

DIDACTIC STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN SEVENTH AND EIGHT GRADES IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN COSTA RICA

*Dunia Navarro**

*Milagro Piñeiro**

RESUMEN

El siguiente artículo tiene como finalidad proporcionar, a los/las profesores de inglés como lengua extranjera, de treinta y dos estrategias didácticas utilizadas por estudiantes practicantes mientras realizaron su práctica docente supervisada en instituciones de enseñanza secundaria de la Dirección Regional de Enseñanza de San Ramón, y validadas por sus profesores supervisores durante los años del 2000 hasta el 2007.

Estas estrategias didácticas han sido modificadas tomando en consideración los gustos e intereses de los estudiantes de secundaria, específicamente de séptimo y octavo año, de acuerdo con los contenidos incluidos en el Programa de estudios del Ministerio de Educación Pública de Costa Rica. De igual forma, cada estrategia didáctica incluida en este trabajo, no excede más de veinte minutos y se clasifica en relación con el nivel de dificultad y destreza lingüística utilizada, lo que se constituye en una alternativa innovadora, divertida y que estimula el fortalecimiento de las destrezas lingüísticas de los estudiantes de forma colaborativa.

Palabras clave: Estrategias didácticas, enseñanza y aprendizaje del inglés, estudiantes practicantes, práctica docente supervisada, aprendizaje colaborativo.

ABSTRACT

The following article aims to provide, to the teachers of English as a foreign language, of thirty-two educational strategies used by practicum students while developing their practice teaching experience at secondary schools from the Regional Bureau of Education of San Ramon, and validated by their faculty supervisors since 2000 to 2007. These teaching strategies have been modified taking into account the likes and interests of high school students, specifically seventh and eighth graders, in accordance with the contents included in the curriculum of the Ministry of Public Education of Costa Rica. Similarly, each didactic strategy included in this work does not exceed more than 20 minutes and is classified in relation to the level of difficulty and linguistic skills used, which constitutes an innovative, fun alternative, which encourages the strengthening of linguistic skills of students in a collaborative way.

Key Words: Didactic strategies, teaching and learning of English, practicum students, practice teaching experience, collaborative learning.

* Profesoras Sede de Occidente, Universidad de Costa Rica.
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Preface

The word didactic comes from the Greek language “*didaskhein*”. It means teaching and “*tékne*” suggests art; “art of teaching”. Didactic refers to the principles, phenomena, forms, precepts, and laws of teaching with no subject in particular (Stöcker, 1964).

Medina (2003, p.7), defines didactic as:

A discipline of pedagogical nature that focuses on the teaching goals and compromise with the aim of better human beings through the understanding and permanent change of the social communicative developments, and the receiving and appropriate growth of the teaching and learning process.

For this reason, we define didactic as the discipline that studies techniques, procedures, strategies, and methods to enhance the teaching process for students to approach in a wide, deep, and significant way the knowledge in the process of acquisition of English as a foreign language.

Vadillo and Klingler (2005), affirms that didactic strategies point to the group of developed activities considering not only students’ understanding of ideas but also a mutual relationship among specific information and a particular activity, as general norm of input. With the implementation of strategies in the process of teaching English, the professor looks for a common project. In a collaborative group, all students make the duties together, that means that they construct the knowledge mutually. According to Brufee “The basis of collaborative learning is the construction of agreement through group cooperation.” (cited in Arcos, 27).

Therefore, didactic strategies should be seen as: on purpose organization of the teaching and learning process structure to achieve goals, in which students not only learn a subject matter, but also gain knowledge of other forgotten contents as the capacity of cooperation, respect for oneself and the others’ differences, and value of people as human beings.

Frabonni (1998, p. 60), asserts that regarding school curriculum, didactic is in charge of elaborating the ideal teaching procedures to promote the alphabetization process or the acquisition of knowledge of subject matters; it

refers also to meta cognition strategies, such as being able to understand, to apply, to analyze, to make synthesis, to perceive, and of course to create. Consequently, Frabonni (1998, op.cit), proposed an empiric decalogue called: “ten words for the didactic”, it refers to ten didactic strategies for the teachers to guide the students into cultural diversity and rights in order to have the benefit of equal learning opportunities.

Regarding the decalogue, a summary of the sequential order is going to be provided for a better understanding of each one of the concepts suggested by Frabonni (1998, p. 160-166), and considered, by the authors when writing the didactic strategies.

Decalogue:

Planning; determines the objectives the students are going to achieved.

Continuity; makes reference to longitudinal continuity and transversal continuity; the first one refers to the transition of the student from a level to another, and the second one proposes the relation of the school to the whole world.

Class; focuses on individual learning process according to students’ likes and needs.

Interclass; refers to students’ participation in extra class settings: labs, workshops, plays, and so on.

Individualization; centers on the cognitive style of each student, the individual learning process.

