

A Web of Friends

Encourage cooperation among the students in your class with this quick activity that only takes a ball of yarn or string! Have students sit in a circle and give the ball of yarn or string to one student. Ask that student to hold the end of the string and toss it to another student in the circle. Then ask that student to hold the string and toss the ball to another. Continue until all students have had the chance to hold the string and pass it to another classmate. Then ask students to undo the web in the same order as it was made. As the ball is thrown back and forth, the string will be rolled back up and it will be ready to use again!

Anne Bosarge, Georgia Learning Connections

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Don't be Foiled!

Have small squares of tin foil precut for times when you need a quick activity to fill a few minutes. Students will enjoy making these quick and easy foil creations. Distribute a foil square to students and ask them to use it to create a figure from it. Encourage them to get creative and make an animal, person, or another object. Allow students to share their creations. This will be one time-filler that they'll want the chance to do over and over again!

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Literature Hangman

Use the traditional game of hangman to get students to identify titles of books that you've read throughout the year and recall some of the details from the story. Draw a hangman's noose on the board and enough blanks for each letter in the story title. Ask students to guess a letter in the title. If they get it right, put the letter in the appropriate blank and allow students to guess again. If they get it wrong, draw a part of a body on the hangman's noose. After students have identified the title of the book, ask them to recall five details about that story/book.

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Over, Under; Left, Right

As you wait in line, don't let students' behavior get out of hand. Play this quick and easy game that will keep students busy while waiting. Ask students to stand in a straight line. Take something that you have on hand (a student jacket, shoe, hat, sunglasses, notebook, etc.) and ask students to pass it from the front to the back and to the front again. Give the object to the first person in line and ask him to pass it over his head to the next person in the line. Ask the second person to pass it under (between his legs) to the next person in line and have them continue to pass the object over and under until it gets to the end of the line. Then ask students to begin to pass the object forward again in the same manner. If you still have more time to spare, continue the game by passing it to the left and right the next time.

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Shadow Directions

1. Stack the problem cards face up in the center of the team.
2. The Leader calls out the first problem.
3. Everyone solves the first problem on his or her own chalkboard without talking. (Place boards face down when finished.)
4. The Leader says "Showdown!"
5. Everyone shows their answer.
6. Discuss your answers.
7. The Leader turns over the card to check the correct answer.
8. Rotate Leaders for each round.

Developed by Laura Candler (Teaching Resources at <http://home.att.net/~teaching>)

Spelling in Code

Review spelling words before a quiz or test with this quick and easy time filler. Display a code on a piece of chart paper. One suggestion for a code to use is to write the letters of the alphabet on the chart

and assign a number to each letter. Display the code in the front of the room in a place that is visible for all students. Then ask students to use the code to write five to ten spelling words on a piece of paper. If time allows, ask them to exchange papers with a partner and have their partners use the code to decode the words and make sure that they are spelled correctly.

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You vs. Me

Create a little friendly competition in your classroom with this easy listening activity. Write the words "You" and "Me" on the board. Tell students that you are going to have a little competition to see who how well they can listen. Explain that for every right answer, you'll give students a point and for every incorrect answer, you'll get the point. Tell them that you'll also get a point every time someone talks and that sometimes you'll trick them into talking to get a point. Read a short passage from a story or novel and then ask students questions based on the passage. If the score gets too imbalanced and students are winning, try to trick students into talking by putting down the book and asking a question such as, "Tommy, what do you think about the weather today?" Students will enjoy practicing this listening game over and over again!

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Looking for Letters

Have students compete to find objects in your classroom that begin with certain letters of the alphabet. Tell students that you will give them 5 minutes to find as many objects as they can in the classroom that begin with the letters of the alphabet. Have them write down the letters on their paper and the name of the object next to the letter. Then divide the class into boys and girls. Create two charts: one for boys and one for girls. List their responses on the chart and see which group found more examples, the boys or the girls.

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Problem Solving

Display a number of items, such as a rope, an over-sized pencil, an eyelash curler, a CD, a newspaper advertisement, a straw, and so on. Explain to students that they are archaeologists investigating a lost city. Ask them to describe the lives of the people who might have used the items. Encourage the children like to play games, although they don't like games which they know they are learning from. This is a good memory game, which also improves self-esteem.

I LIKE TO.....

First you tell the children to sit in a circle and hold hands. You, the teacher, starts the game. First you explain what they need to do... pick something they love to do. It could be singing, dancing, playing with toys etc.

You tell them what you like to do, for example: I like to cook.

After you have said this, you squeeze the hand of one of the children sitting next to you. This means that this child has to say what you like to do, then what they like to do.

For example: Mr / Mrs... likes to cook, I like to dance

After that, they squeeze the hand of the child next to them. This child says what the teacher, the other child, and what they like to do.

For example: Mr / Mrs... likes to cook, Sarah likes to dance, I like to play computer games...

You do this until you have gone around the whole class, or until someone forgets part of the sequence. If someone does make a mistake, that child could be "out", or you could just start again, from a different part of the circle.

