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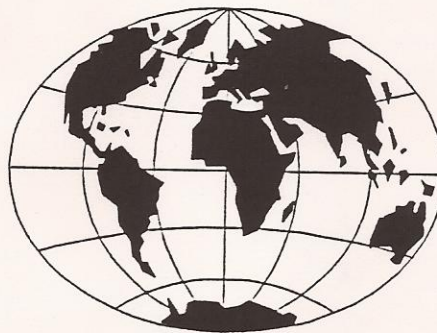
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INTRODUCTION

PRONUNCIATION ACTIVITIES

The purpose of these pronunciation activities is to provide the ESL teacher with ideas, means, and methods of teaching English in practical, meaningful, and enjoyable ways.

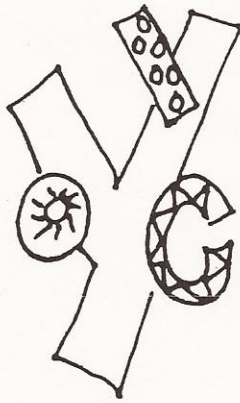
These exercises aim to simplify teaching pronunciation by using a basic method for all activities. It is to be stressed, however, that this is only one method, and by no means the only one. Teachers should feel free to modify it.



1. Write target words on the board.
2. Establish meaning. (Use pictures, drawings, etc.)
3. Teacher says target words several times. Students repeat. (Teacher must exaggerate sounds for students to hear).
4. Teacher uses target words in a phrase. Students repeat.
5. Teacher uses target words in a sentence. Students repeat.
6. Students practice new vocabulary in various activities.

There are many variations to the above suggestions. Teachers should use their own judgment to decide how long to stay with any step, how often to spot check and correct, and finally when to stop. It's important not to be in a hurry when introducing new words and phrases and to allow time for the new sounds to sink in. On the other hand, teachers should keep up a good pace. By the time students have finished, they should feel as if they've had a good workout.

And finally, pronunciation activities should be fun. The spontaneous laughter that is created during a pronunciation class makes teaching a joy and learning a pleasure.



THE ALPHABET

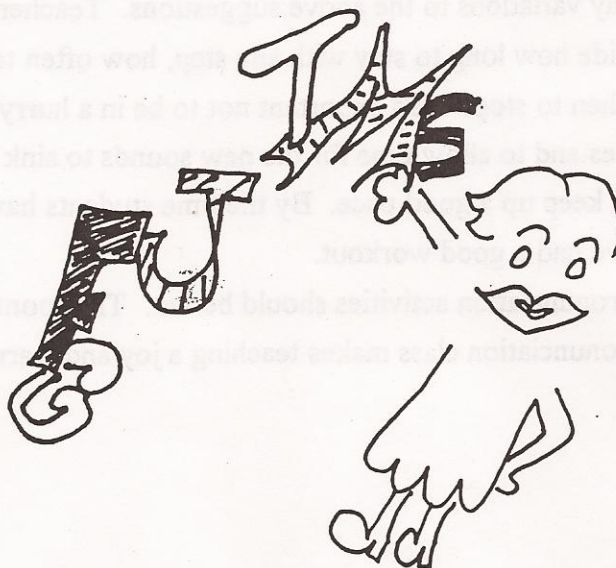
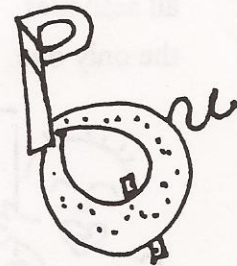
What Do the Letters Sound Like?

An essential life skill for all ESL students is the ability to say (sound out) the letters of the alphabet. Yet, this activity is often given short shrift by the ESL teacher, who may think that learning the alphabet is "kindergarten stuff" or "too easy." She may even think that once taught, it is quickly learned and remembered. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The alphabet needs drilling, repetition, and practice. The ability to spell one's name and address and be easily understood is a vital skill for all ESL students.



Description of Activity

- Post the alphabet in large letters around the room.
- Pronounce letters after the teacher.
- Practice only vowels.
- Practice only isolated consonants.
- Students say and spell own name, address.
- Teacher dictates (spells) new words. Students listen and write.
- One student dictates (spells) teacher-generated words: Examples: names of students, cities and countries of origin, etc.





SAY SOMETHING NICE

Students enjoy learning words and phrases that they can use immediately as they struggle to adapt in a new culture. They want to learn common expressions of polite and socially accepted speech. You, as the teacher, will do them an invaluable service by teaching them expressions of kindness, as well as some small talk.