Disciplinary; refers to the assimilation of each subject.

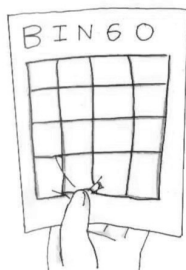
Interdisciplinary; works with the transversal topics studied in all subjects.

Didactic unit; provides the student with the operative modalities to acquire the cognitive morphology of each discipline.

Didactic project; investigates the natural and socio cultural environment.

Assessment; includes the diagnostic, as well as the formative and summative evaluation process.

1. Irregular Tense Verb Bingo



SKILLS: LISTENING, READING
MATERIALS: BINGO CARDS, PAPERS
CATEGORY: INDIVIDUAL WORK

Objectives:

- To identify the past tense of verbs by means of playing a bingo game.
- To react toward instructions for setting a task.

Procedures:

1. Prepare a set of bingo cards.
2. Give every student one of the bingo cards and little pieces of paper.
3. Call out the simple form of a regular or irregular verb. The students should cover with the little piece of paper the past tense of the verb.
4. The first student to cover five verbs in a row shouts "Bingo!" Walk over and check for accuracy, or call out the student to see if the verbs are in fact correct.
5. For variety, ask for different completions, as an irregular bingo: five up or down, diagonals, across, or four corners. Or use copies for the same card so that all students shout "Bingo!" at the same time.

Suggestions:

You could also make game cards with either the past or past participle and require students to find the other form (in this case the basic form is not used).

2. Recognition Relay



SKILLS: LISTENING
MATERIALS: BOARD, CHALK
CATEGORY: TEAM WORK

Objectives:

- To act in response of language spoken at near normal speed in everyday circumstances.
- To transfer the information heard to visual form.

Procedures:

1. Ahead of time, write 100 numbers in mixed order on each half of the board, using a different order for the two lists.
2. Prepare in advance a list of the numbers in the order in which you will call them during the game.
3. Choose from your class two teams of ten students each and have them stand in lines with their backs to the board.
4. Give a piece of chalk to the player nearest the board at the end of each line.
5. As you call the first number in your list, the two students with the chalk turn around and cross out the number you have called, each on his half of the board.
6. As soon as a player has crossed out the number, announce the second number. The first player will give the chalk to the next player in line and then take his/her seat.
7. The team that wins is the one that first finishes crossing out the numbers you call.

8. If a student makes a mistake in crossing out a number, he/she must return to the board, erase the mistake, rewrite the number, and then cross out the correct one.

Suggestions:

The students at their seats could help you check that the correct numbers are crossed out. With one hundred numbers on the board, you could choose new teams until every student in the class has had the turn to participate.

3. Chain Spelling



SKILLS: LISTENING, WRITING,
MATERIALS: SHEET OF PAPER, PEN
CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To react toward instructions for setting a task.
- To identify specific details.
- To label and select appropriate letters to form words.

Procedures:

1. One player begins by spelling a word in the category decided upon: The rest of the group and the teacher write each word down on a sheet of paper.
2. The next player must spell a word in the same category but beginning with the last letter of the first word spelled.
3. Any player beginning with the wrong letter, misspelling the word, or giving a word outside the category is dropped out from the game.

4. The game may continue until there is a single winner.

Suggestions:

A student can be sent to the board to write words down and check correct spelling of words.

4. Image sentences



SKILLS: WRITING, READING
MATERIALS: NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES,
SHEETS OF PAPER, GLUE, SCISSORS, PEN
CATEGORY: PAIR WORK

Objectives:

- To convey familiar factual information by writing appropriate sentences.
- To identify specific details when asked.
- To respond to visual stimuli.

Procedures:

1. Divide the class into pairs. Give each group some newspapers, magazines, and sheets of paper.
2. Have each group cut some images out, paste them on the sheets of paper, and write ten sentences using the verb TO BE and the verb TO HAVE.
3. Have each group read their statements aloud while presenting to the class the images the statements describe.
4. The first group that presents ten correct statements wins.

Suggestions:

Different verb tenses could also be used in order to achieve this didactic strategy.

5. Imaginary



SKILLS: LISTENING, WRITING, READING
 MATERIALS: TAPE RECORDER, INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC, SHEETS AND PEN
 CATEGORY: INDIVIDUAL WORK

Objectives:

- To react toward instructions for setting a task.
- To express likes and feelings in a written form.
- To refer to recent experiences and everyday activities.

Procedures:

1. Ask students to close their eyes, relax, listen to the instrumental music in the background, and visualize a setting where they would like to be. Ask students: What are they doing in that place? What is the weather like? What do they see? Who is with them? Where are they sitting or standing? How do they feel? Give them three minutes to picture the scenery.
2. Ask them to open their eyes, take a paper, and describe of what they just imagined.
3. Encourage students to read about the place they would most like to be at.

