

10 Speaking activities

Most readers will be familiar with narrative and role play as they are regularly used in the classroom for further practice of important structures and functions/notions in the syllabus. Vocabulary teaching in these activities is usually relegated to second place, the choice of target lexis being determined by the topic which incorporates the particular structure or function. Unfortunately, this can result in students learning a lot of vocabulary which serves a classroom need, but has little intrinsic value.

We feel sure that the suggestions in this section will still provide useful practice for a wide variety of structures and functions; we have simply changed the emphasis by making vocabulary the first priority. In each case, we have drawn on our classroom experience, and included speaking activities which we hope will provide the kind of interesting and generative practice so often neglected in many courses.

10.1 Role play

- i) AIRPORT ENQUIRIES (see text on p. 116 for presentation of vocabulary)

Level: Intermediate.

Suggested procedure: In this activity two students operate the Information Desk at an airport, and the remaining students make a variety of travel enquiries. In addition to the vocabulary already presented you will also need to pre-teach the phrases 'schedule'/'due to arrive at...'

Start by giving the two students a series of cards, each one containing information about flight arrivals and departures:

e.g. Flight: BA429 from Munich
Scheduled arrival: 14.40
Time now: 15.40
Information: Fog. One hour delay. Just landed.

Now send both students out of the room to study their information. Give the remaining students a role card with a specific enquiry e.g. 'You are meeting your mother who is flying from Munich. The plane was due to land at 2.40 p.m. It's now 3.40 p.m. What has happened?'

You can now invite the two students back into the room, seat them at opposite ends of the room, and ask the other students to take it in turns to get up and make their enquiry. A more interesting variation, however, is to invite the students to make their enquiries before the preceding student has finished. The effect of this is to put more pressure on the students, to introduce a wider range of functions, and to make the activity more fun. The result is often enjoyable chaos, which can be repeated several times by giving each student a new card.

Comment: This is the type of situation where appropriate lexis can compensate for grammatical or functional inadequacy. The student interaction is fairly brief but quite demanding, and we would be surprised if the students were able to handle the situation without running into one or two problems; much will depend, of course, on the nature of the information on their role cards. However, we would hope that a knowledge of the relevant vocabulary would be sufficient for them to achieve their aim.

ii) VERB PATTERNS (see p. 131)

Level: Intermediate.

Suggested procedure: For this activity four members of the class are 'doctors' and the remainder 'patients'. Start by giving each 'patient' a role card with a complaint written on it e.g. you can't sleep / you're putting on weight / you've got a pain in your back', etc. Then allow them two or three minutes to think about their complaint and develop the details i.e. when? why? how? how long? While they are thinking about this you instruct the four students acting as doctors that they must listen to the patients' complaints and then offer advice, suggestions, orders, or instructions for each patient. Each doctor should then be seated in a different part of the classroom.

When the patients are ready they must take it in turns to consult the doctors. Each patient must talk to each of the four doctors and make a note of the advice given to them, as do the doctors. At the end of the activity the patients regroup into fours (the doctors forming a separate group). In this next phase each patient describes his complaint and the different advice given by the four doctors. The group must then decide who gave the best advice; doctors do likewise. Each student will now be using reported speech and they could be encouraged to use the verbs presented earlier i.e. advise, suggest, tell, warn, insist, selecting in each case the verb that corresponds in meaning to the doctor's actual words.

Comment: The amount of information you include on the role cards, and the extent to which you guide the students towards the target verbs, will obviously affect the degree of control you exercise over

the students' language. At the preparation stage, therefore, you should decide exactly how much freedom you wish to allow your students and set up the role play accordingly. If you feel that the doctor/patient situation is not appropriate for your students, you could easily transfer the idea and target vocabulary to a different context e.g. advice/suggestions/warnings on examinations to take, careers to follow, places to go on holiday, etc.

iii) SHOP ROLE PLAY

Level: Advanced.

Suggested procedure: Teach all the items in the visual and give students some controlled practice. Go on to discuss what they are used for and clarify any vocabulary necessary e.g. to undo, to unscrew, a nail, a bolt, etc. Divide the class into groups of about eight students, appointing two of the students as shopkeepers. Explain that one of them has a hardware shop and the other a second hand shop. Give them each their role card, and ask them to leave the room while they read through and absorb their information. Explain to the rest of the students that both shops are having a closing-down sale and that they are going to buy items in the shops. They are all in a hurry to buy and to find out which shop will give them the best bargain for their purchase. Once they have decided where to buy, they should make a note of it and the price. Give each student a card with their intended purchase:

e.g.

a spanner (any kind)

a saw – you want to do
some carpentry at home

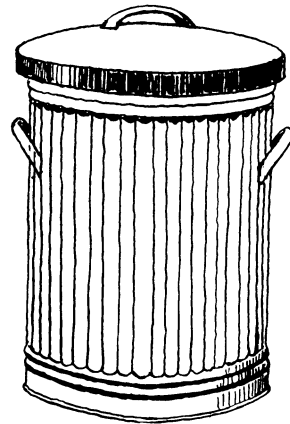
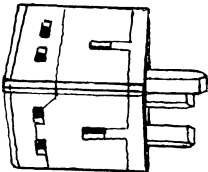
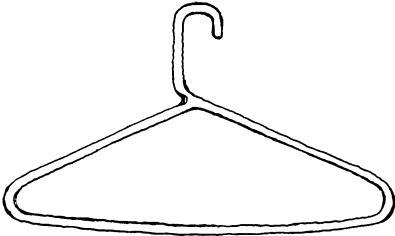
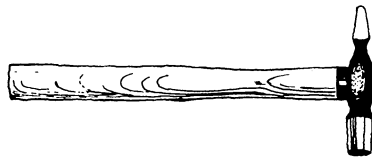
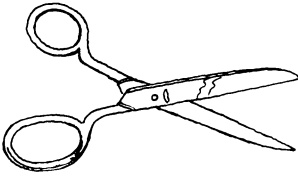
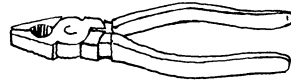
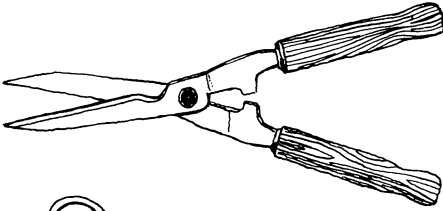
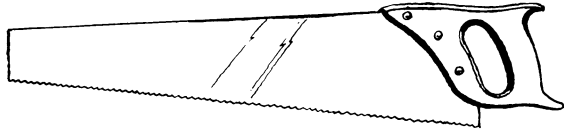
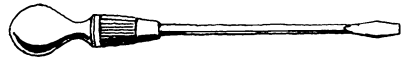
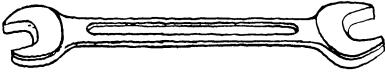
and also tell them that they are amnesiacs: they can't remember the word on the cards so have to describe the object or its use to the shopkeeper. Give this piece of information to the shopkeepers too, and tell them to remind the customers what the name of the object is:

e.g. Customer: I want one of those things you use for cutting wire.

Shopkeeper: Oh, you want a pair of pliers.

Ask the shopkeepers to return and sit them in different parts of the room. Ask two students to go and buy something from each shop and almost immediately send another pair to interrupt and get the ball rolling. Once students have been to both shops and made their decision they should come to the teacher for another prompt card and buy something else.

Comment: Apart from the target vocabulary, there is a wide range of language practice here. Shopkeepers will have to delay customers, ask



them to queue up, be quiet and persuade them to buy. Customers will need to describe (i.e. use definition and paraphrase) and to interrupt. Since the shopkeepers have to talk a great deal, choose appropriate students for these roles.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Hardware shop

You sell *coat hangers* in bunches of five for £1. You have only got wooden ones.

You've run out of *adaptors*. (They'll be here on ...?)

Shears with wooden handles £8.50.

You don't sell *scissors*.

Spanners: You have all sizes ranging in price from £1.50–£6.00.

You've only got very small *saws* in stock £1.50.

Hammers: wooden handles £2.50, plastic £3.80.

You sell *screwdrivers* in packs of five (different sizes) £3.50.

You've got a child's *torch* for 80p.

Dustbins: large, plastic ones £10, metal £7.50.

Pliers: You've got one pair you'd love to sell at £8.

Second hand shop

You've got different types of *coat hangers* (plastic, wooden, wire) all at 10p each.

You've got one (rather dirty) *adaptor* £1.20.

You have one pair of *shears* with plastic handles £4.

Your *scissors* aren't very sharp. Sell them at 60p if you can.

Spanners: none in stock at the moment.

You've got a large *saw* in stock – for two people to cut down trees with £18.

Hammers: wooden handles only £2.

You sell only very small *screwdrivers* at 15p.

You've got a large *torch* (no batteries) £3.

Dustbins: Rather old, the one you've got £2?

Pliers: Several, all at £2.50 in good condition.

iv) COMPLAINING (see p. 133 for presentation)

Level: Intermediate.

Suggested procedure: Divide the class in half and send one group out of the classroom for two minutes. Explain to the remainder that they are guests in a hotel but are extremely unhappy with the room they have been given. Tell them to think about their complaint and encourage them to incorporate some of the negative vocabulary from the exercise on page 133. While they are preparing their complaint you can join the other group who will play the part of the hotel receptionist. Their job is to please the guests and they should be encouraged to employ the positive vocabulary from the exercise in order to reassure the unhappy guests. However, it is more interesting if you throw in a few suggestions to complicate the situation e.g. you have a room available which isn't damp, draughty, gloomy or cramped, but it is more expensive or rather noisy as it overlooks the main road.

Bring the students back into the classroom, put one receptionist with either one or two guests and get them to act out the situation.

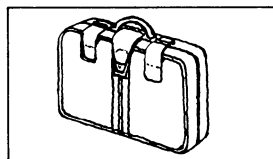
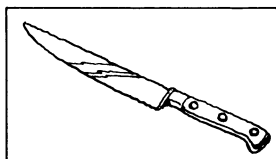
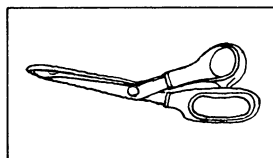
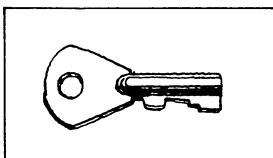
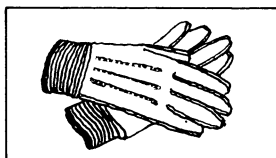
Comment: Hotel situations are relevant for many foreign learners of English and they are also very versatile i.e. they can be manipulated for vocabulary practice in a wide range of lexical areas.

10.2 Narrative

i) NARRATIVE THROUGH VISUALS

Level: Any level.

Suggested procedure: Select a group of items you wish to practise/revise and draw them on small pieces of card (one item per card). Divide the class into small groups, and give each group six cards. Make sure they do not show their pictures to the other groups. Each group must then construct a narrative that will include all the items they have been given e.g:



I have all my old clothes in a *suitcase* and yesterday I decided that I wanted to wear an old grey scarf and black pair of *gloves* that were in the suitcase. Unfortunately the suitcase was locked and I couldn't find the *key*; so, I got a *knife* from the kitchen and tried to break the lock. I couldn't but I cut my finger and there was blood all over my mother's best carpet. I ran to the bathroom turned on the *tap*, and washed off all the blood. I looked in the bathroom cupboard for some plasters but couldn't find any. Then I noticed the key to my suitcase under some towels. Feeling better I went back to my room and opened the suitcase. It was empty except for a *pair of scissors*, some suntan lotion and some plasters.