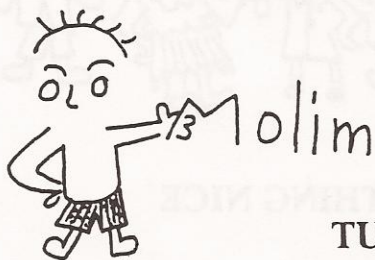
Remember that any new words or phrases will not be learned overnight. It will take "a good listening ear" and much practice to speak and respond in an appropriate manner. Though such phrases seem deceptively easy to us, they are, in fact, very difficult for the foreign student to master.

Description of Activity

- Make a list of common "polite" expressions.
- A partial list might include:
 - "Thank you, I appreciate it."
 - "How are you; how's it going?"
 - "It's good to see you." "It's good to see you, too."
 - "May I have" (instead of "Give me.")
 - "I've missed you." "I've missed you, too."
- Practice the same expression for at least a week.
- Don't be surprised if it takes weeks to "get the feel" of any given expression.
- Post these expressions in huge letters around the room.
- Use them during authentic classroom activities when appropriate.



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TURNING THE TABLES



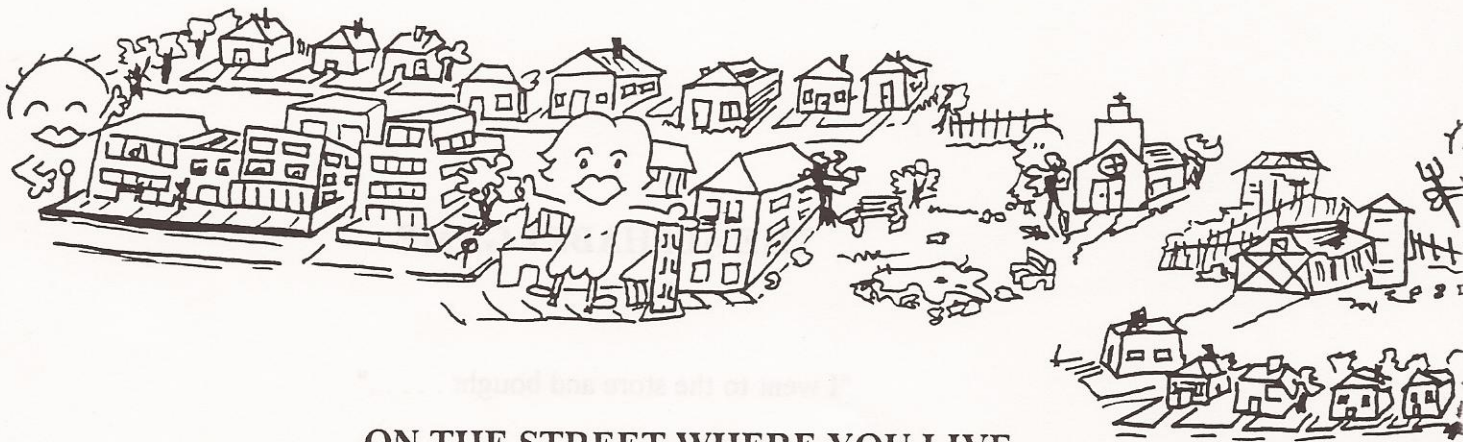
In order to get the sense - - the frustration and the joy - - of learning a new language, have the students teach you and the class a simple poem, greeting, or expression in their own languages. Students love it as you struggle to master the sounds and words that roll so magically off their tongues! Further, in order to get the sense of what students are going through, teachers need frequent reminders of how much practice, repetition and diligence is required to learn even the simplest expression correctly. It's not easy! In short, we need to put ourselves in our students' shoes.



Description of Activity

- Choose a special day - - a holiday or a special occasion to learn about.
- Select one of the better students to "teach" the activity. It can be on the board or on handouts.
- Student-teacher uses the same steps as for other pronunciation activities, identifying key words, speaking slowly and making corrections.
- Class recites poem, greeting, or expression.





ON THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE

Students need to be able to give their full home and work addresses in an understandable way. This skill needs to be perfected early, which makes this pronunciation drill very practical. An effective way of presenting this drill is to present the sentence in small segments and to work intensely from the end of the sentence forward. Be sure to move freely about the room and correct where necessary. It may be necessary to explain the U.S. address system.

Description of Activity

- Write on board: street, road, avenue, lane, boulevard, etc.
- Repeat above after the teacher several times.
- Write street names of students on the board.
- Repeat, for example, "Euclid Avenue."
- Introduce numbers -- 0 to 10 and practice.
- Repeat, "16025 Euclid Avenue."
- Finally, say the whole sentence, "I live at 16025 Euclid Avenue."