Suggestions:

Before starting the activity, you may want to demonstrate by telling students where you most like to be at and what you see yourself doing there.

6. Sequence Tale



SKILLS: LISTENING, SPEAKING, WRITING
 MATERIALS: A 2" X 4" CARD PER STUDENT WITH A VERB WRITTEN ON EACH, SHEETS AND PEN
 CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To comprehend short passages made up of familiar language.
- To take part in short conversations.
- To refer to recent experiences and everyday act.
- To adapt language to parallel situations.

Procedures:

1. Sit students on a circle.
2. Give each student a card with the simple form of a verb. The verb may have regular or irregular past forms.
3. You start a tale by saying out loud a sentence. Going around in the circle, each student adds a new sentence to the tale, using their verb in past tense. The tale will be serious or funny, but it should make some sort of sense.
4. After all students have participated, have them to repeat the tale for the students to write it down, as well as you.
5. Write it down on the board for students to check grammatical structures and spelling of words.

7. Observing People



SKILLS: LISTENING, WRITING, READING
 MATERIALS: SHEETS AND PEN
 CATEGORY: EXTRA CLASS WORK

Objectives:

- To produce paragraphs, using simple descriptive language.
- To perform simple familiar tasks that require some elementary linking of sentences and structuring of ideas.
- To use the target language to describe details.

Procedures:

1. Have students go to different places where there are used to be a lot of people, such as: library, park, cafeteria, bookstore, soccer field, mall, etc.
2. Tell them to stay there the necessary time to observe the different activities people do.
3. Ask them to write down as many sentences as they can according to the activities people did.
4. They will present an oral exposition next class.

Suggestions:

Have students present their written report as well as the oral exposition. A specific grading scale could be prepared by the teacher in order to assess students' work.

8. What is happening in the picture?



SKILLS: WRITING, READING
 MATERIALS: WORKSHEETS, PENS, AND PICTURES WITH PEOPLE PERFORMING DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES
 CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To choose the appropriate form of writing for a particular task.
- To describe people or settings related with everyday activities.

Procedures:

1. Divide the class into groups of three or four. Give each group the same picture, or put it on an overhead projector.
2. Instruct the groups to use a specific verb tense to make as many sentences as possible in the time allowed. These sentences must be grammatically correct and accurately describe what is happening in the picture.
3. Set the time.
4. The team with the most correct answers at the end of the time limit wins.
5. To determine accuracy, have each group read their sentences or write them on the board.

Suggestions:

Give each group different pictures to carry out this didactic strategy.

9. Jog Your Memory



SKILLS: LISTENING, WRITING, SPEAKING
 MATERIALS: SHORT VIDEO SEGMENT,
 PAPER, PEN
 CATEGORY: WHOLE CLASS

Objectives:

- To appreciate short passages made up of familiar language.
- To apply simple descriptive language when referring to past events.
- To develop communication.
- To express ideas based on a passage.

Procedures:

1. Show the class a short video (2-3 minutes). This could be a short segment from a TV show video, or a commercial.
2. Tell students to watch carefully and to concentrate on what is being said. They should not take notes.
3. Put students in groups and set a time limit.
4. Have them write as many sentences as they can to describe what they just watched.
5. Have them read the sentences out aloud.
6. The group that has more correct sentences wins.

10. Guess the Verb Tenses



SKILLS: LISTENING, WRITING, SPEAKING
 MATERIALS: CD PLAYER, SONG LYRIC,
 PAPER, PEN
 CATEGORY: PAIR WORK

Objectives:

- To transfer the information heard to written form.

- To fill in the blanks with appropriate vocabulary.
- To express decisions.

Procedures:

1. Find a lyric that contains different verbs tenses.
2. Divide the class into pairs and give each pair a copy of the lyric with the verbs rub out.
3. The students work together to decide which tenses are more appropriate.
4. Play the song at least two times, so the students can check their answers.
5. Elicit from the students why they chose one tense over another.

11. The Magic Ball



SKILLS: WRITING, READING, SPEAKING
 MATERIALS: AN INDEX CARD PER
 STUDENT, PEN, BAG, AND A MAGIC BALL
 CATEGORY: INDIVIDUAL WORK

Objectives:

- To put in writing several sentences to predict the future.
- To structure questions based on given information.
- To take part in conversations.
- To identify main points and personal responses.

Procedures:

1. Give each student an index card.
2. Have students write two predictions from their classmates on their index cards- one using WILL and the other using GOING TO.

3. Tell them to make general predictions so they could be applied to anyone in the class.
4. Predictions can be serious or fun, and should be positive.
5. Put all the cards into a bag.
6. Each student chooses a card. If a student chose the card he/she wrote, he/she replaces it and chooses another.
7. The students read one of the predictions on the card, turn it over, and on the back write one question that might come before the prediction.