When they have finished each group reads their story to the rest of the class, and the students have to guess what pictures each group was given.

Comment: This activity can be easier or more difficult not only by the choice of items but also by the distribution of the cards. With advanced classes it is more challenging and often more fun to give each group a very disparate set of items that will demand a fairly complex or ingenious narrative in order to thread them together.

ii) NARRATIVE: PICTURE COMPOSITION

Picture stories are a valuable and widely used source of language practice material, and are commonly exploited either to provide controlled practice of structures, vocabulary and functional exponents, or to act as a stimulus for the communicative skill of narrating. It is not within the scope of this book to discuss how picture stories should and can be exploited generally: we are restricting ourselves here to a list of suggestions as to how the area of vocabulary can be approached with this type of material. The ideas suggested below are not necessarily all applicable to the picture story 'Jogging', but we suggest that next time you decide to use this type of material with a class, you check the suggestions to see if any of them are particularly relevant.

In addition to the obvious possibilities of pre-teaching the necessary vocabulary or feeding it in as students work through the story, we suggest the following.

Suggestions

- Tell the students that they are going to look at a picture story about a fat man who goes jogging and has a lot of problems. Ask them to form groups or pairs and predict the items which are likely to occur. At this stage they may wish to ask you how to say certain things

in English. Write their suggestions on the blackboard. At the end, give them the pictures so that they can check which items would be needed.

- Split the class into two groups. Ask one group to predict the vocabulary as above, and ask the other group to look at the pictures and decide which vocabulary is relevant to telling the story. At the end, let the groups compare answers.
- Allow the students to see the *last* picture in the sequence and ask them to predict some of the vocabulary from the previous pictures. Then show them the pictures so that they can check their predictions.
- Show all the students the picture story and ask them to work through it in pairs, deciding which items they will need to use when telling the story and which items they cannot express in English. They can use paraphrase, definition or the pictures themselves to ask about new items.
- The same activity as above, but allow students to use bilingual dictionaries to find out. Conduct a feedback session to check the items.
- Give the students a series of pairs of items and a relevant picture number. Ask them to decide which of the two items they would need to use and which would be less appropriate or useful:
e.g. Picture 5 – ‘to fall down’ or ‘to fall over’.

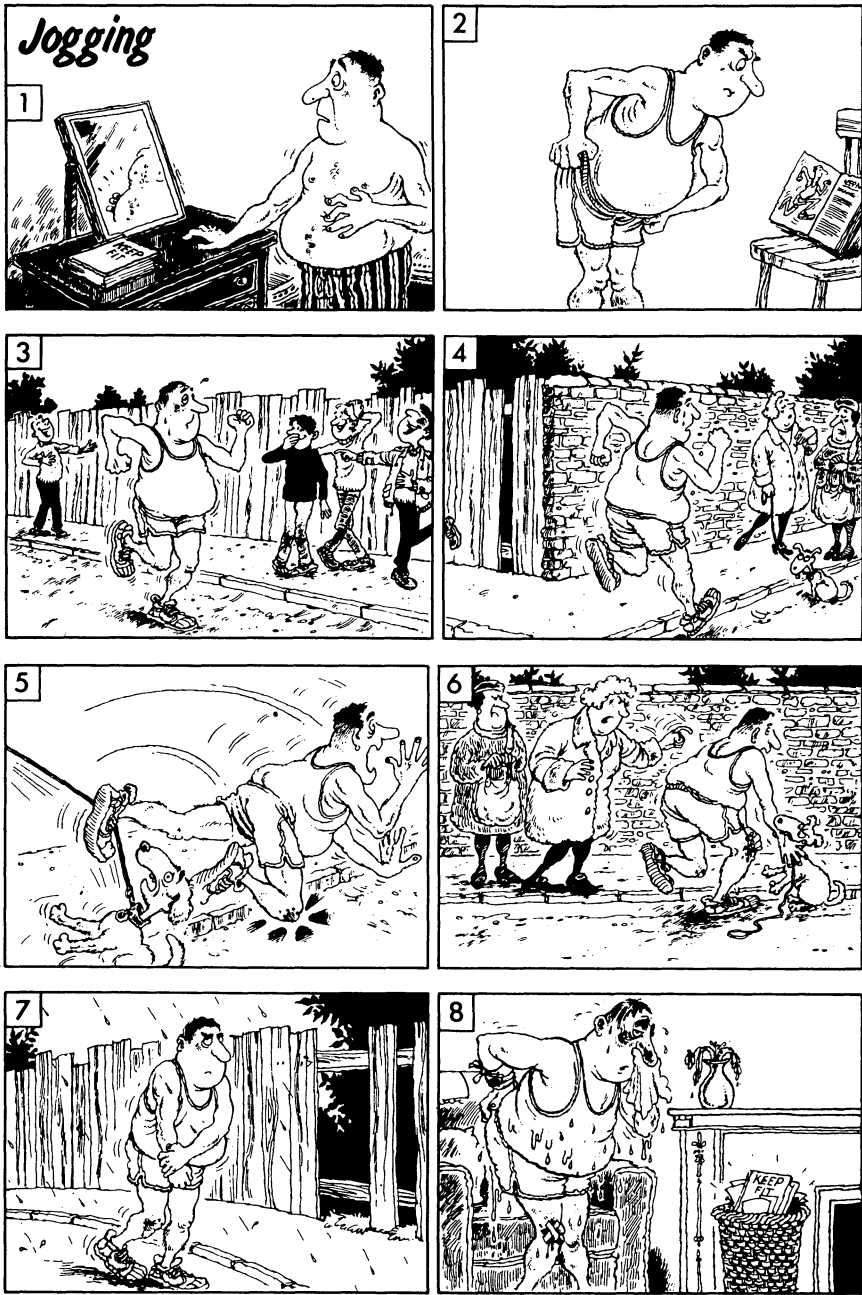
Picture 8 – ‘damp’ or ‘wet’.

