

# ACTIVITY HANDOUT TO THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH TO CHILDREN FROM PRESCHOOL TO SIXTH YEAR IN BASIC EDUCATION

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What is this?

The following handout is a flexible complementary activity material carefully and specially designed to children's English courses. The activities proposed here can be flexibly adaptable to children from preschool to the sixth year basic school. These activities can be used as reinforcement of teaching activities, writing and the always feared grammar of English in an inductive and funny perspective.

The handout purports to fill a gap in the children's teaching area because the materials used are always taken from imported and expensive books and this is different. It has been thought to be implemented thinking in Venezuela's social and educative reality. In these activities there is an emphasis in the use of disposable and recyclable materials. The handout in general has been designed to encourage the teacher to be creative, to enjoy the class planning and performing of the instructional daily activity.

## Theoretical Bases

This handout is based on several approaches according to the needs of the learners such as: The Total Physical Response Approach, the Natural Approach, the Communicative Approach, Piaget's Theory of Learning and the Humanistic Affective Approach among others.

The Total Physical Response proposed by James Asher proposes involving language learners physically when learning a new language.

This approach focuses on natural acquisition strategies. . It makes the task of language learning enjoyable by combining visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning modalities. For example, if children are given commands for physical actions, directions, which they perform, often combined with music, mimic and drama.

Children at this level do not have enough proficiency in the mechanics of writing, but they respond clearly to imperatives given by adults around them.

Stephen Krashen's Natural Language Approach is connected to the theory of Asher. Krashen suggests that there is not anxiety for the child because there is not pressure to produce the new language at the beginning. This approach is always clearly presented and comprehensible to students when teachers use visual media, body language and gestures, whatever way will convey meaning to children.

This approach places less emphasis on teacher monologues, direct repetitions and formal questions and answers and focuses on accurate production of target language sentences.

There is an emphasis on exposure rather practice, optimizing emotional environment for learning a prolonged period of attention to what the language learners hear before they try to produce the language.

Krashen and Terrel (1985) emphasize the primacy of meaning and the importance of vocabulary.

In this sense, acquisition is viewed as the "natural" way, paralleling first language development in children.

Acquisition refers to unconscious processes that involves the naturalistic development of language proficiency through understanding language and through using language for meaningful communication.

Krashen emphasizes the interaction using natural languages. This emphasis to interact is also taken into account in the Humanistic Affective Approach, which organizes classroom interactions and it is also important and valuable for young children. Improving academic achievement encourages better relations among the students. Students become more active, self directed and communicative.

This method also enables students to work in groups depending on their needs, age, likes and other characteristics.

In the same way in the communicative approach students regularly work in groups using language for social interactions with other people to transfer meaning in situations where one person has information that others lack.

Drawing on work by Jean Piaget, he holds that children in elementary schools are usually in what is called the concrete operational stage of cognitive learning.

This means that they learn through hands on experiences through manipulation of objects in the environment. Children in the school settings generally learn by doing.

Some suggestions while monitoring activities with children

- ❖ Be patient, kind and happy. Show pleasure to performing the activity.
- ❖ Be interested in the activity, be involved yourself.
- ❖ Encourage weak children as much as possible.

- ❖ Allow children to speak in their own natural pace.
- ❖ Do make creative activities to stimulate children's imagination.
- ❖ Do use songs and games to reinforce the vocabulary previously learned.  
Play the same songs or jazz chants while children are doing any passive activity. This helps them to learn the lyrics unconsciously.
- ❖ Encourage and challenge children to create their own answers and to develop their own personality.
- ❖ Be careful to avoid that the children become fans of only one activity.
- ❖ Make sure all the children work together.
- ❖ Take advantage of errors and the brilliant child's questions to teach something, it can be something new but not too complex.
- ❖ Be careful to correct mistakes specially at the beginning in order not to make children feel fear of speaking
- ❖ Let the unmotivated child help you with the activity by giving him/her a responsibility, an important role so that he/she can be unconsciously involved in the activity.
- ❖ Leave the last minutes of class to the most dynamic activities. Stop the activity when it is at its most interesting point to keep the children motivated to perform some other one with enthusiasm next time.
- ❖ Special activities must not be just Friday activities but can form part of the teacher's everyday repertoire.

## PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

### 1. DAYS OR MONTHS TRAIN

OBJECTIVE: To reinforce vocabulary.

GROUPING: Small groups. (7 or 12 children)

MATERIALS: Flashcard and a model train.

PROCEDURE: Give each child a flashcard containing a day of the week or a month of the year. Ask

them to stand up and put it into the corresponding cart while the teacher says the day

or the month. (You can also sing a song).

## 2. ALPHABET DOMINOES

OBJECTIVE: To review the alphabet through an association of letters and pictures.

