

market school shop zoo post office

Yesterday I went to the market. Why did you go to the market?

I wanted to buy some tomatoes. Did you buy any tomatoes?

Yes, I did.

Yesterday I went to the zoo. Why did you go to the zoo?

I wanted to see an elephant. Did you see an elephant?

Yes, I did.

(f) Using a classroom shop

Have you got any eggs? No, I haven't got any eggs.

Have you got any tomatoes? Yes, I have some tomatoes.

Can I have one kilo of tomatoes, please? Yes, here you are.

How much? That's 90p please.

(g) Using actions

Can you touch your toes? Of course I can!

Go on, show me! Look! Can you do a handstand?

No, I can't. I can. Look!

(h) Using a simple map

A: Excuse me. I want to go to the post office. Can you help me?

B: Yes, of course. Go along this road. Turn right at the crossroads. The post office is on your left.

The language used in the activities above is guided by the teacher and the short conversation is designed to practise *specific* language. The teacher will want the pupils to practise particular tenses or expressions. Accuracy is very important and the teacher will monitor the work carefully and correct pupils when they make a mistake if that mistake is the focus of the lesson. So, for example, if the teacher is practising *can you* questions and a pupil says *can you touching your toes*, the teacher will immediately correct this. However, if a pupil says *can you touch your toe*, this might not be corrected at that point although the teacher would note it and may deal with that mistake at a later date.

5.2 Conversations that are longer and less controlled, where the focus is on fluency

With other short conversations, the focus of the activity might not be on specific language but on communicating a particular *message*. This sort of activity will not be so carefully controlled by the teacher and so the pupils will be free to use whatever language they want as long as they can put over the message clearly. The emphasis will be on *successful communication* not on accuracy. In other words, this may be a classic communicative activity. In such activities, the teacher will note mistakes (and this is best done by carrying a small note book and scribbling a quick note about the mistake) and either deal with the mistake / error later in the lesson (if this is appropriate) or deal with it at a later date. Again real objects, pictures, maps and so on will be ideal teaching aids. Young pupils love talking on the telephone and so they could do this too. An old-fashioned telephone is usually more fun than a small mobile! Here are some examples of activities of this type starting with the simplest.

(a) Colouring

The pupils work in pairs but they do not look at each other's picture. Both pupils have the same picture of people on the beach. There are no colours in the picture. The girls colour the girls in the picture and the shop; the boys colour the boys in the picture and the deck chairs (or the other way around!). Then they tell each other about the colours they have used and add those colours to their own picture. In the end, if they have understood each other, they should have two pictures with the same colours.

Timu: The small girl has a red hat on her head.

Askar: The tall boy is wearing a green shirt.

Timu: The tall girl is wearing blue jeans.

Askar: The small boy is wearing black shorts.

The style and content of the picture would be changed according to the age of the pupils, their cultural background and/or the country where you are teaching.

(b) Comparing pictures 1

The two pupils have pictures that look very similar but which are different in various ways. They have to find out what the differences are.

Amir: There is a boy and a girl. They are outside a shop.

Helle: Yes, I have a boy and girl too. The shop sells ice-cream.

Amir: No, my shop sells cakes.

Helle: Is the girl wearing a hat?

Amir: Yes, she is. But the boy isn't.

Helle: Ah! The boy in my picture is wearing a hat.

(c) Comparing pictures 2

The pupils each have the same picture and one pupil describes one of the figures. The other pupil has to decide which pupil is being described.



(From *Where there is no artist* by Petra Röhr-Rouendaal, Practical Action Publishing, 2007.)

(d) Using a map

Pupil A will have a map of a castle that is complete; pupil B will have a map with information missing. They will not be able to look at each other's maps. The aim is to find the gold crown! First, pupil B has to find a gold ring, then a gold sword, then a gold cup and finally the gold crown.