They should put the ‘correct’ item in a sentence.

- Write six to eight relevant (and probably unknown) items on the blackboard and show the students the pictures. Ask them to use their dictionaries to check the meaning and to decide *where* in the story each item would be used.
- With higher level students, give them a series of simple items of vocabulary and ask them to ‘brainstorm’ (i.e. use their shared knowledge) to find another way of expressing the idea:
e.g. to laugh – to kill yourself laughing / to scream with laughter
to get very wet – to get soaked
This simply provides a starting point and is a useful way of finding out what your students already know.
- Give the students a series of items and ask them to decide which of the items are *essential* for telling the story. They may need to use dictionaries to check the meaning first:
e.g. 1 ‘running shoes’ (not essential)
2 ‘to trip over’ or ‘to fall over’ (one or the other essential)
3 ‘to tap someone on the shoulder’ (not essential)
4 ‘a lead’ or ‘a leash’ (not essential – ‘he tripped over the dog’ is perfectly acceptable; (this may require some explanation)
5 ‘to bite someone’ or ‘to attack someone’ (essential)

- Give the students a written version of the story at the same time as

Classroom activities



(from Storylines)

they see the pictures. Underline any key items you wish to highlight and ask them to deduce the meaning from the text and pictures:

e.g. 'As he came round the corner, he didn't see the dog and he *tripped over* it and hurt himself.'

(See p. 106 for a lengthier example of this.)

- Pre-teach or check appropriate connectives (e.g. because, just as, as soon as, so). Tell the students to decide where in the story they could be used.
- Before using the pictures, deal with word building and grammatical problems:
e.g. to jog, (to go) jogging; to put, to get, to hurt, to run, to bite, (all irregular).

This picture story is from *Storylines* (Fletcher and Birt, 1983) which includes practice activities such as gap filling, guided dialogue, role play and written consolidation.

iii) CO-OPERATIVE STORY TELLING

A woman was sitting in a café drinking tea one afternoon
(describe the woman)

Suddenly a man ran into the restaurant and shouted her name
(what was her name?)
(describe the man)

She looked frightened and went quickly to her bag for ...
(what did she want from her bag?)

The man rushed up to her and hit her in the face.
(how did she feel?)
(how did he feel?)

(what happened next?)

Level: Lower-intermediate upwards.

Suggested procedure: Ask students to work in pairs for this activity.

Explain that they are going to fill in the details of a story.

Write the first line of the story on the blackboard:

A woman was sitting ...

Tell the pairs to describe the woman. (All instructions in brackets are for the students.) Ask them to make brief notes (e.g. tall / beautiful face / long black hair, etc.). It is useful to set a time limit for this. Continue with the next line of the story, writing it on the blackboard and giving the students their next instruction, and so on to the end.

Classroom activities

Now ask each student to find a new partner and tell him his version of the story. Finally, ask one or two students to tell their story to the group.

Comment: This is based on the co-operative story telling activity in *Once Upon a Time* (Morgan and Rinvulcri, 1983), where you will find many excellent uses of narrative. The vocabulary revised here would cover physical descriptions, objects and emotions.

iv) MIME STORIES

Level: Any level.

Suggested procedure: Tell your students to watch you carefully and write down everything you do; they must not say anything while they are watching. You then perform a short mime of having a bath. When you have finished, put the students into pairs. Their task is to describe your mime to each other, adding details and correcting each other as they proceed. After a group feedback session to establish the most accurate record of the mime and clarify any lexical problems, the students can take it in turns to perform a short mime of their own.

This particular mime provides practice of multi-word verbs, including turn on/off (the tap), get into/out of (the bath), put on / take off (your clothes), sit down, hang up, etc. It can also be very amusing. A further example for multi-word verbs is 'tidying a room' e.g. tidy up, hang up, throw away, put away, take out, etc. The procedure is the same.

Comment: Mime stories can be exploited for further practice of a wide variety of lexical items, and they are also popular with a wide range of age groups.

10.3 Processes, priorities and appropriacy

i) PROCESSES

Life cycle

You get married.
You fall in love with someone.
You get to know someone.
You have a baby.
You go out with someone.
You get divorced.
You get engaged.

Level: Mid-intermediate.

Suggested procedure: The sentences above should be written on the blackboard in random order. At this stage, tell the students not to write down the sentences, but to use their dictionaries or shared knowledge to clarify the meaning and pronunciation of any items which are new or only partially known. You will probably need to check understanding, particularly with the use of 'get' and the meaning of 'have' in 'to have a baby'; the prepositions may also require some attention. Some teachers may wish to include some controlled practice at this stage.

Practice: Next, put the students in pairs and ask them to discuss the 'correct' order for these activities. When a pair have finished, ask them to find another pair and compare answers. Finally, ask one pair to tell the class the order they arrived at.

Now ask the students whether there are any variations to this order; whether, for example, they know of people whose life did not conform in the usual style, or whether they know about any variations in different cultures. Ask them to discuss this in small groups.

Comment: The area of vocabulary in this example contains problems of form rather than concept for most learners. The activity gives the students considerable oral practice, and at the same time allows the teacher to check that students have understood the items. It often works best when there are a variety of ways of ordering the same set; this gives the students the opportunity to discuss the process and draw on a wider range of vocabulary than that which is contained in the exercise. The initial check on meaning can be either learner-centred or teacher-centred. It is inadvisable with this type of activity to give the sentences on a handout at the beginning; if you do, the students may simply write numbers next to the sentences or point to them, which defeats the object of practice! It would also be worthwhile pre-teaching or pre-checking certain items of transactional language:

e.g. I think the first thing is ...		First of all you ...
I think Y comes	before X.	Then you ...
	after	After that you ...
I think you Y	before you X.	
	after	

Processes: some further suggestions

The sets of items below all have a suggested level next to them, however, the particular items chosen within a set could be made more or less sophisticated according to the group. Some sets are clearly suitable for certain groups of people; students who may be interested in business,

Classroom activities

scientific or technical English will find some of them very relevant. Some activities are more 'controversial' than others; in other words, there is a greater chance of variations on a standard order in some sets than in others.

