya restaurant?
Do you eat any kind of special food at New Year?
What is sake made from?
How high is Mt. Fuji?
What is special about the water at Kiyomizu Temple?
What is shochu made from?
What is tempura?
What is natto made from?
Where can I buy a yukata?
How fast does the bullet train go?
What is special about Tanabata?
What can I see if I go to Kyoto?
What is o-bento?
What does Keiro no Hi mean in English?
Do I have to take my shoes off in a restaurant?
What does Bunka No Hi mean in English?
What do Japanese people do on New Year’s Day?
What is Setsubun?
What is the specialty food in Fukuoka?
What do people do at Obon?
What is tofu made from?
What kind of souvenirs should I buy?
What is the national sport of Japan?
What is Kabuki?
What do people do at a hanami party?
What is daikon?
What does Hinamatsuri mean in English?
What is ramen?
Why do people throw beans at Setsubun?
What is a kotatsu?
What is shoji?
When do people wear kimono?
What do people do at Christmas time in Japan?
What kind of food is served at yakitori?
Should I take a gift to the host of the party?
IMITATE THE PICTURE/PHOTO

DESCRIPTION:
Split the students into teams. Choose the appropriate number of students from one of the teams as are in the picture, and send them to the front of the room. Then show the picture to the remaining students on the team and have them give instructions to the students in front so that the students in front are in the same pose as the picture. Do not allow the advising students to describe or show the picture to the rest of the students, or to go to the front and touch or move the posing students. Just have them advise the students in front how to pose. Give prizes to teams for closest pose; can be quite humorous when students learn photo is of animals!

MATERIALS:
Photos of a group of people or animals from a magazine.

WHO AM I?

DESCRIPTION:
Students are given 20 questions to guess who the person you are thinking of is. They can either ask YES/NO questions or more specific questions, such as “What colour hair do you have?” or “What country are you from?” Famous leaders, movie stars, pop idols, athletes, classmates, etc. are appropriate.

OPTIONS:
You can have the students take turns at being “someone”, or have them play in small groups taking turns at being the star.

REMARKS:
Make this more exciting by really acting your part!

VARIATION:
Divide the class into two teams and assign each a name. First tell the kids that you will give them hints about a person, place, or things. If they can guess “who I am” after the first hint, award their team five points. If they cannot guess, give the second hint, which is worth four points etc. Here are a few to give you a good start. You can think of some more of your own.

MICKEY MOUSE
1. My girlfriend’s name is Minnie.
2. I live in Disneyland.
3. Donald Duck is my friend.
4. I have big, round ears.

SANTA CLAUS
1. I am a fat man with a white beard.
2. I am very busy at Christmas time.
3. I wear a red suit.
4. I have nine reindeer.

THE OLYMPICS
1. I am an event that started in Greece.
2. In Japan, I was in Tokyo, Sapporo and Nagano and my symbol is 5 rings.
3. People from all over the world come to me.
4. I have a summer and winter part.

ICE CREAM
1. I am a food that you lick.
2. Eat me fast, or I will melt.
3. I am soft and cold.
4. I come in vanilla and chocolate flavours.
WHAT’S IN THE BAG?

DESCRIPTION:
Put several objects in a bag (coin, ball, pencil, etc.) and have the students ask you Yes/No questions to determine what the object is (have one object in mind per set of questions). For junior high, write and practice appropriate sentence patterns. These patterns often parallel the grammar in their textbook and teach them how to narrow down the choices with their questions, e.g. “Yes, it is a coin, what KIND of coin is it?”

Another way you can play this game: put the objects out on a desk and go over the names of each. Put them back in the bag and then have one student come to the front and choose an object from the bag (only you and the student know which object). Have the class ask questions to find out which object was chosen. Prepare cards with the kind of questions they should ask, e.g. What colour is it?

OPTIONS:
What shape is it? Can you eat it? Use the cards as “cue cards”.
Here are questions that high school students could use:
• Tell me about ____.
• Is it ____? (small, heavy, etc.)
• Is it bigger than a ____?
• Is it made of ____? (wood, paper, etc.)
• Is it smaller than a ____?

MATERIALS:
Objects, bag, cue cards.