Example: You will win a hundred dollars.
Will I win the lottery this weekend?

8. Collect the cards again. Pull out the magic ball and announce that the teacher has a magic ball that can tell them the future.
9. The teacher reads the ball's answers to the class. Everyone will want to question the ball at least once.
10. If there is enough time, they can read the second question for the second prediction.

Suggestions:

Instead of using a magic ball, you can prepare some general answers on slips of paper, such as yes, no, definitely, probably not, it's unclear at this time, etc.

12. Find Me Quickly



SKILLS: LISTENING, SPEAKING
MATERIALS: PICTURES WITH PEOPLE, TAGS
CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To ask and respond to oral and visual stimuli.

- To take part in short conversations.
- To scan for locating specific required information.

Procedures:

1. Make groups of five students.
2. Have two students to be the time checkers.
3. Stick many pictures on the board showing people with different physical appearance; assign a number to each one of them.
4. Call a student from one group and say a number of a picture for him/her to observe it discreetly, the rest of the group cannot know what the indicated picture is.
5. His/her classmates must ask questions about the physical appearance and clothing of the people in order to guess who the chosen person was.
6. The student who is answering the questions cannot look at the board.
7. When the group knows who the person is, a member of the group must point to the picture and the teacher verifies if that is correct.
8. The time checker students must indicate how much time the group needed to find the person.
9. When the group finishes, it is the turn of the other group.
10. The group with more points is the winner.

Suggestions:

The group that guesses the fastest gets two points (one for guessing and one for being the fastest).

13. Guessing who am I



SKILLS: SPEAKING
MATERIALS: NONE
CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To respond to language spoken at near normal speed.
- To ask for and respond to Yes/No questions.

Procedures:

1. Decide a category (famous people, occupations, food, animals, etc)
2. Choose one student to answer questions to the rest of the class. Show the student a word in a piece of paper. The word should be an object or a person. Have this student sit in front of the class and answer only yes or no to any question asked of him/her.
3. The class should only ask yes/no questions too. The purpose is to discover the name of the object, animal, food or the person's identity.
4. The class is allowed to ask only ten questions. If they can guess the person or object's identity before or by the ten questions, the class wins. If they do not guess correctly, the student wins.

Suggestions:

To make the game more challenging, you may want to omit step 1, so that the students use up some of their questions determining the category.

14. The Journalist



SKILLS: READING, WRITING, AND SPEAKING.

MATERIALS: ONE NEWSPAPER ARTICLE FOR EACH STUDENT, SHEET OF PAPER, PEN

CATEGORY: PAIR WORK

Objectives:

- To extract relevant specific information from such texts as newspaper articles.

- To scan for locating specifically required information.

Procedures:

1. Provide a newspaper article for each student, or invite students to bring one to the class.
2. Have them read the article and write six Wh-questions based on it.
3. Divide the class into pairs. Have each partner check each other's questions for grammatical accuracy. Then the partners trade articles and answer the questions by reviewing the material in the news articles.
4. Students and teacher check questions and answers orally.
5. Teacher picks papers up to check it at home.

Suggestions:

If you have time distribute old news magazine for students to find articles. You may want to suggest an approximate size for these articles.

15. Concentration



SKILLS: SPEAKING, READING
 MATERIALS: GRID, FILLED- IN GRID, BOARD, CHALK (MARKER)
 CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To react toward instructions for setting a task.
- To use reference materials to find verbs.

Procedures:

1. Draw a blank grid with numbers on the board.

On the board

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20

2. Divide the class into teams of five students.
3. Each team takes turns calling out two numbers, trying to match words (singular-plurals, present tense - past tense, etc).
4. As the number is called, write in the word that corresponds to the number from your filled-in grid. Warn the teams to wait until you write the word before they call out a second number.

On the teacher's paper

1 go	2 go	3 became	4 was	5 began
6 have	7 is	8 went	9 put	10 were
11 put	12 are	13 had	14 begin	15 run
16 become	17 went	18 ran	19 won	20 win

5. If a team makes a match, draw a circle around them. The team then makes another turn. If the team does not make the match, erase the two words.
6. Team members may discuss together, but remind them that this is also a memory game, so no writing is allowed.

Suggestions:

You can use this game to review plural spelling rules, irregular plural forms, or a combination.

16. Guess which occupation I am describing

SKILLS: SPEAKING

MATERIALS: CARDS WITH DIFFERENT NAMES OF OCCUPATIONS, THREE COLOR CARDS, A CLOCK.

CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To understand familiar language used to describe occupations.
- To respond with single words or short phrases to what is heard

Procedure:

1. Make groups of three people each.
2. Give a different color card to each group.
3. You will need a helper, who will be in charge of holding a card containing an occupation name behind the participant from each group.
4. When it is time to participate, every group will have to go in front of the class in order to be sat two facing one.
5. The helper will stand behind the person, who will not be able to see the card the helper is holding about occupations.
6. The idea is to have the pair to make mimics for their classmate in order for him/her to guess the occupation contained in the card being hold.
7. When the student guesses the occupation they will have to switch places. One student will move to face the other two and the process is repeated.
8. Each group will have one minute to guess as many occupations as possible. The group that guesses the most will be the winner.

Suggestions:

This game could be used with any other type of useful vocabulary according to students' interests.

Instead of cards, a video beam projector could also be used, so pictures could be shown in a bigger screen to be well observable by the entire class.

17. The caterpillar



SKILLS: SPEAKING

MATERIALS: A CATERPILLAR SHAPE ROD MADE OF DIFFERENT COLOR PAPER AND CONTAINING AS MANY CHUNKS AS IT IS WISHED, A DICE

CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To identify specific details from the topics selected by the teacher. (greetings, leave takings, introductions, alphabet, commands, classroom objects, prepositions, descriptions of objects)
- To show understanding of the contents learned.

Procedures to make the caterpillar:

- Draw ten big circles on a color paper (similar to a basket ball) cut them to figure the caterpillar.
- Draw the caterpillar's face on the first circle, write the word START on the second circle, and the word FINISH on the last circle.
- For the caterpillar's tail draw a triangle.
- You will need five small color paper circles, which will be stuck to the caterpillar's tail. These circles are the ones to be moved by turns as dice shows. Each color will represent a group.
- Also, you will need some envelopes with questions or commands, for the different tasks the students will be carrying out based on the caterpillar's number of chunks.

Procedures:

1. The teacher places the big caterpillar rod on the floor.
2. Students select a colored circle to represent each group.

3. There must be called a student, who will be known as the coordinator, to represent the group and who will be rolling the dice and moving the colored circle by walking as many spaces as it indicates.
4. Each coordinator will perform the task indicated in the envelope placed on randomly spaces along the caterpillar. Teacher decides the number of tasks to be performed according to students' requirements.
5. The group whose coordinator gets to travel along the caterpillar first will be the winner.

Suggestions for possible tasks:

- Describe the classmate next to you
- Tell 5 directions or instructions to one of your classmates
- Introduce yourself to one of your classmates.
- Get back two steps
- Name five classroom objects and what are they used for
- Use prepositions to tell the location of five people or objects in the classroom
- Describe your classroom
- Get back one step
- Exchange greetings and leave takings with a classmate from your group.
- Make and introduction of yourself to your classmates.
- Tell informal greetings.
- Get back three steps.
- Choose a partner from your group and tell his/her personal information to your classmates.
- Spell your full name
- Tell five locations of objects in your bedroom.
- Describe two objects use size, shape, and color for your classmates to guess what it is.

18. Describing with my hands!



SKILLS: SPEAKING

MATERIALS: MASKS, CLASSROOM OBJECTS

CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To reinforce students' listening skills.
- To reinforce students' knowledge when describing classroom objects.

Procedures:

1. The teacher introduces the topic about describing classroom objects.
2. The teacher asks students to make groups of six; it depends on the size of the group (invites students to sit in small circles).
3. The teacher gives each student a mask and motivates them to wear it along the activity so, it would blind them.
4. Also students receive a classroom object.
5. Each student has to say a specific characteristic related with the shape, material, size, or other characteristic of the object in his/her hand. Teacher will call some students out to say these characteristics, while the others will be paying close attention.
6. Ask students not to repeat the same characteristics heard from their others classmates when called, unless there is no other characteristic to say.
7. The student will tell the teacher the name of the classroom object he/she has according to what is guessed.
8. While doing this, other student could guess the name of the object being described in order to get a point.
9. The winner will be the student who guesses the most objects.
10. To perform this, teacher must indicate students to control noise while participating.

19. Blockbusters

SKILLS: SPEAKING

MATERIALS: A COPY OF THE GRID, COPY OF THE ENLARGED GRID WITH A LETTER OF THE ALPHABET IN EACH FIGURE.

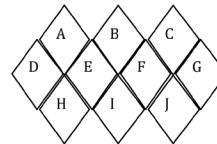
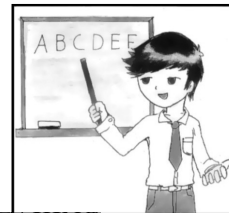
CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objective:

- To improve listening skill and at the same time, students can go over vocabulary studied in class.

Procedures:

1. Stick an enlarged copy of the grid on the board (see picture).
2. Divide your class into three teams and nominate a student to choose a letter from each group.
3. From a previously prepared word list of the vocabulary under study, choose a word whose first letter matches the student's choice, and explain the meaning of the word to the class.
4. Students will have to pay close attention to each explanation in order to guess the word from the list being described.
5. The group that guesses the word correctly claims the hexagon and chooses to continue.
6. To win the game, a team must get as many hexagons as possible.