- 1 *Daily routines* (elementary/lower-intermediate)
put on your clothes / get up / wake up / take off your pyjamas / go to the bathroom / clean your teeth / have breakfast / have a shower (wash, bath, shave)
- 2 *Being ill – having flu* (lower-intermediate)
you feel sick or dizzy / your body aches / you feel better / you stay in bed / you have a headache / you feel very tired / you call the doctor / you take aspirins / you get up
- 3 *Driving a car* (upper-intermediate)
turn the steering wheel / put the key in the ignition / use the indicator / look in the rear view mirror / get into the driving seat / put your foot on the clutch / adjust the rear view mirror / unlock the door / let the handbrake off / start the car / put the car in first gear / pull out
(This process often causes considerable argument.)
- 4 *Things you do in an exam* (upper-intermediate)
get up / go over your answers carefully / make up the answers you don't know / read through the questions / put your pen down / cross out anything which is wrong / note down your ideas roughly / try to make out what the questions mean / pick up your pen / write the essays out neatly.
- 5 *Releasing a record* (upper-intermediate/advanced)
write the lyrics / find the performers / launch a publicity campaign / compose the music / release the record / record the album / design the record sleeve / raise the capital / approach a recording company / edit the album

You may also wish to devise sets on the following topics:

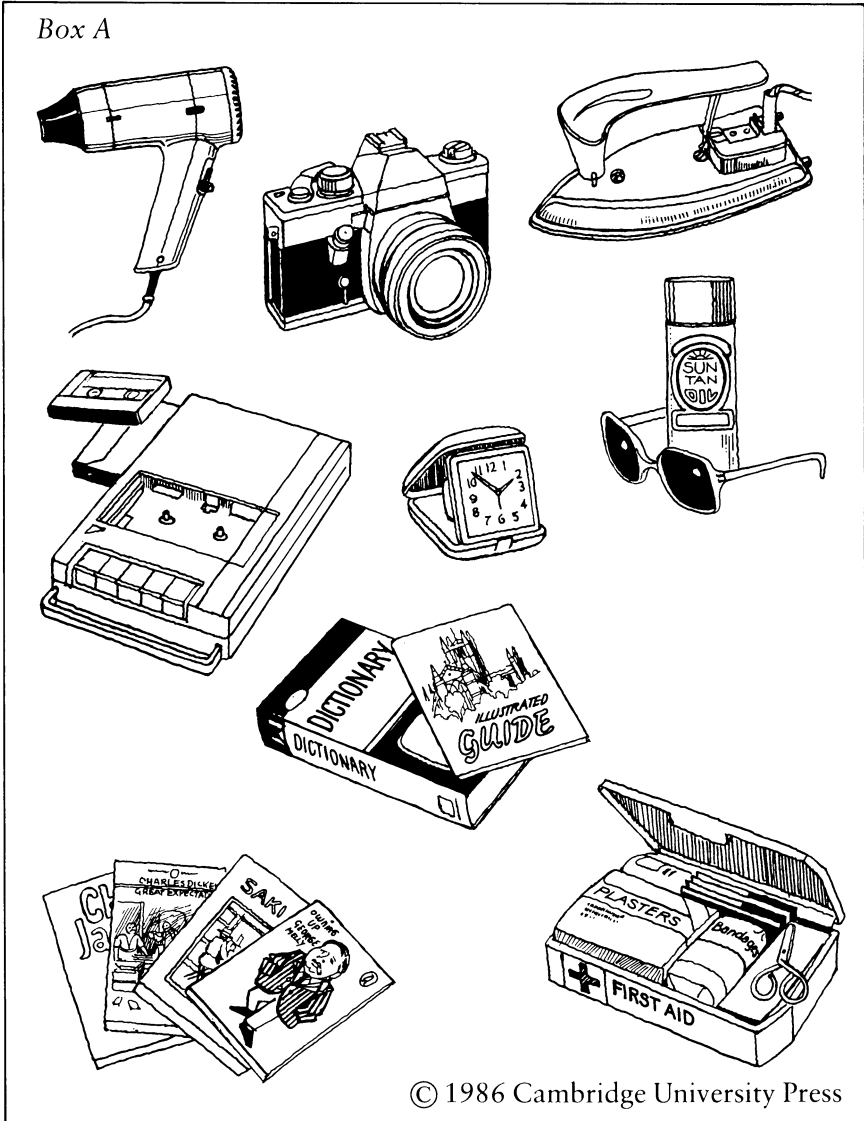
Renting a flat, making a purchase, changing a plug, using an electrical gadget, making a dish or hot drink, being arrested, being tried, making a phone call, deciding on the order of dishes in a meal.

If your students are not particularly interested in very culture-bound content, you can make the topics above relevant to their own environment.

ii) PRIORITIES

The procedure for teaching and practising vocabulary through 'priorities' (see below) is much the same as the procedure we have suggested for 'Processes'. There are many splendid and extremely generative examples of sets of priorities in *Discussions that Work* (Penny Ur, 1981). Here is one of our own examples.

Priorities: contents of a suitcase



Box B

A *two month* stay in . . .

- a) an English-speaking country where you are going to attend a language school and stay in a student hostel
- b) a variety of hotels on a seaside holiday
- c) a holiday campsite abroad
- d) a foreign country where you will be working for a company full-time

Level: Lower-intermediate, could be adapted for any level, as long as the students have some knowledge of comparatives.

Suggested procedure: Look again at the suggested procedure for the process on page 155 as it is applicable here. Hand out a copy of box A, write the vocabulary for it on the blackboard and clarify any difficulties of meaning and pronunciation. Explain to the students that they are going abroad for two months, and while packing their suitcases they find they only have room for four out of the ten items on the list. They will not have any extra money to buy the remaining items when they go abroad. Put the students in pairs or small groups and ask them to take the situations in box B and come to an agreement as to which four items they will take in each instance. Once they have decided, they can pair up with another group and thrash out their arguments again until they reach a common decision.

Comment: Again, students will be able to have a considerable amount of oral practice of the target items. This particular exercise may also be a useful vehicle for revising suggestions and accepting and rejecting them, and 'going to' to express intention.

Priorities: further suggestions

- 1 *The bathroom shelf* (advanced, if using all the vocabulary suggested, but teachers could restrict the items for lower levels).

Using the situations in box B above, which *eight* items would they put in their suitcases?

talc/toothbrush/toothpaste/soap/flannel/mouthwash/sponge/
nailbrush/hairbrush/comb/shampoo/conditioner/deodorant/
razor/perfume or eau de cologne/bath or shower gel/shaving foam/
antiseptic/body cream/cotton wool/plasters/aspirins

- 2 *Giving up smoking* (upper-intermediate)

Put in order of most important or useful to least important or useful:
give up smoking with a friend / stay away from smoky places /
throw away cigarettes and lighter / get rid of your ashtrays / put

aside the money you save / take up a new hobby / chew gum /
eat sweets / tell all your friends you are giving up

3 *Qualities required for a job* (intermediate)

Put qualities in order of importance for the jobs given:

Qualities: patient / friendly / hard-working / dedicated / studious /
responsible / imaginative / tactful / flexible

Jobs: doctor / receptionist / actor / diplomat

Look back also at the text 'Holidays go to the top of the perks list' on page 120, for an example of a set of priorities linked to a text; the gadgets illustrated on page 78 could also be exploited here: which items are dispensable or indispensable in the house or flat where you live?

iii) APPROPRIACY

These exercises provide semi-controlled practice of vocabulary items and they can be done in groups or pairs. Students are asked in each case to discuss the suitability or appropriacy of items in a variety of contexts. This can be a useful way of bringing disparate items together e.g.

Containers

Level: Intermediate.

Suggested procedure: Begin by teaching the items of vocabulary listed in box A (i.e. tube, bag, etc.) either through realia or using the visuals in the exercise. Then ask the students to look at the items in box B and name one container in each case which is normally used for these goods e.g. washing-up liquid is usually sold in plastic bottles.

Now put the students into pairs or groups and tell them to discuss each product in turn to find the maximum possible number of ways of packing it. They should consider the advantages and disadvantages in each case:

e.g. *Yoghurt:* usually sold in *tubs*, could be packed in *bottles* (but may be difficult to get it out), *great* in a *tube* (you could eat it discreetly on a bus, for example), would last a long time in a *can*, not very easy to carry in a *plastic bag*, etc.

Comment: It is important to plan in advance how to give maximum practice in the target items. In the case of the 'containers' vocabulary, you need to ask the students to discuss the *goods* in turn. (If you ask them to take each container in turn, then inevitably students will practise the 'goods' vocabulary instead.)

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Containers



Box A

tube bag bottle jar
can tub packet sachet

Box B

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------|
| 1. washing-up liquid | 5. glue |
| 2. yoghurt | 6. aspirins |
| 3. perfume | 7. fresh cream |
| 4. beans (cooked) | 8. coca cola |

Appropriacy: further suggestions

1 *Events* (intermediate)

Which of the following actions might happen in the events listed below? In each case, say how or why. It may not be possible to match them in every case.

Actions: To cry, to scream, to fight, to ride, to ring, to throw, to win, to hide, to draw, to burn, to shoot.

Events: A car crash, a party, a football match, a lesson.

As a follow-up activity students write a story in the past tense about one of the events above, using as many verbs as possible. (Many of these verbs are irregular.)

2 *Furniture and rooms* (beginners/elementary)

Which of the following pieces of furniture *could* be found in the different rooms?

Furniture: Bookshelf, cupboard, wardrobe, sofa, table, desk, record player, table lamp, basin.

Rooms: Kitchen, bedroom, living room, hall, dining room, study.

3 *Ways of reading* (upper-intermediate)

Ways of reading: To flick through something, to glance at something, to look something up, to read something carefully, to scan something, to read something aloud, to skim something.

Reading materials: A thriller, a newspaper (generally), a newspaper article, a dictionary, a book of photos, a history book, instructions for a new gadget you have just bought.

It would also be possible to devise similar exercises linking clothes and occasions, food and occasions, moods and types of books or films, ways of walking and events, etc.

Further reader activities

- 1 Devise a role play for further practice of vocabulary from the following:
 - a) the text on page 120, 'Holidays go to the top of the perks list'.
 - b) any suitable text you plan to use this week with your class.
- 2 Collect a set of pictures of disparate items you have taught your class recently. Use them as the basis for a narrative story similar to the one on page 150.
- 3 Experiment with one of the approaches described on page 150 which you have not used before. Either use the jogging picture story or a picture story of your own.

Classroom activities

- 4 Devise a mime story to practise one of the following:
 - a) something cooking
 - b) a street event (e.g. an accident)
 - c) 'make' versus 'do' (e.g. activities in the home).
- 5 Use one of the suggested topics for processes on page 156 and devise a set of items suitable for your class.

11 Games, questionnaires and problem solving

This last chapter of part C contains a 'mixed bag' of vocabulary practice activities. Most of these would be particularly useful for revision and further practice rather than presentation, and on the whole, they require very little preparation time. Many of the activities described would be useful as warmers or end-of-class activities.

i) PYRAMID GAME

Level: Intermediate upwards.

