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# Activities for Teaching the Four Language Skills

The four language skills are divided into receptive skills (reading, listening) and productive skills (speaking, writing). Below are some activities you can use to teach these four skills.

## Listening Activities

### Simon Says

- Physical commands work well with younger students

### Picture Dictation

- Dictate sentences that students use to create a picture. Afterwards, have students show their pictures and describe what they've drawn.

### Checking Off Items

- Students write the category words and put a check under the classification of the word they hear.

### True or False

- After working with a clip or after the teacher has read a passage out loud, ask true or false questions.

### Detecting Mistakes

- After working with a clip or after the teacher has read a passage out loud, ask true or false questions.

### Aural Cloze

- The teacher reads a passage, or the students listen to a clip. The students have the text of the listening with gaps and have to fill in the gaps with the missing words.
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## Reading Activities

### Predicting

- Students look at the title and any subtitles and predict what that text or article will be about, or the students read the first and last paragraphs and predict the content of the text. Have the students read the title and scan the article for related vocabulary.

### Draw a Picture

- Divide the class into groups. Have each group work with a section of a reading and draw a picture (make sure the reading lends itself to picture description). Then together each group describes its picture. The reading of the complete text follows.

### Make Up Questions

- Divide the class into small groups. Give each group the reading. Each group will read it and create comprehension questions that they will ask the other groups.

### Matching

- Students have to match topic sentences with the paragraphs from which they came or match supporting sentences to topic sentences.

### Jumbled Stories

- Photocopy a text. Cut it into sections or sentences. Place in an envelope. Have pairs of students reassemble these into their proper order.

### Jumbled Paragraph

- Similar procedure to the one above but with paragraphs that have been photocopied, cut out and jumbled together. Pairs of students or groups have to reassemble them in the correct order.

### Planning a Day

- Have students read the weekend or cultural section of a newspaper and decide upon the kinds of things they'd like to attend or see: movies, dance, concerts, museums, while considering the time, dates and prices that are suitable for them.

### Jumbled Paragraph

- Students read a recipe or an article about a type of food. They can make the dish and bring it into class. This can be done in groups so there can be a variety, and they all share each other's recipes.

## Summarize

- If you're reading a long text over several days, have the students summarize what they know about the text so far at the beginning of each lesson.

## Writing Activities

### Jumbled Sentences

- Students have to unscramble sentences and put them into an order that makes sense.

### Picture Dictation

- Describe a scene sentence by sentence; repeat 2 or 3 times; students draw the scene as they hear it described; have students check the picture in pairs; students explain what's in the pictures; they can continue the story if you wish; students then write the story and perhaps personalize it by adding something about themselves in their version.

### Build a Story

- Put a sentence on the board. Have a student come up with the next sentence in a story. A second student contributes a third, etc. until there is a complete story on the board. Students can then read the story out loud, copy it, and change the story to fit their own ideas by changing the characters, location or ending.

### Strip Stories

- The sentences are photocopied onto a sheet of paper, the individual sentences are cut into strips and mixed together in an envelope. Give one set in an envelope to a pair of students and let them assemble the story in the correct order. They can add to the story or change the ending as they like.

### Description

- In pairs, have students describe in writing a beautiful picture, or their most exciting experience. They can also respond to music, describing the mental pictures it creates.

## Application Forms

- Have the students fill in application forms for an ideal job, school, etc. where they have to write a brief paragraph why their application should be considered.

## Different Story Perspectives

- Hand out a short story with several characters in it. Tell the students to rewrite the story from the perspectives of the various characters and see how they differ from the main character's perspective.

## Emails

- Write emails and letters, both formal and informal, practicing salutations and different formalities of writing.

## Social Networking Posts

- Put up a 'post' and have learners react to it using at least two sentences.

## Requesting

- Write to request information from an organization. When students receive the information, it's a great reward to see the effects or results of their efforts.

## Surveys

- Write survey questions and conduct the surveys on a group of people.

## Paragraph Completion

- Complete paragraphs with different kinds of supporting details, such as physical description, example, statistic, fact, or personal story.

## Autobiography

- Have the students write their life stories, or write a biography of a person that they know or know about.

## Speaking Games

### Taboo

- Students are split into teams. One player picks a card and tries to explain the word on the card to their team without using the word or five additional words included on the card.

### Two Truths, One Lie

- Each student comes up with two truths about themselves and one lie and the rest of the group guesses which one is the lie.

### 20 Questions

- A student picks something and tells everyone the category (person, place, thing) and the group has 20 questions to try and guess what it is

### Pictionary

- Students are split in teams. A student draws a card with a word or phrase on it, then tries to draw it while the rest of the team guesses.

### Who's Telling the Truth

- <https://www.bbbpress.com/2014/07/drama-game-whos-telling-truth/>

### Secret Word

- [https://www.wimpykidclub.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/TLH\\_Secret-Word-Game1.pdf](https://www.wimpykidclub.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/TLH_Secret-Word-Game1.pdf)

### Desert Island Game

- <https://englishteaching101.com/desert-island-survival-activity/>

## Speaking Activities

### Debates

- Select a statement with two sides and assign students to each side to debate. You can introduce the idea of debate structure (an argument, counter-argument, opening and closing arguments)

### Roleplays

- Give students roles, characters, situations to act out.



## Interviews

- Come up with lists of questions the students have to ask each other in pair-work or in a mingle, in which the students get out of their chairs and move about the room interviewing many or all of the other students in class. To make this more challenging, have the students come up with the list of questions themselves and exchange their lists with other students. After completing interviews, the students could discuss their findings.

## Surveys

- Like interviews, these can be scored to see what “category” the students fit into. Afterwards, the students can discuss whether they agree or disagree with the results.