



# TEACHING IDEAS

## GAMES AND ACTIVITIES TO USE WITH

### FLASHCARDS

Flashcards can be used in many ways to introduce and practise vocabulary, as well as consolidate, recycle and extend children's language. Here are 30 ideas to have up your sleeve!

#### **1. Flash!**

Show each flashcard to the children in turn very quickly by holding it at the sides between your thumb, index and second finger and "flashing" it or turning it round very quickly. Children look and guess what it is. Re-cast and introduce the word in English as appropriate.

#### **2. Slowly, slowly!**

Choose the flashcards you are going to use and have ready a plain piece of card the same size. Hold up each flashcard in turn covered completely by the card at first. Pull down the card to slowly reveal the picture and encourage children to guess what it is. Children call out the name once they can see enough to recognise the picture.

#### **3. Point to...!**

Stick a set of flashcards on the walls round the classroom. Hold up each one and get the children to say the names as you do this. Give instructions e.g. 'Point to the spider! Point to the butterfly!' Children listen, look round the classroom and point to the correct flashcard as fast as they can.

#### **4. Mime the flashcard**

Hold up flashcards in turn and say the names. Children do a mime in response e.g. they can pretend to eat a particular food (if you are using food flashcards), imitate a particular animal (animal flashcards) or put on clothes (clothes flashcards). Then do mimes of different flashcards yourself or invite individual or pairs of children to take turns to do this. Children watch and call out the names.

#### **5. What's missing?**

Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Hold up each one and get the children to say the names as you do this. Then say 'Close your eyes' and demonstrate meaning. When children have their eyes closed, quickly remove one of the flashcards from the blackboard. Children open their eyes and call out the name of the missing flashcard.

**6. Magic eyes**

Stick a set of no more than six flashcards in a row on the blackboard. Say the names and get the children to repeat them two or three times. Then remove the flashcards one by one. Point to where they were and children repeat the names as if they were still there.

**7. Flashcard instructions**

Stick a set of flashcards on the walls around the classroom. Divide the class into groups. Give each group instructions in turn e.g. *Group 1. Walk to the elephant. Group two. Jump to the lion* and children respond.

**8. Repeat if it's true**

Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Point to one of the flashcards and say the name. If you have said the correct name, children repeat it. If not, they stay silent. This activity can be made more challenging if you say sentences e.g. *It's a red tomato.*

**9. Lip reading**

Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Choose one flashcard and mouth the word silently to the class. Children lip read what you are saying and respond by saying the word out loud.

**10. Guess the flashcard!**

Stick a set of flashcards on the blackboard. Secretly choose one and encourage children to guess which it is by asking you questions e.g. *Is it red? No, it isn't. / Is it blue? Yes, it is.* Invite individual children to the front of the class in turn and get them to secretly choose a flashcard while the others guess in the same way.

**11. What is it?**

Stick 6-8 flashcards from different units on the blackboard. Elicit or remind children of the names. Choose one and give clues e.g. *It's a small animal. It's got eight legs. It runs. I'm scared of it. What is it?* Children listen and identify the correct flashcard: *(It's the) spider.*

**12. Kim's game**

Stick 8-10 flashcards from different lexical sets on the blackboard. Elicit or remind children of the names. Give the children one minute to look in silence and try and memorise the flashcards before removing them from the board. Children work in pairs and write a list of the flashcards they can remember. Check the answers by eliciting answers from the whole class and writing a list on the blackboard.

**13. Flashcard groups**

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Give each group a flashcard and explain that this is the name of their group. Give instructions e.g. *Apples, touch your nose! Carrots, put your hands on your head!* Children listen and follow the instructions for their group.

**14. Flashcard charade**

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Give each group a flashcard, making sure that other groups don't see. Explain that children must think of a way to mime their flashcard. Give them a minute or two to prepare this. Each group then takes turns to do their mimes to the rest of the class and guess each other's flashcards.

**15. Stand up!**

Divide the class in two teams. Stick 4-6 flashcards on the left of the blackboard for one team and 4-6 flashcards on the right of the blackboard for the other team. Say the words in random order. Children listen and stand up as fast as they can if the word belongs to their team.

**16. Flashcard letters**

Divide the class into groups of five or six. Give each group a flashcard (making sure other groups don't see) and explain that children must make the letters to spell the name of the picture with their bodies. Give them a few minutes to prepare this and encourage them to check spelling if necessary. Each group then takes turns to make the letters of their words with their bodies and to guess each other's words.

**17. Who's got the flashcard?**

Have a music CD ready for this activity. Children stand close together in a circle with their hands behind their backs. Choose one child to stand in the middle of the circle. Show the flashcard you are going to use first and elicit or remind children of the name. Explain that when you play the music, children should pass the flashcard round the circle behind their backs. When the music stops, they should stop passing it round. The child in the centre has three chances to find out who's got the flashcard by asking questions e.g. *Have you got the sweater? Yes, (I have). / No, (I haven't)*. If he or she finds the child with the flashcard, that child has the next turn. The game continues in the same way using a different flashcard each time.

**18. Ball game**

Have a soft ball ready for this activity. Stick 8-10 flashcards on the blackboard. Children stand in a circle. Hold up the ball, say *One, two, three...* and name one of the flashcards on the blackboard e.g. *grasshopper!* as you throw the ball to a child in the circle. The child who catches the ball repeats the procedure and names another flashcard. The game continues in the same way until all the flashcards on the blackboard have been named.

