



Introduction

In this issue, the English Corner features a host of vocabulary games and activities for young learners, two lesson plans designed around reading skills, vocabulary development and genre analysis using film reviews as a theme, suggestions for parents on how to minimize the effects of stress and trauma on children, and, finally, an exploration into the benefits of using Arabic in the English language classroom. For further English language resources and activities, contact

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Vocabulary and Spelling Games for the English Language Classroom

Games are an excellent way to practice spelling and vocabulary because they spark student interest and allow them to have fun and interact with each other, thus developing communication skills. The games provided here are suitable for almost all ages and levels because they can be adapted to incorporate vocabulary items from the curriculum being used. They can be used in the classroom each day as five-minute warmer and cooler activities.

Secret Codes

The teacher first writes the alphabet in eight numbered sections on the blackboard:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
abc	def	ghi	jkl	mno	pqrs	tuv	wxyz

The teacher then thinks of a word and writes the section number for each letter on the blackboard. For example, if the word chosen is apple, the teacher would write 16642 on the blackboard. The students are asked to decode the word by selecting letters from the appropriate section. The teacher can then provide a number of other examples such as money which is 55528. Students can then be divided into pairs or small groups and asked to create their own example and to test each other.

Backward Spelling

This activity can be adapted to suit both beginning and advanced level students by selecting words of varying difficulty. Choosing a word that you want to recycle, either from the curriculum or from a previous lesson, begin to spell the word for the students backwards. For beginning students, the word tree would go like this: 'E,' 'EE,' 'EER,' until the students guessed the correct word. After conducting a few examples for the students, allow them to continue the activity in small groups or pairs.

Word Circle

The teacher first divides the students into two groups. One group sits in a circle facing outwards. Each student has a piece of paper and begins by writing the first letter of a word followed by dashes which represent the missing letters: e _ _ _ _ _ _ . The second group of students stand one each in front of one of the seated students and guesses what the second letter might be. If the guess is correct the seated student writes the letter in the dash, but if the guess is incorrect it is left blank. The standing students then rotate around the circle of seated students until the word is completed correctly: elephant. This is an excellent way to review vocabulary unit by unit, for example, as a list of words can be used instead of just one.