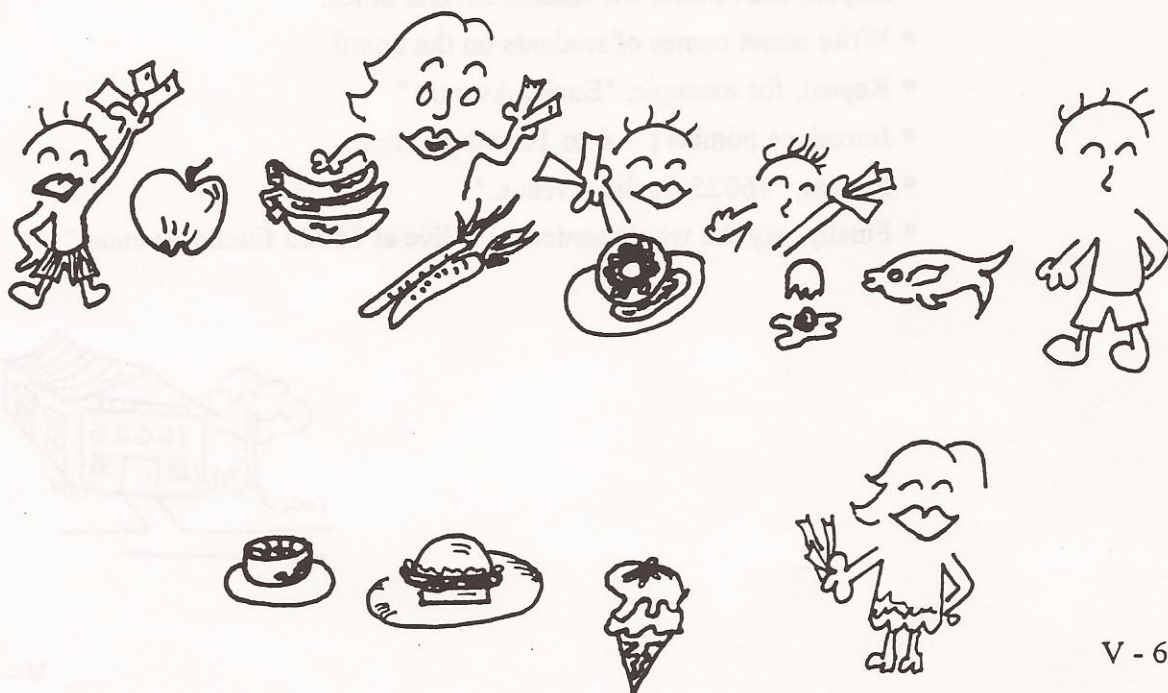
THE ALPHABET GAME

"I went to the store and bought"

Once students have played the alphabet game, they request it often. They enjoy listening to each other, repeating, as well as the challenge of coming up with a new word. Don't be surprised if they insist on helping each other! This activity is especially useful after studying word groups such as foods, clothing, etc. The repetition provides excellent reinforcement for new vocabulary.

Description of Activity

- Arrange small groups of six to eight students.
- First student begins, "I went to the store and bought apples."
- Second student repeats, "I went to the store and bought apples and bananas."
- Students continue, in turn, with their letter of the alphabet.



THE "S" GAME

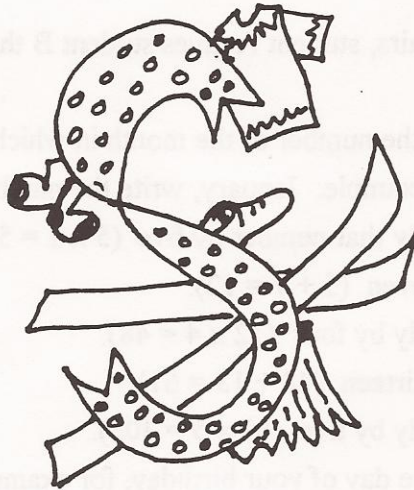
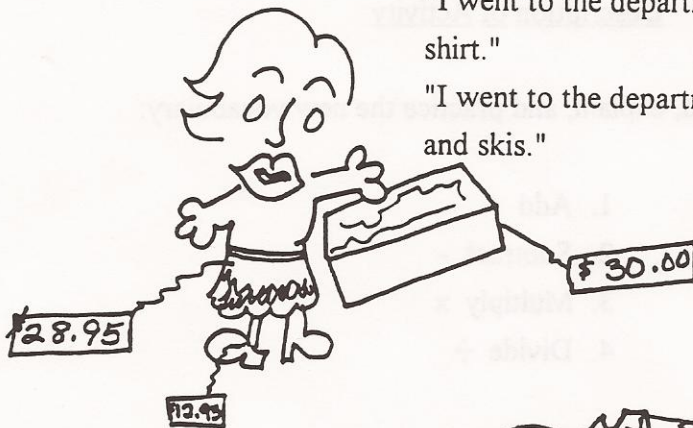
This variation of the Alphabet Game takes the same letter of the alphabet for all the students. For example, the letter "S" might be chosen, and all items must start with that letter. It becomes challenging for more advanced students especially, as they run out of nouns!