**20. The occupations / memory game**

SKILLS: SPEAKING

MATERIALS: SET OF CARDS WITH OCCUPATIONS

CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objective:

- To reinforce the name of the different occupations by identifying them in a memory game.

Procedures:

1. Make groups of four students and invite them to sit on the floor.
2. Distribute a set of cards (a complete set) to each group.
3. Explain them how to play. The idea is to place all the cards backwards on the floor, every student will have one turn to pick two cards in order to make a pair and say its name out aloud, each picture has to match with its corresponding description.
4. If there is a correct matching, the student who is playing will have one extra turn to make another matching.
5. The student who matches the most cards will be the winner.

Suggestions:

This activity could be adapted to many vocabulary sets in order to reinforce more words.

If teachers prepare only one set, this could be pasted on the board to play with the whole class. In this case, the student who makes the most pairs will be the winner.

21. Setting classroom norms together

SKILLS: READING

MATERIALS: FIVE TO SIX CARDBOARD PAPERS, FIVE TO SIX MARKERS, ADHESIVE TAPE, A COPY OF THE SUGGESTED CLASSROOM NORMS PROPOSED BY THE TEACHER

CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To understand simple classroom norms in order to have a pleasant learning environment.
- To use the target language to set up important classroom norms.
- To value the importance of respecting classroom norms.

Procedures:

1. Teacher explains students that they are going to establish the norms of the class.
2. Students make six groups.
3. Then, teacher gives a cardboard paper, a marker to each group, and distributes a copy of the suggested norms for each group to choose the norms they like the most or if they prefer they can think of the norms that will help to create a nice classroom environment.
4. Once each group work is finished, teacher sticks another cardboard with all the norms included in the suggested list.
5. A student from each group comes to the board to put a “check mark” on those norms that they choose as part of their own.
6. Finally, the teacher chooses 5 of those norms and writes them down in a big cardboard which will bring the next class.

Suggestions:

Ask students to make the same groups, but this time, they will be motivated to write their own classroom norms. Every group will have a coordinator who is going to be in charge of presenting their norms to the class. Teacher will discuss these norms with students in order to choose the most appropriate ones.



22. Show me the right demonstrative



SKILLS: LISTENING

MATERIALS: FOUR CARDS CONTAINING EACH DEMONSTRATIVE, TAPE

CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

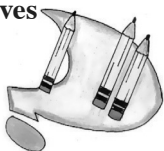
- To respond with a head movement to what is heard.
- To identify the correct demonstrative by responding to what is heard.
- To understand better the demonstratives by listening and associating them with the word they see and the movement they make.

Procedures:

1. Teacher sticks some cards with different demonstrative on the wall of the classroom.
2. Teacher has students to stand up and make three rows of ten students each one.
3. All of them have to look at the teacher, listen to a sentence, and look at the wall with the same demonstrative the teacher said.
4. Students repeat the same movement depending on the demonstrative they listen on each case.

Suggestions:

This activity could be used as a `warm up` to introduce the topic or to reinforce it.

23. Let`s use demonstratives

SKILLS: SPEAKING

MATERIALS: REALIA, AUTHENTIC MATERIAL

CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objective:

- To apply demonstratives and vocabulary by asking and responding simple Yes/No questions.

Procedures:

1. Teacher explains inside the classroom the activity because it is going to be done outside of it.

2. Teacher divides the group in 2 subgroups and has students make 2 circles, one inside the other.
3. All of them facing another student from the other circle
4. Students from the inner circle point to one object from those around them, and make a sentence using demonstratives and verbs.
5. Then, the student that is in front has to make a Yes/No question from the sentence his/her partner already made.
6. The student who made the sentence has to give a correct response to the question.
7. After 5 minutes, teacher claps hands and students change their roles, those who were making a question have to make sentences and vice versa
8. Once students understand the activity teacher will take them out to a suitable place in the high school to play.

Suggestions:

If it is not possible to go outside, the activity could be played in the classroom, but in this case, teacher will stick pictures around the wall with different objects, for students to use them during in the activity.

24. How many words can you remember?

SKILLS: WRITING

MATERIALS: A COPY CONTAINING CLASSROOM OBJECTS AND PERSONAL ITEM PICTURES.

CATEGORY: INDIVIDUAL WORK

Objectives:

- To recognize vocabulary learned about classroom objects and personal items.
- To reinforce vocabulary learned about classroom objects and personal items by recalling it.