Suggested procedure: Choose about twelve lexical items you have taught in the previous few days and write them on a piece of paper in two columns. Thus:

<i>Student A</i>	<i>Student B</i>
a bend in the road	traffic lights
to skid	the boot of the car
the bumper	to swerve
to run someone over	to crash into something
foggy	a fork in the road
a zebra crossing	a careless driver

This vocabulary forms a clear lexical set but you may decide to make a more random selection.

Make as many copies of the columns as you need for your class and cut them in half. Put the students in pairs, facing each other, and give six of the items to one student in each pair. To this student explain that he has to define the words as quickly and clearly as possible so that student B can say what the word is. Student A can then go on to define the next word. He mustn't use any of the words on the card. It is usually clearer if you demonstrate to the group as a whole first:

e.g. Teacher: It's a long, yellow fruit with a skin you can't eat.

Students: Banana.

When student A has defined all his words and student B has guessed them, give student B his group of words to define for student A.

Classroom activities

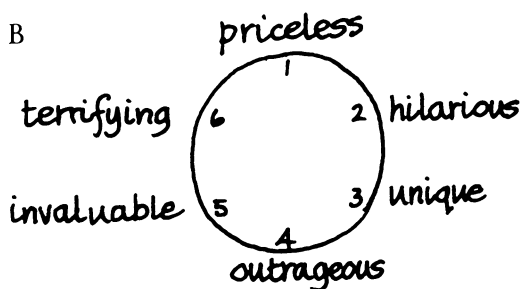
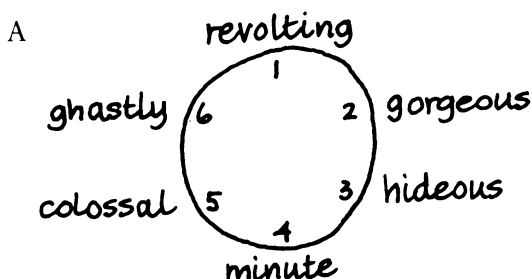
It is useful at the end to discuss as a group how the students described their items; this can provide an ideal opportunity to introduce and develop different ways of paraphrasing and defining.

Comment: This activity is an enjoyable way of revising and, if done on a regular basis, can give students valuable practice in paraphrase, circumlocution, etc.

ii) COMMON FEATURES

Level: Advanced. (This game is a further practice activity for the material on page 140.)

Suggested procedure: On the blackboard draw two circles and add the vocabulary thus:



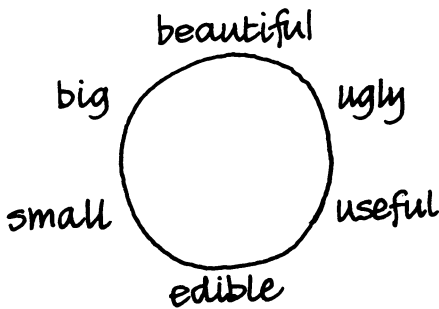
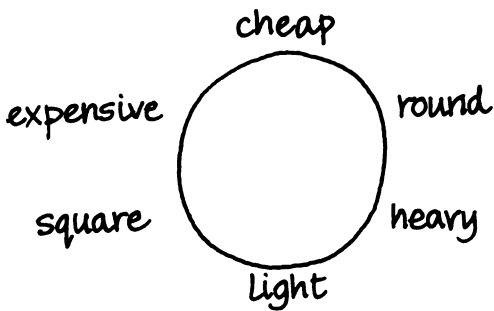
Divide the students into small groups and give each group a dice. All groups do the following activity at the same time.

One student in each group throws the dice twice; the first throw corresponds to dial A and the second to dial B. If, for example, he throws 5 the first time and 6 the second, his two words are 'colossal' and 'terrifying'. The group then has to make a note of the two words and think of something or someone which includes these two words

in their meaning (e.g. King Kong). The next student in the group takes his turn to throw the dice and the groups thus build up a set of about five to six two-word combinations and an example for each.

Now bring the whole class together, and ask the first group to tell their *example* (i.e. King Kong). The rest of the class then have to decide which two adjectives from the circles were the ones they had thrown.

Comment: For a low level, the same activity could be done with simple vocabulary e.g.



Note: Students may need more help from the teacher or a bilingual dictionary in finding examples if they are a lower level.

iii) NOUGHTS AND CROSSES

Level: All levels.

Suggested procedure: Draw two grids on the blackboard, filling in the squares on one grid with various headings and leaving the other one blank. The choice of headings depends entirely on the type of group and the items you wish to revise; here are two examples:

Classroom activities

preposition	past tense	adjective	clothes	furniture	sport
opposite	noun	spelling	shopping	food	work
pronunciation	adverb	verb	transport	cinema, theatre, T.V.	health

Before the lesson you should have prepared three or four questions on each of your chosen headings.

Divide the class into two teams and explain that the object of the game is for each team to try and secure a straight line of noughts (or crosses) on the grid; the line may be vertical, horizontal, or diagonal. In order to get a nought (or cross) in one of the squares the team must answer a question asked by the teacher based on the heading of their selected square. So, if team A want a nought in the top left hand corner they must answer a question on prepositions e.g. complete the sentence 'I'm not very keen ... tennis'. If the team cannot answer the question they do not get their nought in the square, but the question is not passed to the other team. As the teams answer questions correctly you put the noughts and crosses onto the empty grid on the blackboard.

Comment: We first encountered this game (as applied to the EFL classroom) in the Teacher's Book to *Contact English 1* (Colin Granger and Tony Hicks, 1977). We have used it very successfully with a wide range of classes and found it to be a very enjoyable way of revising vocabulary items from previous lessons.

iv) PELMANISM

Level: Intermediate upwards (although the vocabulary examples given here would be upper-intermediate or advanced).

Suggested procedure: Write a list of partial synonyms which you wish to revise with your class (about eight to twelve pairs of words will be sufficient) e.g. man/guy, child/kid, a pound/a quid, mad/round the bend.

Write each of these items on small pieces of card:

a man	a guy	a child	a kid
-------	-------	---------	-------

duplicating your sets according to the size of your class.

Divide the students into groups of four to five and give them a

set of cards which they place face down on a level surface in front of them. The first student turns up any two cards to see if they are partial synonyms; if they are, he keeps them, and if not, he turns them face down again, and the next player takes his turn. If the player turns up two partial synonyms (e.g. man/guy) he has to state the difference between them (i.e. 'guy' is more colloquial) to the satisfaction of his group. The winner is the student who accumulates most sets of cards. The game can be played several times in a row.

Comment: Although any vocabulary items can be recycled in this way, this is a particularly useful activity for revising items which students need to know for receptive purposes. With this particular example, the slang words may sound rather incongruous when spoken by students, but they may be useful items to recognise and understand in an English-speaking community.

v) QUESTIONNAIRE – 'MAKE' VERSUS 'DO'

Level: Intermediate.

Suggested procedure: Pre-teach the collocations of 'make' and 'do' listed in the questionnaire. You could display a set of visuals illustrating the vocabulary and ask the students to decide which verb ('do' or 'make') is used in each case; they could use dictionaries or shared knowledge to do this.

Practice: Give the students a copy of the questionnaire and ask them to carry out a class survey to find out whether these activities are predominantly carried out by men or women. Point out that they must use the appropriate verb in their question:

e.g. In your house, | who does the shopping?
 | who makes the most money?

At the end of the group work, it may be fun to compile the results.

Comment: This is a controlled practice activity with a communicative aim. It also revises the 'household activity' vocabulary.



STUDENT ACTIVITY

'MAKE' AND 'DO' – a questionnaire

In your house, who *does* or *makes* things?

Ask the other people in your group and fill in the information about them.

Who *does* or *makes* these?

	<i>a man</i>	<i>a woman</i>	<i>either</i>	<i>who?</i> <i>you / your brother /</i> <i>wife / friend / father /</i> <i>etc.</i>
<i>the shopping</i>			X	Juan or mother or sister
<i>the washing-up</i>				
<i>the cooking</i>				
<i>the bed(s)</i>				
<i>the cleaning</i>				
<i>the decorating</i>				
<i>the most money</i>				
<i>the ironing</i>				
<i>a mess</i>				
<i>most of the decisions</i>				

vi) MARRIAGE QUIZ (LASDE)

Level: Upper-intermediate.

Suggested procedure: Allow students to work together to discover the meaning of the italicised words using shared knowledge and dictionaries. Ask them to guess the answers to any questions they don't know: this will make the correct answers more interesting! This activity can be done as a team game with points awarded for good answers. Students can then discuss the differences between marriage in Great Britain and in their own countries.

Comment: Another approach here would be to give the students extra supplementary reading material; *Life in Britain* (Brookes and Fraenkel, 1982) has a paragraph on weddings where the answers to some of the questions could be found. Alternatively, this information could be given to half the group who in the feedback could then correct the guesses of the other half. It is often possible to link vocabulary teaching and cultural information in this way.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

MARRIAGE QUIZ – see how much you know about English marriage!

- 1 When do people *get engaged*?
- 2 What happens to the *bride* and *groom* during a wedding?
- 3 Why wouldn't you see any women at a *stag party*?
- 4 What happens in a *registry office*?
- 5 Who pays for the *reception*?
- 6 If you were asked to *toast* the bride and groom, what would you say?
- 7 Where do most people spend their *honeymoon*?
- 8 Why can't a *bachelor* also be a *bigamist*?
- 9 Can anyone be a *spinster*?

© 1986 Cambridge University Press

vii) HAIR PROBLEM SOLVING ACTIVITY (MARRIAGE LINES)

Level: Upper-intermediate upwards.

Suggested procedure: This activity is a useful follow up to the semantic field exercise on page 104. Students can either do this in pairs in class or on their own for homework.

(The answers are: 1 Mr Foyle's 2 dark hair 3 Mr Foyle is bald.)

Classroom activities

Comment: Try doing this activity yourself. It's virtually impossible to do it without repeatedly mumbling the relevant vocabulary either aloud or 'in your head'. It would be simple to vary the vocabulary and for example, describe the people as living in a cottage, detached house, semi-detached house, terraced house, etc.

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Marriage Lines**

Messrs Lagan, Foyle, Bann and Erne are neighbours. Three of them are married. One of the four is bald, one redheaded and one dark-haired.

Mr Erne isn't redheaded, nor is he dark-haired, but is married.

Mr Lagan isn't bald nor is he fairhaired, but is single.

Mrs Bann is blonde but her husband is neither dark-haired nor bald.

Mr Foyle doesn't have either fair or dark hair.

Mr Erne's wife is dark-haired while the bald-headed man has a redheaded wife.

With this set of facts, can you work out the following:

1. Whose wife is a redhead?
2. What colour hair has the single man?
3. Mrs Foyle's husband has which hair colour?

(from Gyles Brandreth's *Book of Puzzles and Brainteasers*.)

Further reader activities

- 1 Devise a quiz (similar to the one on p. 169) which practises/revises vocabulary on one of the following topics:
 - a) politics
 - b) education
 - c) illnesses
 - d) entertainments
 - e) sports
- 2 Devise a pelmanism game (see p. 166) with twenty paired words to revise one of the following:
 - a) work vocabulary (see p. 136 for some examples)
 - b) 'extreme' adjectives (see p. 141)
 - c) clothes vocabulary (e.g. 'jeans' versus 'trousers', 'boots' versus 'shoes', 'shirt' versus 'blouse')
- 3 Devise a questionnaire to practise/revise relevant vocabulary for one of the following:
 - a) You and your personality.
 - b) Holidays and travel.
 - c) Leisure activities.