

# ESL SWAP SHOP

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I know we're only supposed to share one teaching idea... but no one of my ideas is fantastic so I'm sharing a list of ideas that are working well with most of the children I work with.

**Target Audience:** Kindergarten, all ESL levels

**Purpose:** Vocabulary and oral language development

## **IDEA 1: I Spy**

I created a sheet filled with clear pictures (drawn by hand or copied and pasted off the Internet) of items within a certain theme. For example, I began with the theme of clothing and created a sheet filled with the following pictures: shirt, pants, t-shirt, jeans, shorts, skirt, dress, jacket and sweater. I coloured each item with a different colour and/or had the children colour each item on their own sheets with a specified colour. I teach each word to the children by pointing out items that they themselves are wearing that day and by displaying the "real" pictures of each item on a computer screen. Next, I use the sheet to play a game of "I Spy": "I spy something that is \_\_\_\_\_(name a colour)." Children guess and identify the item by stating its name. As children get more familiar with the vocab, I give them turns being the "spy". Other vocabulary themes I will be teaching include fruits, vegetables, school supplies, family members, body parts, shapes.

## **IDEA 2: "Today I am Wearing..."**

This activity uses the same clothing vocabulary learned during "I Spy". The children stand in a circle. Each child then states what they are wearing on top and bottom today. For example, "Today I am wearing a sweater and jeans". As the children get the hang of this, they move on to add colours to this statement: "Today I am wearing a red sweater and blue jeans". When the children have mastered this set of vocabulary, I will move on to other clothing vocabulary (e.g. socks, scarf, boots).

### **IDEA 3: Temperature**

I create a poster chart listing several different feelings. I draw simple faces to show the expressions associated with each feeling then beside each one I write the word(s) for each feeling. These are the feelings that the students and I came up with together: happy/great, okay/fine, sad, mad/angry, tired/sleepy, excited, sick/uncomfortable, bored, embarrassed, loved. Once students have learned the different feelings, we take a few minutes at the beginning of each lesson to take each child's temperature: Sitting in a circle, each child takes a turn saying "Today I feel \_\_\_\_\_." I encourage the children to use expression in their voice and to show the feeling on their faces.

### **IDEA 4: Miscellaneous games**

I find these games useful for the more reluctant speakers: Simon Says, Bingo, and Go Fish. Initially, I do most of the talking while the children mostly just listen. Eventually, the children are encouraged to repeat after me. Once they are comfortable with each game, I get individual children to lead it for the group; or play independently, in the case of Go Fish. I am currently playing Go Fish with a regular deck of cards - the children practice their numbers. Eventually, I'll look for or make cards with other vocabulary/pictures.

### **IDEA 5: Pass the Gesture (Drama)**

The children have found this drama game very fun. I like to use it as an invigorating way to close our time together. Everyone stands in a circle. Then, the first player makes up a gesture and sound that go together. I've started by using animal sounds and gestures (e.g. Dog: "Woof, woof!" with paws up; Duck: "Quack, quack!" while hands create a beak that opens and closes; Cat: "Meeoww" while swishing arm behind back like a tail).

Player one turns and faces player two, who is next to her/him (clockwise or counter clockwise) and demonstrates her/his chosen sound and gesture to player two. Player two must face player one to "receive" the gesture. Once player one has "given" the gesture to player two, player two then turns to player three to give the same gesture and it continues all the way around the circle. Children must repeat the gesture exactly as it was first demonstrated. Once it gets back to player one, player two gets to create a new gesture to send around the circle. I have been doing all of the creating at this point. When the children become more comfortable I'll choose keen, eager children to create the gestures.