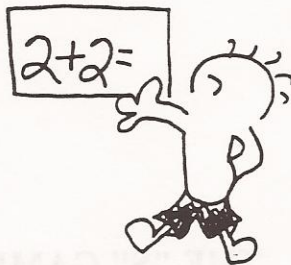
For example:

"I went to the department store and bought shoes."

"I went to the department store and bought shoes and a shirt."

"I went to the department store and bought shoes, a shirt, and skis."



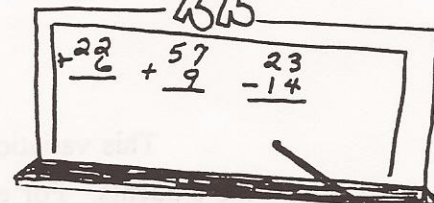


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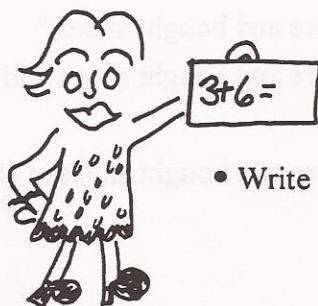
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HOW'S YOUR MATH?



Students enjoy learning new skills as long as they are practical. The study of math terms is essential for daily life. This game provides an opportunity for the practice of new terms, the reinforcement of numbers, and the fun of discovering a partner's birthday.



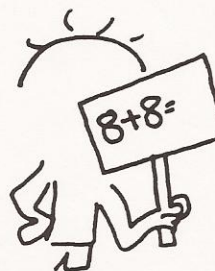
Description of Activity

- Write on board, explain, and practice the new vocabulary:

1. Add +
2. Subtract -
3. Multiply x
4. Divide ÷

- Working in pairs, student A gives student B the following instructions:

- Write the number of the month in which you were born.
(example: January, write the number 1)
- Multiply that number by five ($5 \times 1 = 5$).
- Add seven ($5 + 7 = 12$).
- Multiply by four ($12 \times 4 = 48$).
- Add thirteen ($48 + 13 = 61$).
- Multiply by five ($61 \times 5 = 305$).
- Add the day of your birthday, for example 23 ($305 + 23 = 328$).
- Subtract 205 ($328 - 205 = 123$). Your birthday is 1/23 or January 23.



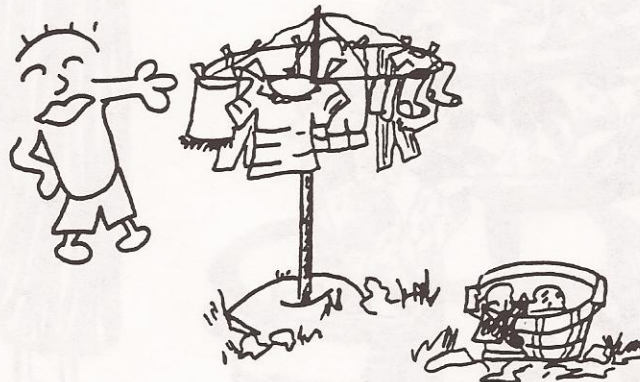
"SHIRT, SKIRT, SHORTS"

Tactile learning has long been recognized as a sure-fire way of increasing retention. If you touch something, you're more likely to remember it. Put an object in a student's hands, and you immediately create an almost ideal learning situation. The interest is immediate and learning not easily forgotten.

"Shirt, skirt, and shorts" all sound the same to a beginning student. The "ur" sound in shirt and skirt is difficult for students to master. Any activity which promotes pronunciation practice of common objects is important. Students find "Shirt, Skirt, and shorts" fun and worthwhile.

Description of Activity

- Bring in as many old skirts, shirts, and shorts to the classroom as you can.
- Identify the objects.
- Have the student hold up the object and say correctly, "This is a shirt." Pass it one to another student. Repeat.
- There are many variations of this game. Play store. "I don't want this shirt. I want a skirt." Practice - "this", "these," singular, plurals, etc.