REMARKS:
Good game. Works with many different levels and types of students.
Writing Activities

**DRAW A PICTURE/ WRITE A STORY**

**DESCRIPTION:**
Draw a humorous picture on the board (or have a student draw one). Each row of students is one team. Each student, in turn, writes a sentence about the picture and then passes the paper to the student sitting behind him.

Each row must write a story about the picture, (i.e. they must read the sentences written by the previous students and build on them so it is not just a series of unconnected sentences)! The first row to finish wins - also be sure to reward creativity and logical story-lines.

**MATERIALS:**
Blackboard & chalk, or a prepared picture, paper & pencil.

**REMARKS:**
Let all rows finish their stories (set a time limit) and then read them out loud to the whole class. Again, stress the idea of story writing and not just sentences.

**HUMOROUS “GUIDE TO OUR TOWN”**

**DESCRIPTION:**
This activity is creating a brief, not so serious, but accurate account of the history, sightseeing spots, and *meibutsu* (local specialty) of your town in English. Include an easy-to-read map marked with the places described.

Keep it lively and entertaining.

Write about the cafe with the best cheesecake, the new handsome dentist in town with no appointment necessary, the local teen hangout, etc.
ENGLISH BULLETIN BOARD

It is extremely simple to set up an English bulletin board as long as you have a few resources and a bit of time on your hands. With the list of resources given below, you should be able to be on your way in minutes.

First, ask one of your teachers to let you use a space in the school for your bulletin board. It should be somewhere that all students can access and that they are likely to walk past. I was lucky enough to be given one of the doors to the teachers' room - prime real estate!

Then, plan your attack. You can include various sections in your bulletin board.

1. Sections
   • **News** - cut out short articles or interesting pictures from an English newspaper or magazine. If you can get your hands on a copy of kids’ magazine from the U.S., your life will be made a lot easier.
   • **Sports** - cut out pictures of athletes (NBA players are a big hit in my school) and articles from English newspapers or magazines.
   • **Stars** - use newspapers and magazines to make displays about current stars in Japan and abroad. There is at least one English teenybopper magazine in Japan that would do the trick here.
   • **Fashion** - use fashion magazines to show different fashions in your home country and Japan.
   • **Discover a New World** - make up interesting units on different (perhaps English-speaking) countries around the world (see the section on home country organisations later in this book).
   • **Comics** - display comic strips or comic book excerpts from your home country.
   • **Special Guest** - make a display about one of your fellow ALTs. If possible, arrange for that ALT to visit your school at some point.
   • **What’s Cooking** - post easy recipes from your home country or elsewhere.
   • **Student’s Corner** - display students’ work.
   • **Activities** - use some of the resources listed below or later in this book to help you create new and interesting activities once a week (or whenever you visit a particular school), once a month, or once a year. The activities can be based on a theme (e.g. holidays), or a grammar point, or they can be completely random (my choice). I use large envelopes cut in half and taped to the wall to hold the activity sheets.
   Give the students stamps or seals or something to motivate them to do the activities. One idea could be to give the students stamps from the ALT’s country which they paste onto their English class “passports”.

Here are some ideas for activities you can include. Samples of many of the following activities are available through this *Teaching Materials Collection*:

- Crossword Puzzles
- Word Search Puzzles
- Correction Exercises
- Analogies Games
- English Test Preparation Activities
- Fill in the Blank Quizzes *(correct form of word)*
- Multiple Choice Quizzes *(definitions)*
- Creative Writing Exercises *(using comics, for example)*
- Matching Games *(opposites, translations)*
- True or False Quizzes
- Holiday Activities
- Follow the Numbers Pictures
- Scrambled Words
- Hidden Pictures Games
- Categories Game
- Break-the-Code Games

• **Understanding Each Other** - put all of those culture books that you bought before you came over to good use. Write or photocopy a short passage each week that will help explain the differences between your culture and the Japanese culture.
• **Let's Enjoy Casual English** - find an *Eikaiwa* (English Conversation) book in your local bookstore. Then photocopy a page and cut and paste to separate the English phrase from the Japanese translation. This can be applied to an activity (stamps, or whatever) or just a display (my choice).

• **Translation** - give the students a word, *kanji*, sentence, paragraph, story, etc. to translate.

• **My Country** - use pictures and tourist books from home to explain about your home country. Compare your home country to Japan.

2. **Resources**

Before you even suggest that you want the space, you should make sure that you have enough stuff to stick up there. Here is a list of resources:

• **Newspapers** - (for News section)

• **Magazines** - (for the News, Sports, Stars, or Fashion sections) Try to find a magazine with lots of pop stars and movie stars that the students will know.

• **Picture Books** - (for decoration) Ask any Japanese teacher if one of the teachers in the school has a book that just contains pictures. Someone will have one. This book will aid in making both your bulletin board display and your activities look fun.

• **Stuff** left behind by the former ALT in your town. The former ALT in my town left behind a pile of English teaching materials in my apartment.
EXPRESSIVE READING

Read the following sentence. Place the accent or stress on a different word each time you read it.

How does the meaning of the sentence change with emphasis in different places?

• THIS is a book.
• This IS a book.
• This is A book.
• This is a BOOK.

First read each statement without expression. Then read each one with the appropriate feeling.

• What a wonderful sunset!
• Watch out, Jack! It's hot!
• I'm bored and sleepy.
• What do you want? I'm busy now.
• He’s terrible! I hate him.
• I've just heard about your brother's death. I'm very sorry.

Read the sentence expressing different emotions such as: happiness, jealousy, boredom, anger, disappointment, shock.

• You're very pretty.

How would you say the word “rain” in the following situations:

• You're walking without an umbrella.
• After a month-long drought.
• The weather forecast has failed again.
• It's been rainy for a whole week.
• You have to cancel your picnic.

How would you say the word “soba” in the following situations:

• You haven’t eaten all day.
• You’ve had soba everyday for a week.
• You’re on a diet.
• You have just eaten.
• You have never had soba before.

You hear a noise. How would you say “What’s that?” if you were the following:

• A big, burly policeman.
• A woman who’s had trouble with a peeping Tom.
• A child at the zoo looking at a new animal.
• A jealous wife looking at a blonde hair on her husband’s shirt.
MAKING VIDEOS

• Prepare the script. You can use your own ideas and/or reference book materials.
• Compile materials for the video using magazine pictures, advertisements, family pictures, books, cards, CDs (for soundtrack use), any other appropriate materials.
• The actual production of the video is not very difficult, unless no one in your school has any idea how to work the machines. In that case, perhaps the best thing to do is to encourage the teachers to have a representative of the company who made the machines come to the school and explain them. Emphasise that videos can be a very effective language teaching tool and can make the classes more interesting.
• Film the materials first in the order that they appear in the script. Then tape the script as you watch the previously taped materials. There is usually one teacher who handles the video equipment, and you can edit the soundtrack together and add any additional music, titles, etc.

One term, over a period of six weeks, a group of English Club members got together once a week with the aim of compiling fifteen minutes of “fun” viewing. The result was an amalgam of several items; a five minute mock newscast about school events, spiced up with NHK news jingles and synchronised bows; a five minute interview with one of the English teachers about his university days and, finally, a pop video.

By making listening comprehension checks, you can use the video in the classroom. One ALT commented that such use of video had an interesting side-effect on his first year students: not only were they lining up to appear in the next video, they also seemed to take it for granted that it was well within their ability to speak English into a video camera. It would appear that seeing other students speak English in the video made the students much more confident and less self-conscious.

USING REALIA

Realia means real stuff. Real stuff is great; it keeps the students engaged, it makes your lessons more vibrant and interesting as well as easier for the students to grasp, and you can use real stuff to illustrate things like cultural background in new ways. Bringing objects into the classroom is one of the best ways to motivate your students. A mysterious looking bag seen at the start of the class will help set the atmosphere. Bring in items yourself, ask the students or teachers to bring things in, or dig around the school. Perhaps the drama club or the other departments have interesting things for you to “liberate”.

• Make sure that the objects, whether pictures or parrots, are large enough to be seen by students sitting at the back of the room.
• If you are intending to use the articles in a role play, make sure they are not easily broken. If they are of sentimental value, it would be better to keep the items for “eyes only”.
• When using posters of pop stars, check beforehand that the students know who you are talking about. You will soon see a generation gap when you receive blank looks after holding up a picture of The Beatles.

Some suggestions for items that have worked include: different types of food, blindfold, pictures of well-known pop stars, TV characters for “Who is it?”, noses, ears of the above for “Whose is it?”, large stuffed toys, telephones, all sorts of omiyage for show and tell, a plastic microphone for interview games, singing, etc., different hats, glasses, clothes, etc. to distinguish characters in role play. The best things are the totally freaky and weird. Remember the rule “Provoke a reaction, grab their attention, focus their energy.”
INTRODUCTION: SONG AND MUSIC TECHNIQUES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING

Teaching songs to younger children and to older students requires different techniques. Please see the “English in Elementary Schools” section for further ideas on teaching songs to younger children.

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NB: Ss - students; T - teacher; IPA - International Phonetic Alphabet.

DRAWING DICTATION:
Before the Ss listen, T dictates a scene from a song. Example: “I Left My Heart in San Francisco”: “Draw a home. Draw a cable car…” Discussion of the drawing leads to the introduction of the song or provides the transition from the song to the next activity.

PRONUNCIATION:
Receptive and Expressive: T first plays a song, Ss listen. Then T passes out text of song (can include IPA transcription for especially difficult parts). Ss listen, follow song with IPA and text. Ss then read the song. T responds by articulating the lines as the singer does. Ss attempt to match articulation.

FILL IN THE GRID:
Ss listen for specific information: times, actions, etc.

SINGING PERIOD:
Use a twice-weekly singing period to review vocabulary and to help Ss internalise the song(s).

TEACHING (getting) STUDENTS TO SING:
The best way is to sing yourself. Sing the song over and over if necessary. Do not criticise the Ss, just wait until they work up their courage. In some classes, a toy karaoke microphone will lighten the mood, making it “safe” for them to sing. If the eye contact with other students is intimidating and if your room has windows, have Ss face the windows, singing to the buildings across the street, etc. Soon they will loosen up and turn around.

DRILL 1: Give alternatives for lyrics (like a multiple choice item); only one choice is grammatically correct. Ss choose which is correct either before or during listening.

DRILL 2: Give alternatives for lyrics, all of which are grammatical and meaningful. Ss identify the item used in the song.

DRAW A PICTURE: After or while listening, Ss draw a picture that is inspired by the song. They then discuss the pictures. This works especially well with instrumental music.

SONG SURVEY: Ss poll their classmates to find the favourites. Make comparisons within the class and with other classes.

CATEGORIES: Ss brainstorm 20 or more songs, then in small groups decide on categories for them. Groups compare categorisation (e.g., solo/duet/group; happy/sad; etc.)

COUNT THE WORDS: For a simple listening exercise, have the students count how many times they hear a particular word.

PARTS OF SPEECH 1: For words that can be used as different parts of speech, Ss count the number of time they are used as nouns, as verbs, etc.

PARTS OF SPEECH 2: “Cloze” a particular part of speech that is being studied. Ss either listen and fill in the cloze or work together before listening trying to predict what will go in the blank. They listen to check.
BINGO

There was a farmer who had a dog,  
And Bingo was his name—oh!  
B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O, B-I-N-G-O  
And Bingo was his name—Oh!

There was a farmer who had a dog,  
And Bingo was his name—oh!  
And Bingo was his name—Oh!

(Repeat 4 more times, each time leaving out one more letter of the name and replacing it with a clap.)

HEAD AND SHOULDERS

Head, shoulders, knees, and toes  
Knees and toes  
Head, shoulders, knees, and toes  
Knees and toes  
And eyes, and ears, and mouth, and nose  
Head, shoulders, knees, and toes  
Knees and toes

(Repeat several times, each time omitting a body part and replacing it with a hum until you are humming the entire song.)

HOKEY POKEY

Put your (right hand) in  
Take your (right hand) out  
Put your (right hand) in  
And shake it all about.  
You do the Hokey Pokey  
And you turn yourself around,  
That’s what it’s all about.

(Also: use foot, head, hip, whole body, etc…)

IF YOU’RE HAPPY

If you’re happy and you know it clap your hands (clap, clap)
If you’re happy and you know it clap your hands (clap, clap)
If you’re happy and you know it, Then you really want to show it!
If you’re happy and you know it clap your hands (clap, clap)
If you’re happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp, stomp)
If you’re happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp, stomp)
If you’re happy and you know it, Then you really want to show it.
If you’re happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp, stomp).
If you’re happy and you know it, shout “hooray” (“hooray”)
If you’re happy and you know it, shout “hooray” (“hooray”)
If you’re happy and you know it, Then you really want to show it.
If you’re happy and you know it, shout “hooray” (“hooray”)
If you’re happy and you know it, do all three (clap, clap, stomp, stomp, “hooray”)
If you’re happy and you know it, do all three (clap, clap, stomp, stomp, “hooray”)
If you’re happy and you know it, Then you really want to show it.
If you’re happy and you know it, do all three (clap, clap, stomp, stomp, “hooray”)

Also try:
Hungry - Rub your tummy (rub-rub)
Sad - Cry Boo-hoo (boo-hoo)
Scared - Run and hide (oh-no)
Tired - Go to bed (snore)
Hot - Wipe your head (it’s hot)
Silly - Run around (woo-hoo)

1 This line is also often sung as, “Then your face will surely show it”

OLD MACDONALD

Old MacDonald had a farm, E-I-E-I-O
And on this farm he had a cow, E-I-E-I-O
With a moo, moo here, and moo, moo there
Here a moo, there a moo, everywhere a moo, moo
Old MacDonald had a cow, E-I-E-I-O

(Replace animals and sounds: cat/meow, dog/bow wow, etc.)

ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT

Row, row, row your boat
Gently down the stream
Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily
Life is but a dream.
THE UNIVERSALITY OF MUSIC

Japanese-  *Ue o muite aruko* by Kyu Sakamoto  American version-  *Sukiyaki* by 4 P.M.

Background on song and singer- “*Ue o muite aruko*” is a song loved by many Japanese people. The singer of this song, Kyu Sakamoto, was tragically killed in a plane accident several years ago. Most students will be familiar with this song. Many students will be pleasantly surprised to learn that there is an English version of this song that was popular in the United States.

Activity Idea- Play the song “*Ue o muite aruko*.”
1. Ask the students if they know the song and whether or not they like it.
2. Ask them if they are familiar with the singer.
3. Tell them that there is an American song called “*Sukiyaki*” based on “*Ue o muite aruko*” that was very popular in the United States, especially in the 1980s.
4. Play the song “*Ue o muite aruko*”, then “*Sukiyaki*” for the students once.
5. Then, pass out handout with the words. Instruct the students to listen to the song again carefully and to select the correct words.

*SUKIYAKI* performed by 4 P.M.

It’s all because of you/who
I’m feeling bad/sad and blue/flu
You went away and now my life is just a rainy day
I love you so how much you’ll never know/show
You’ve gone away and left me only/lonely

Untouchable memories seem to keep haunting/holding me
Of a love so true/blue
That once turned all my gray skies blue/true
But you disappeared and now my eyes are filled with tears/years
And I’m wishing you were here with me

Soaked in love are my thoughts of you
Now that you are born/gone
I just don’t know what to do

*If only you were here you’d wash away my tears
The sun would mine/shine and once again you’ll be mine
All mine/fine
But in reality you and I will never be ‘cause you took your love/life away of/from me

*Repeat

Ah Baby you took your love away from me

SCORE:
__/15
Adult Classes

INTRODUCTION

Challenges
Expanding the cultural horizons of adults is potentially more challenging than doing the same thing with children. However, you probably will not face as many linguistic barriers - the adults you work with will probably have better English and Japanese skills than the children you teach. The difficulties come in trying to overcome a lifetime of influences, most of which stress how different all other ethnicities, languages and cultures are from Japanese. From Godzilla movies, to documentaries and game shows on life overseas; from the standard practice of using manga cartoon voices for the voiceover of foreign movies, to television performers’ usual hyperaccentuation of Japanese when imitating non-Japanese, adults may have imbibed decades of assurance that “foreigners” are unfathomable, and that Japanese culture, language and thought itself is inscrutable to all but the Japanese.

Patience, creativity and a sense of humour will help you greatly when you begin countering these several decades of influence with your two or three decades of what life has taught you about our common humanity. In the analogy of planting the seeds of cross-cultural education, you may only be “soaking the seed” to make it easier to germinate. Your successor may only help the seed to develop roots. It may not be until several generations of JET participants later that the first shoots appear above ground. It will serve you best to realise that some people may seem as hard-hearted at the end of your tenure as they do at the beginning, but you should not underestimate your contribution.

Of course, not all Japanese have been as influenced. Some are naturally more culturally aware than you are. And there will almost certainly be success stories - a housewife whose house is now the first home a foreign resident is invited to in town, a kaisho (department chief) whose complaints about yokumoji (horizontal/roman characters) grow infrequent after he develops a deep friendship with someone from his community’s sister city, etc. Let these successes carry you on the days you feel the challenge is overwhelming. The activities which follow are a compilation of cross-cultural activities, some tailored to an adult audience, some for children, many applicable to both.
Activities

GETTING STARTED

Warm-ups
Always do at least one warm-up, even if the participants know each other. If necessary, do several. Things like your own self-introduction and splitting participants into groups can be done as warm-up games. Warm-ups serve three purposes:

1. Getting participants to relax, get to know each other, and be prepared to work in pairs or as a group.
2. Getting participants into an active frame of mind.
3. Introducing the topic, getting participants to start thinking about the issues.

Reluctant Organisers
If you have been asked to do a speech, the organiser might be uneasy that you’re going to do a game instead. You can reassure them with a combination of:

1. Explaining the purpose of the activity, and stressing that it is educational.
2. Making it clear that you will be conducting a discussion afterwards based on the game (and that you’re giving a talk after, if you are).
3. Telling them about other occasions when you have done activities like this, i.e. there is a precedent.
4. Telling them this is often done in your home country - after all, they probably invited you in order to promote “internationalization”.

Reluctant Participants
If the participants are expecting a speech they, too, may be resistant to the idea of a game. Tell them you know it may seem unusual, but explain the objectives and also 1. to 4. above. Participants may be nervous about being put on the spot or looking silly. Arrange the activities so that this won’t happen, and reassure them about it - tell them that you’re not a cruel person! If English isn’t involved, make this clear right at the start.

Most people really enjoy doing the games once they give them a try, especially if you do lots of warm-ups to relax them. If it is a kenshu (work training), make the warm-ups as “serious” as possible and include questions related to the workplace or to them. For example, rather than doing an animal noises game to divide people into groups, you could use statistics for women in government (see the warm-ups section).

WARM-UP IDEAS

Your own self-introduction
You can do this in quiz form, e.g. a multiple choice quiz that’s handed to participants as they enter. As well as questions about yourself, your job and other necessary self-intro information, you can include questions about your country and a couple of general questions to introduce the day’s theme. If doing multiple choice, you can make the “incorrect” choices to actual answers for other countries, including Japan.

FORMING PAIRS
Matching Halves. Each person gets half of something and has to make a pair by finding the person with the other half. The something could be a proverb from your home country translated into Japanese, a map, a word, an environmental problem and the name of the country which is the biggest creator of that problem, etc.

String Pairing. However many pairs are necessary, have that number of pieces of string. Hold them in your hand so the ends are sticking out and have participants take an end each. Let go. They pair with the person holding the other end of their string.

FORMING GROUPS - Cards
Give each person a card with the name of an animal. They cannot talk, but must imitate the animal
with noises or actions and find other people with the same animal.

**FORMING GROUPS - Divide and Regather**

As above, but split each thing into several parts and people have to make groups. 2 things which work well:

**For older students, adults: Women in government.**

Using UN statistics, select a number of countries and the percentage of women members of the national government. Give out the country name and the percentages as for animal noise. First people join up with the same country or percentage, then they try to make groups by matching themselves up.

**PARTICIPANTS’ SELF-INTRODUCTIONS**

If participants do not know each other well, as might be the case at an English camp or similar activity, one or more of the following is essential before you do an activity. Examples are:

**Introduction Bingo (entire group)** - Make up bingo cards with something in each box like “Has been to karaoke in the last seven days”, “Can say Thank You in Chinese”, “Has a female kaibo (section chief) or kakaricho (section head) in their office”. Everyone has to find someone who fits the category, then write their name in the box - each person’s name can go on a card only once. Have a card yourself and join in.

**Introduction “Taikai” (entire group)** - Tell everyone to stand and introduce themselves to as many people as possible. Stop them after a minute or two and ask them to see how far they are from their original seat. Most will be quite close to their “own space”. This is useful if you want to encourage them to move around and mix a lot during the next activity - otherwise they probably won’t be aware of how little they move about.

**Questionnaire (groups)** - Give each group a questionnaire to complete, asking how many people in the group live in X City, how many can make tempura, how many have the character “山” in their name, etc. The point is to get them to talk amongst themselves, but some kind of report back is necessary, for example with the questions down one side and “Group A”, “Group B”, etc. written across the top. You can include a couple of multiple choice questions that the group has to reach consensus on - e.g. the most useful second language to have in the 21st Century will be a) English, b) Chinese, c) Spanish, etc.

**Interview (groups)** - In pairs, participants “interview” each other about their workplace, hobbies, what they like most about their job, etc. Then each person introduces their partner to the group.

**Meishi (pairs, small groups)** - Each person makes an A4 size meishi (business card - see example below). Then, each person introduces themselves to their partner or other group members using the meishi as a guide. One of the items could be something to introduce you to them, e.g. “give one example of how you think Japan has become more international in recent years”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Hobbies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Hobbies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td>Draw a picture that represents you in some way - a self-portrait, a food you like, anything!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What you like most about your job</td>
<td>Person you most admire</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NAME MEMORISING ACTIVITIES

Name badge hiding - Get them to do the usual go-round-and-do-a-self-introduction activity. After they have finished, get them to cover their name badges with their hands, then recall as much as they can of their group members’ names and other details. Most won’t remember more than a couple. Go on to other self-introduction activities, and everyone will really pay attention.

Catch - Give each group a ball or something they can throw and catch. First the person holding the ball throws it to someone else and they say their own name. The catcher then throws it on to another person, saying their own name. After a bit, change - the thrower has to say the name of the person they’re throwing to.

Introduction Snowball - The first person says their name plus a piece of information (e.g. what they’re planning to do this weekend, their favourite food etc.). The second person repeats the first person’s name and information, then adds their own. The third person repeats the first and second person’s information, and so on. When you have gone once round the circle, make the first three people repeat everyone’s information again.

SHORT ACTIVITIES (15-30 MINUTES)

Get to Know a Potato
Take along or arrange to have a big box of potatoes in the room - at least one potato per participant. Get participants in pairs, and ask each person to choose a potato. Give them a few minutes to get to know their potato and try to imagine its history (it comes from Hokkaido, from a small family farm, etc.), how it got all its marks, what its future might be. Each person tells their partner their potato’s “story” and why they picked out that particular potato. Then all the potatoes are returned to the box. Mix them up a bit so the last ones aren’t still on top. Then tell everyone to come back and pick the same potato out of the box again. Most people will protest that it is impossible, but everyone will probably be able to do it when they try. This leads to discussion about individuality, everyone not being the same even though they may appear so at first sight, cultural stereotypes (including cultural stereotypes about Japanese people in your home country), how hard it is to generalise and say that people in your home country are X or do Y or think Z.

Hidden Agenda Bingo
Do this at the end of the self-introduction warm-up games, so people will think it is the same kind of thing. Give out Introduction Bingo sheets and explain the game. With some of the sheets have a slip of paper with a secret instruction telling the person to behave in a particular way throughout the game, e.g. to interrupt other people who are talking, or to stand extremely close to whoever they talk to. Play the game, then ask everyone how they felt about the “unusual” behaviour. This then leads to discussion about cultural differences, how something that’s rude in one culture might not be in another, how it is harder to deal with if you do not expect or understand it, etc.

Proverb “Karuta”
In small groups, each group is given one set of cards. Each card has half a proverb so they can be paired up to make about seven different sayings. The first halves are one colour and the second halves are a different colour. For an English class proverbs can be in English, otherwise translate them into Japanese. Try to make them so that any first half can go with any second half.

At first, the groups have all the cards and have time to think about which halves might go together to make the proverbs. Then they play karuta with only the second halves on the table. The first half of a proverb is read, and they all try to pick up the card with the second half. The person who picked up the correct card first keeps it and the next proverb is read. At the end, the one with the most cards wins.

For feedback and discussion, first check to see if everyone understands the meaning of the proverbs. What cultural values do they represent? Which values are also found in Japan? Are there any corresponding Japanese proverbs? Which values are very different? Are there any proverbs in
DISCUSSIONS

Facts
This activity (original ideas from “Ho-Hum, Interesting Fact, That’s a Problem” and “Good News, Bad News” in the Global Winners book) illustrates several sides to everything. It is good for generating general discussions, e.g. about the environment or globalisation. You need to make sure students have the necessary vocabulary and have practiced making points and agreeing or disagreeing with each other.

Participants are given several pieces of information and have to classify each under one of the following categories: “That’s good”, “That’s neutral”, or “That’s a problem”. Information can be things like: The Soviet Union has ceased to exist; throughout the world life expectancy is increasing; about 40% of women in Sendai (replace with information from your community) work outside the home, etc.

Discussion can be done in pairs or small groups, then feedback to the whole group. One thing which will hopefully come out of the discussion is that whether you think a statement is good or a problem depends on your viewpoint, and that the same piece of information can have both a positive and a negative side. You can reintroduce each statement and reconsider who might think it good and who might think it a problem (for example, an individual, a company, a government, the United Nations).

Using Pictures
In advance, tell participants to bring a picture that somehow represents internationalisation to them. It can be a magazine picture, photograph, drawing or any kind of picture. In pairs, both first look at their partner’s picture and say why they think their partner chose it and what they think it meant to them. Then they both explain their own picture.

Another idea is to take a variety of pictures - adverts and pictures accompanying articles - from Japanese and non-Japanese magazines. Participants look at pictures and discuss what values are represented in the pictures, which are common and which are different.

GLOBAL ISSUES IN THE CLASSROOM - TEACHING FOR A BETTER WORLD

“We need a profound reshaping of education if mankind is to survive. Humanity is facing grave difficulties that can only be solved on a global scale. Education is not moving rapidly enough to provide the knowledge about the outside world and the attitudes towards other people that may be essential for human survival.”

Edwin Reischauer

For the ALT, it is all too easy to perceive the JET Programme as a language teaching programme, and its goals as primarily concerned with grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, conversation and high scores on entrance exams. Wrong. The JET Programme is a unique exchange programme which has aims much wider and more profound than those of the typical language classroom. The JET Programme is about internationalisation - about promoting global awareness, international understanding and effective cross-cultural communication.

One of the most important tasks for educators today is to help students learn about the rich variety of people in our multicultural world, the important world problems that face our planet and the actions needed to solve these. The ALT has a special role to play in this important work. Bringing the world into the classroom involves teaching students about a number of key topics:
Some Common Activities

• **Global issues**: teaching about world problems such as war, poverty, prejudice and pollution, and about global concerns such as AIDS, human rights, world hunger and the environment.

• **Geographic literacy**: teaching about the world’s countries and cultures, and about the diverse peoples that share our global village.

• **World themes**: teaching about international topics such as world customs, world gestures, world food, world flags, world music and world religions.

An exciting new field that can help in this task is global education. Global education aims to promote “the knowledge, attitudes and skills relevant to living responsibly in a multicultural and interdependent world” and consists of efforts to “bring about changes in the content, methods and context of education in order to better prepare students for citizenship in a global age”.

Why consider a global education approach to language teaching given the day-to-day reality of the classroom where teachers face such difficulties as lack of time, examination pressures, low language levels and lack of relevant teaching materials? There are several good reasons:

• The world countries, themes and issues taught in a “global education” classroom appear each night on the TV news - a daily lesson in relevance.

• The topics are inherently interesting, important, and therefore motivating for students.

• For many learners, the foreign language class is a “window on the world” and they expect their language studies to help them be more “international” and become “world citizens”.

• Global awareness and international understanding are educational objectives emphasised by the Ministry of Education in Japan as well as by the United Nations and UNESCO.

• Teaching language in context through a content-based approach with meaningful real-world issues involves students in real communication and leads to increased retention levels.

• Global issues and world topics are particularly appropriate in Oral Communication for speaking and listening activities from show-and-tell to games, quizzes and role plays.

• Global issues lend themselves naturally to the teaching of debate and discussion, and to developing higher level thinking skills that will benefit students in the short and long term.

**GLOBAL ISSUES NEWSLETTER**

To find out more about how language teachers around the world are integrating ideas from global education, peace education, human rights education and environmental education into their teaching, subscribe to the quarterly **Global Issues in Language Education Newsletter** at [http://jalt.org/global](http://jalt.org/global)