**19. Flashcard chain**

Have a set of flashcards ready. Stand or sit in a circle with the children. Pass the first flashcard to the child on your left and ask a question e.g. *Do you like carrots? Yes, (I do) / No, (I don't)*. After answering, the child then asks the question and passes the flashcard to the next child and so on round the circle. When the flashcard is three children away from you in the circle, introduce another one by asking the child on your left a question in the same way.

**20. Threes!**

Sit in a circle with the children and divide them into two teams. Lay three of the flashcards out in front of you and elicit or remind children of the names. Then turn the flashcards over so that the pictures are hidden. Change the positions of the flashcards on the floor so that the children can no longer easily identify them. Invite a child from one of the teams to name one of the three flashcards. This child then tries to find this flashcard by choosing one of them and turning it over to reveal the picture. If it isn't the flashcard they named, the three flashcards are turned over and moved around again and a child from the other team has a turn in the same way. If it is the flashcard they named, they keep it for their team. You then need to introduce another flashcard to make up the three in the game. The game continues in the same way with the children on each team taking turns to name and turn over the flashcards. The team with most flashcards at the end of the game are the winners.

**21. Flashcard bingo**

Use 10-15 flashcards for this activity. Stick the flashcards on the blackboard. Children draw a grid with six squares and write the name of one flashcard in each square (encourage them to check spelling to do this as necessary). When children are ready, remove the flashcards from the blackboard and shuffle them. Hold up the flashcards one by one and say the names. Children listen and write a cross on the word if it is in their grid. The first child to write a cross on all six words in their grid calls *Bingo!* and is the winner.

**22. Flashcard whispers**

Children stand in two lines facing the blackboard. Secretly show the last child standing in each line a flashcard. This child then whispers the name of this flashcard to next child and so on up the line. The child at the front runs to the blackboard and draws or writes the word. They then go to the back of the line. Repeat the procedure several times.

**23. Odd one out**

Stick three or four flashcards in a row on the blackboard e.g. butterfly, beetle, spider, grasshopper or apple, carrot, pizza, tomato. Children look and identify the odd one out and say why e.g. *Spider. It's got eight legs. / Pizza. It isn't from a plant.* Repeat the procedure several times.

**24. Flashcard story**

Give out flashcards you are going to include in the story to the children in pairs. Invent a very simple story using a puppet or coursebook character or a child in the class. An example of one using colour flashcards is as follows: *One day Jack paints a picture (use mime to convey meaning) He paints with red, he paints with blue, he paints with purple etc.. (naming all the colours). Jenny says, "What a wonderful picture!" Jack is very happy. Scruffy the dog is very happy too. He wags his tail like this and oh dear, he spills all the paint. Now Scruffy is red and purple and ... (naming all the colours again). "What a wonderful dog!" say Jack and Jenny.* Children listen and hold up the colour flashcard they have got when they hear the corresponding word in the story.

**Note:** For the remaining activities you need word cards as well as flashcards.

**25. Jumbled words and flashcards**

Stick flashcards and word cards on the blackboard in jumbled order. Invite individual children out to the blackboard in turn and get them to draw lines to join the flashcards and words.

**26. Match the flashcards and words**

Stick flashcards on the blackboard. Give out word cards to individual children. Children take turns to come out to the blackboard and stick their words by the correct flashcard. (Alternatively, you can stick the word cards on the blackboard and give the flashcards out to the children).

**27. Stop!**

Stick a flashcard on the blackboard and elicit or remind children of the name. Hold up word cards one by one. Children read the words silently until you hold up the word card which matches the flashcard. They then call 'Stop!' and read the word out loud. Repeat the procedure with different flashcards.

**28. Team game**

Have ready two sets of word cards for the same flashcards for this game. Divide the class into two teams. Stick flashcards (as many as there are children in each team) on the blackboard or on the walls around the classroom. Give one word card to each child in both teams. When you call out the name of one of the flashcards, the child in each team who has the corresponding word card gets up and goes to touch the flashcard and hold up their word card as fast as they can. The child who gets there first each time wins a point for their team.

**29. Blackboard pelmanism**

Use 8-10 flashcards and word cards for this activity. Stick the flashcards in jumbled order on one side of the blackboard, facing inwards so that children can't see the pictures, and number them. Do the same with the word cards on the other side of the blackboard. Invite one child to choose a flashcard e.g. *Number two, please!* and, as you turn it round to show the picture, to say what it is e.g. *(It's a) hat*. Then invite the same child to choose a word card in the same way. If the flashcard and word card chosen by the child match, remove them from the blackboard. If not, turn them both round so that they are in exactly the same position but facing inwards again. The game proceeds with different children taking turns to choose a flashcard and word card in the same way, trying to match them from memory until they are all removed from the blackboard.

**30. Classify the words**

Draw two or three large circles on the blackboard and write the topic words at the top of each one e.g. animals, food, clothes. Children take turns to come to the front of the class, either individually or in pairs, read a word card that you give them and stick it in the correct circle.

**Note:** The above suggestions are compiled and adapted from Read C. & Soberón A. *Superworld 1 & 2* Teachers' Books, Macmillan Education.