THE USE OF PICTURES IN PRONUNCIATION

The use of pictures cannot be overstated as a vital resource for pronunciation drills. Students respond enthusiastically to nearly all pictures because they know immediately what the teacher is talking about. It gives them an important sense of confidence in their second language learning. A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words by Anthony Mollica and Norman Rockwell's paintings are possible rich sources for this purpose and can be used in creative ways.

Description of Activity

- Put the picture on the wall (the bigger the better).
- Identify basic vocabulary.
- Students repeat basic vocabulary.
- Teacher checks sounds, words, phrases, and sentences.
- Teacher allows students to finish her sentences as she talks about the picture.





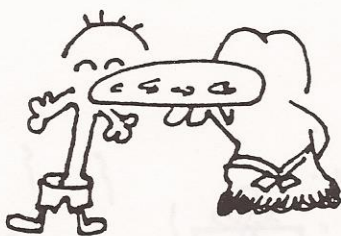
THAT'S MY BIRTHDAY, TOO

This fun birthday game can be used to practice possessive pronouns as well as regular possessives. Students often find it very difficult to say final "s" of possessives. In fact, saying, "my mother's birthday" instead of "my mother birthday" can be a major accomplishment. Remember that all final consonants are voiced, and the "s" in "mother's" is pronounced like a "z."

The teacher should exaggerate and hit those final consonants hard so that students can hear them and finally say them.

Description of Activity

- Teach target vocabulary:
birthday, mother's, father's, brother's, sister's, son's, daughter's, etc.
Pay careful attention to pronunciation.
- Students listen carefully as one student gives the month and day of his birth. (Note: The likelihood of two students sharing a birthday is very high, which creates instant interest.)
- Student one says, "My birthday is January 20."
- Teacher or a student responds, "Really? My daughter's birthday is January 23."
- Continue until each student has told his birthday.



SONGS, POEMS, AND RHYMES

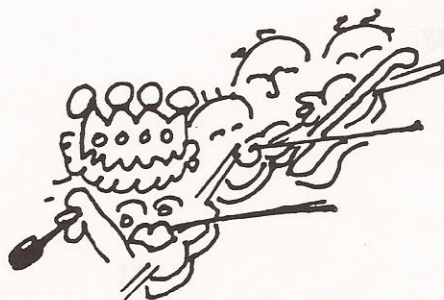
Songs, poems, and rhymes are an excellent way to teach the rhythm, stress, and intonation of a language which are essential in transmitting meaning. If the accent (the phrasing) of a sentence is wrong, the student will not be understood even though he can say the word in isolation. It's important for the student to understand that English is spoken in phrases, that there are important pauses, and that certain syllables are accented quite strongly. In addition, some vowels and syllables are obscured (reduced) as they are spoken.

There is nothing better to accomplish this purpose than the inclusion of simple songs, poems, and rhymes as part of the curriculum. Traditional nursery rhymes are an excellent source of material.



Description of Activity

- Students copy poem off the board.
 - Teacher identifies necessary vocabulary.
 - Teacher reads slowly and accents strongly.
- Teacher and students read together in normal English.
Some students may want to memorize it.



"THERE WAS AN OLD LADY"

This particular poem covers a great deal of ground in teaching good pronunciation. It shows how words are linked together, vowels reduced, and sentence structure kept intact as it tells a humorous story. Beginning students like it because the beat is strong and the story line repetitive. Advanced students like learning the new vocabulary and even enjoy memorizing all or part of the whole poem!

Description of Activity

- Identify vocabulary.
- Go over each verse several times.
- Teacher speaks; students repeat.
- Divide class into groups, each saying one verse, or alternate men and women speaking.
- Bring one group in front of class to recite it.



"THERE WAS AN OLD LADY"



There was an old lady who swallowed a fly.
I don't know why she swallowed a fly.
Perhaps she'll die.



There was an old lady who swallowed a spider.
It wiggled and wiggled and jiggled inside her.



She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die.

There was an old lady who swallowed a bird.
Have you heard, she swallowed a bird.



She swallowed the bird to catch the spider.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die.



There was an old lady who swallowed a cat.
Imagine that! She swallowed a cat.

She swallowed the cat to catch the bird.
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die.



There was an old lady who swallowed a dog.
She swallowed a dog as big as a hog.

She swallowed the dog to catch the cat.
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird.
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die.



There was an old lady who swallowed a cow.
I don't know how she swallowed a cow.

She swallowed the cow to catch the dog.
She swallowed the dog to catch the cat.
She swallowed the cat to catch the bird.
She swallowed the bird to catch the spider.
She swallowed the spider to catch the fly.
I don't know why she swallowed the fly.
Perhaps she'll die.

There was an old lady who swallowed a horse.
She died, of course!

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