Procedures:

1. Teacher gives to each student a copy with pictures of classroom objects and personal items.
2. Teacher explains students that they are going to look at the pictures for about 3 minutes.
3. Then teacher invite students to put the copy away, and take out a sheet of paper and a pencil to write their name on it.
4. At the count of three students will have to write in a minute, all the words they remember from the copy.
5. When the teacher clap hands, everybody stops.
6. Students are asked to exchange papers with a classmate, who will check the spelling of words.
7. If students have any doubt about spelling, they can ask the teacher or check it on their own notebooks.
8. Every student will get a total number of good words which is going to be written on top of the page.
9. The student who remembers the most correct words will be the winner.

25. The alphabet competition



SKILLS: LISTENING

MATERIALS: LAMINATED CARDS CONTAINING THE LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET, TAPE, TWO PIECES OF CHALK
 CATEGORY: WORK WORK

Objective:

- To show understanding of the alphabet by discriminating the pronunciation of each letter correctly.

Procedures:

1. Teacher randomly sticks laminated letters of the alphabet on the board.

2. Divide class in two halves. Group A and B.
3. Have a student from each group to come to the board and give each group a piece of chalk.
4. Then, teacher says out loud a letter; the student who gets to it first and makes a big X on it will win a point.
5. The group that makes the most points will be the winner

Suggestions:

This game can also be played with numbers; in this case, laminated cards with numbers are used.

If a student does not want to play, he/she could be then replaced by another classmate from his/her group.

26. Drawing together



SKILLS: LISTENING

MATERIALS: SHEET OF PAPER, PENCIL

CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To recognize vocabulary related to people's physical appearance by making drawings about it and reinforcing the language structures
- To show respect towards the different features while carrying out the activity.

Procedures:

1. Teacher asks students to make a circle and take out a sheet of paper.
2. Teacher gives the instructions for carrying out the activity.
3. Students have to listen carefully to the teacher's description of some physical features, so students have to draw the first

feature the teacher says and then pass their sheet of paper to their next partner.

4. Then, teacher gives the second description and students have to draw it too, and pass it again.
5. At the end of the activity, the students will have the drawing of a person drawn by many of their classmates.
6. Teacher shows students' final draft to the whole class in order for them to appreciate what is been drawn at last.

27. Guessing the adjective



SKILLS: SPEAKING

MATERIALS: FIVE SET OF CARDS WITH VOCABULARY WORDS ABOUT PEOPLE'S PHYSICAL APPEARANCE
CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objective:

- To use mimics to understand vocabulary and phrases related to people's physical appearance.

Procedures:

1. Teacher makes groups of four students.
2. In each group one student (A) sits in front of the other two students (B and C), and the last student (D) is placed behind student A.
3. The teacher gives to student D from each group a set of cards with vocabulary words about people's physical appearance.
4. The student with the set of cards is going to be in charge of the group.
5. Student A has to give clues to their partners (students B and C) using his/her body language in order for them to be able to guess the word shown.

6. Students cannot use words, they can only use gestures.
7. If a student cannot guess the word, he/she can ask for the next word in order to save time.
8. If he/she guesses the word correctly, they switch one of the students in charge of the guessing.
9. Each group has one minute in order to guess as many words as possible.

28. Bingo as I wish



SKILLS: WRITING, LISTENING

MATERIALS: SHEET OF PAPER, A SET OF VOCABULARY WORDS, PEN
CATEGORY: INDIVIDUAL WORK

Objectives:

- To reinforce the knowledge about vocabulary studied from different topics.
- To recognize vocabulary heard.

Procedures:

1. Teacher asks students to take out a sheet of paper and draw a big square which has to be divided into ten small squares forming the shape of a bingo card.
2. Teacher asks students to write in each square a word of the vocabulary previous chosen (e.g. adjectives, verbs, occupations, and means of transportation...)
3. Teacher chooses only one topic
4. Teacher walks around the class checking students' work and to be sure they use pen to write.
5. Once students have all done their bingo charts, tell students they will have to make an X on the word they hear and have.

6. First students complete four corners.
7. Then a complete line in any direction
8. Finally the full bingo chart.
9. The one who wins will receive a present from the teacher.

29. Whispering Game



SKILLS: LISTENING, SPEAKING
MATERIALS: SET OF PICTURES OF PEOPLE DOING SOMETHING OR VOCABULARY ILLUSTRATED
CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives :

- To identify the correct structure heard in order to match it with the corresponding picture.
- To use the vocabulary studied by producing correct oral sentences.

Procedures:

1. The class is divided in two subgroups.
2. Teacher sticks on the board a set of pictures
3. Teacher whispers a sentence to the first student in the row of each group, this student has to listen carefully and whisper the same sentence (or what he/she heard) to the student next to him/her.
4. Students have to do the same until the last student in the row gets the message, this student has to go to the board and choose the picture that corresponds to the message they heard and he/she has to say the sentence out loud for the rest of the class to listen.
5. The group that keeps the message clear is the winner.

