# The importance of ESL Games and Activities for Teaching Kids English

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Games and fun activities are a vital part of [**teaching English as a foreign language**](https://www.gooverseas.com/teach-abroad). Whether you’re teaching adults or children, games will liven up your lesson and ensure that your students will leave the classroom wanting more.

Games can be used to warm up the class before your lesson begins, during the lesson to give students a break when you’re tackling a tough subject, or at the end of class when you have a few minutes left to kill. There are literally hundreds, probably thousands, of games that you can play with your students. EFL games are used to test vocabulary, practice conversing, learn tenses - the list is endless.

**Fortunately/unfortunately**

Start the class off with a sentence, for example - 'I lost my wallet at the shops but fortunately ...'. Then point to a student to finish the sentence. Then continue: 'But unfortunately ...' (get the next student to finish that sentence). Continue on around the classroom. Very funny responses - my students were talking about it for a long time after.

**Object Stories**

Collect together a number of objects and place in a canvas bag. The objects can include everyday items i.e. a pencil, key-ring, mobile phone, but also include some more unusual ones i.e. a fossil, holiday photograph, wig! Pass the bag around the group and invite each young person to dip their hand into the bag (without looking) and pull out one of the objects. The leader begins a story which includes his object. After 20 seconds, the next person takes up the story and adds another 20 seconds, incorporating the object they are holding. And so on, until everyone has made a contribution to your epic literary tale.

# Good Morning Warmer

It's a great game activity. It may be used as an ice-breaker or a "getting to know each other" speaking activity. The level in fact depends on you, because you may change the questions. It doesn't require a lot of preparation from you, but gives your students an opportunity to speak without being stressed. My students really loved playing the game.

PREPARATION
- At home prepare some questions or tasks, depending on your students’ level.
In less advanced groups the tasks should be as simple as these:
- smile at a person sitting opposite you,
- shake hands with your neighbors,
- pay a nice compliment to a third person sitting on your right,
- ask a question a second person sitting on your left,
- what is your friend like?,
- what do you do in your free time?,
- what is your favourite book about?,  etc.
In more advanced groups the tasks can be a bit more complicated:
- what was the happiest day of your life?,
- where would you go if you could go anywhere in the world?,
- what would you change if you were the headmaster of our school?,
etc.
Write each question or task on a separate strip of paper and put them all into a basket.
PROCEDURE
Ask your students to sit in a circle. Give them a basket with your questions/tasks, play music (it should be a fast piece of music). While the music is playing, they should be passing the basket to a person sitting on their right (so the basket is “wandering” around the circle). Stop the music – the person who is holding the basket should take one strip of paper and answer the question or do the task.
My students really like playing the game and they have great time learning English, getting to know one another and playing at the same time :)

# Qualities of a Good Student

Start the semester off with a writing assignment on what makes a good student. Have students write in class the first day on this topic. They may brainstorm ideas first with each other and teacher. Or they may do a quick write silently and then share their ideas with peers. Often they’re very surprised when their ideas are similar. The final essay on the topic can be due in a week.

 With this method students are generating ideas at the beginning of term on how to succeed academically while practicing writing skills.

**Create a Time Capsule**

Have students create a sample of their current work -- for example, have students take a pre-test, write a paragraph or even video tape them reading aloud or speaking in a foreign language. Bring the examples out in June and let students recognize how much they’ve grown.