GROUPING: Any combination.

MATERIALS: Handmade dominoes.

PROCEDURE: Hand one dominoe out to each child and ask him/her to match the appropriate letter to

the picture.

## 3. Sarah Doll

OBJECTIVE: To teach vocabulary about clothes or parts of the body.

GROUPING: Any combination.

MATERIALS: Handmade detachable doll and clothes, colors, felt-tip pens, markers and papers.

PROCEDURE: Give each child a piece of cloth or a part of the body. Ask him/her to put it on the doll by

turn. After that, he/she must say the word in English.

#### 4. COLOR HOPSCOTCH

OBJECTIVE: To teach colors.

GROUPING: Any combination.

MATERIALS: Colored chalk, colored paper and sticky tape.

PROCEDURE: The teacher draws a hopscotch diagram on the floor with the colored chalk, or sticks a

different piece of colored paper on each top of the corner. Then

he/she asks the child to

hop on each square saying the color at the same time.

#### 5. TOYS MEMORY

OBJECTIVE: To reinforce or teach toys vocabulary.

GROUPING: Restricted to a small group.

MATERIALS: Hand made flashcards

PROCEDURE: Ask the child to call out two numbers in order to match a pair.

Give each a paper counter

for each matched pair. (Whatever counter the teacher prefers).

#### 1. THE MARKET

OBJECTIVE: To teach food and drink vocabulary and some structures.

GROUPING: Small groups. (5 to 6 children)

MATERIALS: Disposable containers, magazines, newspapers, scissors, colors and glue.

PROCEDURE: Ask the children to bring all the disposable materials the teacher has indicated

beforehand. Tell them to make groups of five or six giving them the category to work

with. Give them instructions on how to cut the letters and form the words that are written

on the blackboard or on a piece of paper. Tell them to paste each word on the

corresponding container. Then teach them structures such as:

CAN I HAVE....? YES,

SURE. HOW MUCH IS IT? IT'S..... Motivate them to perform short dialogues.

## 2. PUPPETS

The advantage of using puppets is that the child identifies with them and is able to speak without feeling shy or insecure, because the necessity of the puppet to come alive through his/her voice dissipates the child's fear of being ridiculous.

### a. FINGER PUPPETS:

Nº 1. PROCEDURE: Draw a face or faces on the finger nail(s) with a felt pen. (Figure 1).

Nº 2. PROCEDURE: (with a match box) Just simply push the drawer out of the matchbox and draw a face on the upper surface. Put two fingers through the drawer sleeve. (Figure 2)

#### b. HAND PUPPETS:

Nº 1. PROCEDURE: Children clench their fist and tuck their thumbs in, with lipstick or pen they paint lips around the thumbs and index finger area. Eyes are drawn above the knuckle of the index finger. (Figure 3)

Nº 2. PROCEDURE: Draw a face on the palm of the hand with a ballpoint pen or eyebrow pencil - make sure one eye is on the fold of the palm to make it wink-. (Figure 4)

Nº 3. PROCEDURE: Color the back of your hand. Coloring the tips of the first two fingers provides shoes for the puppet. Cloth of paper can be folded and attached with scotch tape. Band of paper can be attached to cover the wrists. (Figure 5)

Nº 4. PROCEDURE: (With a brown paper bag) Simply cut two holes for the eyes one for the nose and mouth. Decorate it. Act out a story.

(Figure 6)

Nº 5. PAPER SACK PUPPET: PROCEDURE: Fill a paper sack with torn-up newspaper. Put a stick in the bag with some of it left out for a handle. Tie a string around the neck of the sack. Make it tight. Add a face with cut paper, string, buttons, cloth, or anything you have to decorate the puppet. (Figure 7)

Nº 6. ICE CREAM STICK PUPPET: PROCEDURE: (With icecream sticks) Make heads out of cardboard and decorate the faces with paint, colos, paper and other things. Then glue or tie the face to the icecream stick. (Figure 8)

Nº 7. PAPER FORTUNE TELLER: PROCEDURE: A piece of paper is folded in halves and creased both horizontally and vertically, then opened to lie flat as in diagram A. Fold all corners to the center as in diagram B. Use the creased folds as guides. Turn the paper over. Fold all the corners to the center again. Using both hands, inset the thumb, index and middle fingers under the flaps. The puppet head is now ready for decorating as in diagram C.

In summary, It is wished that these activities can serve as a strategy planning motivation, reflection and enrichment for the children's English class.

The activities have been based on the belief that they can help the teacher to have more effective and creative in their daily teaching planning.

Today, you have in your hand the result of a teaching experience. The activities can be adapted and enriched for use in the children's English class according to the students' needs, their class contexts their own learning realities.