This fun game shows that it is ok to like what you do. It also recognises that there are other people in the world and they can like what they like.

- m to consider unusual uses for the common items.

Heads UP

Two children are chosen to stand up and all the others put their heads down on their desks with their eyes closed and thumbs sticking up. The two left standing must then creep around the desks and gently touch one person each on the thumb. Everyone is then told to open their eyes and the children who were touched stand up and try to guess which child touched them. If they get it right the children swap places if not the children have another go. This game is good to use for settling a class down after a busy day and it improves their listening skills.

SHIPS

Use a name and 2 items to bring with you on a desert island.....the things must start with the letters in your name. For example:

Student: (Autumn McKinney): May I Bring an Apple and Music!

Teacher: Yes you may

I am thinking....

When standing in line or waiting play a thinking game. One person starts and describes what they are thinking and the other guesses then it is their turn to think.

Wink Murder

Students sit in a circle on the carpet and you choose a detective. The detective goes outside whilst you choose the murderer. When the murderer winks at you, you must play dead.

The detective then must try and catch the murderer. Another element my class likes to add is 'dramatic death' where they are allowed to act.

You can add other dimensions such as - more detectives, more murderers.

Post Office Box Dice

Submitted by: *I Love That Teaching Idea!* Staff

From: Nibley, Utah

Date Submitted: March 17, 2001

Go to your local post office and obtain two square postal boxes. Tape each box together. Now add the markings on each side of the box to resemble dice. For a fun twist, instead of using dots, try cutting out apples or different shapes. Or maybe you'll want to put flowers or bugs on them. Once your dice are completed, the possibilities of using them are endless! Some ideas include: using them in game reviews, using them in cooperative learning groups, using them for math games, or using them to give out rewards when a certain # is rolled. Your students can even think of new ways to use your fun, over-sized dice!

Brainteaser

I have found a lifesaver for when I sub in grades 3-6! I have a box full of fun brainteasers and challenges (worksheets) that are glued and contact papered on one half of a file folder. When a student is finished with his/her work, he/she shows me and I allow them to pick a "Challenge" and an overhead marker to write with. When they are done with it, they wet a Kleenex, wipe it off and pick a new one! They work hard to stay quiet and finish their work in order to pick a challenge to work on. They love the challenges. I find the challenges in jumbo puzzle books or from brainteaser books (cheap!). My classes have often told me how much they love them and ask me if I'll leave them there! -- - *Submitted 2004-01-01*

SPARKLE

What about Sparkle? Sparkle --> This is great for practicing spelling words... The class needs to be standing up in a circle. The teacher gives a word (let's say, smile). Then picks a person to start the circle. The first person say's "S", the next person in the circle says "M", the next says "I", the next says "L", the next says "E", and the next says "Sparkle" and sits down (They are out). Then the teacher gives the next person a word and they start spelling it as above. This goes on until there is only one person left, that person is the winner. Now it is important to note that if a person says the wrong letter they must sit down and the person next to them must start where they left off. So you are out if you misspell or have to say sparkle. I am not a substitute, just a student teacher. But, I used this often when my cooperating teacher had me take the kids after recess for a few minuets. They loved it and it kept them out of trouble. I learned this from another teacher - I know it is a common game! -- - *Submitted 2004-01-01*

CHAIN STORIES

A great way doing creative writing painlessly is continuing chain stories. If you have access to the Internet, you can find the beginnings of stories on <http://www.beaumont-publishing.com/efl/chainstories.htm> I have found that it is a tremendous motivation for students to be able to continue stories using their imagination and that their efforts will be published on the web. And the fact that they can add a part to any version you want, not necessarily to the last part, means that they have the power to change the way a story is going if they don't like what has been added previously. You don't have to be online to do these. It's enough to get online, print out the stories and have the students work on their versions in class. They can do this individually or can work in groups, with you giving help where needed. With my lower level students, we work in groups so that we can work on grammar, spelling and style. You only need to get online again to submit the completed parts/versions. They love seeing their efforts on the web a day later. -- - *Submitted 2004-01-01*

What State

What State - Geography 1.) Display a large US map. 2.) Have the students line up behind it. 3.) The first two students should stand in front of the map. 4.) The teacher should then name a state. 5.) The first of the two students to point to it wins the round and remains standing. 6.) The next student in line replaces the player who then returns to the end of the line. -- - *Submitted 2004-01-01*

MYSTERY BAG:

Take an empty bag and put something inside (anything will work!) Make a chart on the board with a "yes" column and a "no" column. Students ask yes or no questions to determine what is in the bag. (You may want to limit the number of questions so that they will think before they ask questions.) If the student asks, "Is it a toy?" - write the word "toy" in the appropriate column. After a certain period of time review the yes answers and the no answers. Allow the children to guess what is in the bag. Once you have a few guesses, you can let the children vote. Ex. How many of you think it is a rubber band? Record the votes, and finally....let the child who has been extra nice pull the item out of the bag. (21 questions with a little twist!) -- - *Submitted 2004-01-01*

Autumn McKinney

Nov. 21, 2005-11-21

Time Fillers