30. Learning with a Die



SKILLS: SPEAKING, WRITING **MATERIALS:** DICE , COLOR PAPER BOND, ADHESIVE PLASTIC, TAPE
CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To improve students` speaking skills while reinforcing cooperative learning.
- To strengthen students `speaking skills by reinforcing the use of verb tenses: Simple present, simple past, present continues, and past continues.
- To value the life and achievement of famous people.

Procedures:

1. The teacher sticks on the floor fifteen sheets of paper, some of them containing instructions for the students to make statements using the tenses of the cognitive target selected for this activity.
2. The teacher asks students to gather in four groups in order to write statements using the verb tense indicated by the teacher and by using the cognitive target selected.
3. The groups take turns to write statements using the verb tenses.
4. All the groups rely on just one minute to make as many sentences as possible.
5. If a student loses, another student from the same group continues to throw the die to make more statements (if the group is still on time).
6. Some of the sheets do not contain instructions to make statements. They rather address students to move one, two, or three spaces forward.
7. Once all the groups have participated, a winner is selected according to the number of correct sentences built.

31. Let`s create our own advertisement



SKILLS: WRITING, READING, SPEAKING
MATERIALS: CARD BOARD PAPER, ADHESIVE TAPE, MARKERS, A COPY WITH SUFFIXES
CATEGORY: INDIVIDUAL/GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To identify root words and grammatical structures that modify meaning: affixes, prefixes, and suffixes.
- To use reference materials to extend their range of language and improve accuracy.
- To use different suffixes to talk about the jobs people do.

Procedures:

1. Individually, students write an advertisement describing a particular job.
2. Have students to include a base verb form or noun as a clue in their ad, for example: Our school needs people to lead classes. If you like to teach, apply now!
3. Every group receives a cardboard paper and a marker.
4. Students go to the front of the classroom, read their ads, and stick them on the board.
5. The teacher invites students to `apply` for jobs they want.
6. In their oral responses, students should use the appropriate suffix.

32. Think fast!!



SKILLS: SPEAKING
MATERIALS: A LIST OF VOCABULARY OR TOPICS FOR REVISION. E.G. WORD FIELDS, GRAMMAR, FACTS...
CATEGORY: GROUP WORK

Objectives:

- To list and brainstorm different items.
- To scan to locate specifically required information.

Procedures:

1. Five volunteers go out of the classroom and wait until their turn have come.
2. The teacher chooses a student to take control of time and another to take down a tick for every correct answer.
3. Students should not repeat words.
4. Set up or negotiate norms on pronunciation before the activity starts.
5. Then, the first player is called in.
6. Teacher indicates to the student that he/she will have 20 seconds to name as many things as come to his/her mind about the indicated topic, e.g. Costa Rican Musicians/ Costa Rican Bands/Costa Rican writers/ Musical instruments/Costa Rican athletes/ International singers/ Parts of the body/ Places around the town/ Sports/ Food items... and so on.
7. **TEACHER COULD ALLOW MORE TIME (30 TO 40 SECONDS) FOR LONGER ANSWERS: WHAT HAVE you have done today? / What did you do last week?**
8. The game could be played in groups, where every student picked will be the group` representative.
9. The group with the most correct items expressed will be the winner team.

Suggestions when creating a new didactic strategy

The didactic strategies must:

- Have vertical sequence and horizontal coherence.
- Be attractive, innovative, and diverse.
- Answer to students` likes, needs, and abilities.
- Show situations where students deal with real life issues.

- Be flexible enough to be adapted or modified according to different settings and circumstances.
- Have correspondence with objectives, cognitive matters, procedures, and students' level.
- Specify the name of the strategy, skills to be developed, category, materials, and suggestion based on previous experience.
- Activities should not extend more than 30 minutes.

General recommendations for the teachers to implement a didactic strategy

- Be confident when you are in front of the class.
- Assume the teacher's role, leave behind your student's role.
- Be 15 to 20 minutes before the class starts.
- Make sure you have all the materials needed you come to the classroom.
- Give oral instructions to pupils first.
- Do not allow students to start any task before you are completely sure they all know exactly what to do and what you expect from them while carrying out the task.
- Ask some students to explain the activity once again to their classmates in order to check their comprehension before they start.
- Once you are completely sure they know what to do, let them move and organize for the activity.
- If students' attention spam diminishes change the activity immediately.
- If students do not behave as expected during the activity and they start making a lot of noise, take control of this or stop the activity.
- Remind students the importance of good behavior while performing the activity, as a way of having a pleasant atmosphere during the learning process.
- Identify students' multiple intelligences or learning styles (by means of a diagnostic instrument) in order to use the appropriate strategy.

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Anexo

HOW TO WRITE A DIDACTIC STRATEGY

Name:

SKILLS:

MATERIALS:

CATEGORY:

OBJECTIVES:

PROCEDURES:

SUGGESTIONS:

