



# TEACHING IDEAS

## GAMES AND ACTIVITIES TO USE WITH

## PICTURE CARDS

Many children's coursebooks include cut-out picture cards in the Activity Book. These usually comprise between 6-8 pictures of vocabulary from the same lexical set. Picture cards provide a visual and kinesthetic focus for learning and are helpful in getting young children to take turns and interact in English in pairs. When children make the cards, it is a good idea to ask them to write their initials in small letters each card. This helps to ensure that they don't lose their cards. Here are 20 ideas to try!

### **1 Guess where!**

Children play in pairs. Child A turns all their cards face down and asks e.g. *Where's the car?* Child B points to a card and guesses *Here!* Child A turns the card over and says *Yes, you're right!* if it is the car, or *No, this isn't the car!* As soon as Child B guesses correctly and the car is found, they have the next turn.

### **2 Arrange the cards**

Play with the whole class with you giving instructions and/or children play in pairs with a screen e.g. an open book between them. Child A lays their cards in a row and then gives instructions e.g. *cheese, biscuit, chicken* etc. to their partner to order their cards in the same way. At the end children check that their cards are in the same order and then change roles.

### **3 Hurray!**

Children play in pairs. Each child puts their cards face down in a pile. They turn over their cards at the same time and say e.g. *I can see the ... mouse!* As soon as they have a picture the same, they say *Hurray!* and take that pair of cards out of the game. The game ends when there are no more cards left.

### **4 I can see ...!**

Play with the whole class and/or children play in pairs. Child A holds up a book with one of the picture cards behind it. Child A says *Look!* and gradually moves the card up. As soon as Child B recognises the picture, they say e.g. *I can see the ... robot!* After three turns, the children change roles.

### **5 Can I have ...?**

Children play in pairs. They each choose three cards from a set of picture cards and hold them in a fan so their partner can't see the pictures. Child A asks e.g. *Can I have the lion, please?* If Child B doesn't have the card of the lion, they say *No. Sorry.* If they do have the card of the lion, they say *Here you*

*are!* and give it to Child A, who says *Thank you*. Child B then has the next turn asking a question. The game ends when the children have discovered all each other's cards.

### **6 Happy sets**

Children play in groups of four. The aim of the game is to collect a set of four cards which are the same. Child A shuffles and deals four sets of cards which are the same. Children take turns to say *Can I have a ..., please?* to any member of the group who respond either *Here you are* or *No, sorry* depending on whether or not they have the card asked for. The child asked then has the next turn. As soon as any child has a set of four cards, they name the set e.g. *I've got the tomatoes!* and put it on the table. The child with most sets at the end of the game is the winner.

### **7 Pass the card**

Play with the whole class. Children stand or sit with you in a circle. Show the first card to the child on your left who names what's in the picture e.g. *T-shirt!* This child then shows the card to the child next to them, who names what's on the card and passes it on round the circle in the same way. Once the card has passed to three or four children, start the process again with another card. Continue the game in the same way with all the picture cards.

### **8 Musical cards**

Play with the whole class. Children stand or sit in a circle. Give out the picture cards from one set to different children in the circle. Play any music and children pass the cards clockwise round the circle. Pause the music. Children with the picture cards hold them up and name what's on their card in turn. Everyone claps and says e.g. *Fantastic!*

### **9 First one to touch ...!**

Play with the whole class with you giving instructions and/or children play in groups of four. Children lay out their set of cards face up on their desks. Child A says e.g. *(First one to touch the) ... strawberry!* Demonstrate that the children should touch the correct card as fast as they can and say *Me!* After three turns another child has a turn at being the leader.

### **10 Snap!**

Children play pairs. Each child puts their cards face down in a pile. They turn over their cards one at a time at the same time and say the words e.g. *Giraffe!* If they have the same picture, the child who says the word followed by *Snap!* first keeps the cards. The child with most cards at the end of the game is the winner.

### **11 Do you want ...?**

Play with the whole class. Children sit or stand in a circle. Play any music on the CD. Children pass a vocabulary card clock-wise round the circle. Pause the music. The child with the card should choose another child and ask e.g. *Do you want the bike?* If the child they ask says *Yes, please*, they give them the card and the game starts again. If the child they ask says *No, thank you*,

they continue asking different children until someone says *Yes, please* and the game starts again. Change the picture card every few turns.

### **12 Abracadabra!**

Children play in pairs. Each child lays their cards face down in a row on their desks. Child A points to Child B's first card, pretends to wave a wand and says e.g. *Abracadabra! It's the butterfly!* Child B turns over the card. If it's the butterfly, they say *Yes!* and leave the card face up. If it isn't the butterfly, they should say *No!* and leave the card face down. Child B then has the next turn.

### **13 Find your partner**

Play with the whole class. Children choose a picture card secretly and hold it to their chest so no-one else can see. They then walk round the class asking other children e.g. *Have you got an apple?* / *No, I haven't* / *Have you got a plum?* / *Yes, I have* until they find a partner with the same card as themselves.

### **14 Find your group**

Play with the whole class. Give one picture card to each child and children keep it secret. Children walk round the class saying e.g. *(I'm a ...) lion.* / *Yes. Me too!* or *No, (I'm a) parrot* and organise themselves into groups with the same card.

### **15 Guessing game**

Play with the whole class and/or children play in pairs. Child A secretly chooses a card. Child B asks up to three questions e.g. *Do you like eggs?* and Child A responds *Yes, I do* or *No, I don't* depending what's on the card. If child B guesses correctly, they keep the card. Child B then has the next turn. The child with most cards at the end of the game is the winner.

### **16 Memory**

Children play in pairs. Children lay out two sets of picture cards in random order face down on the desk. Child A turns over one of the cards and names what's in the picture e.g. *Ball!* or says a sentence e.g. *I like cheese!* They then turn over another card and repeat the procedure. If the two cards are the same, Child A keeps them. If they are not the same, Child A puts them back face down exactly where they were. Child B then has the next turn. The child with most cards at the end of the game is the winner.

### **17 Noughts and crosses**

Play with the whole class. Draw a noughts and crosses grid on the board. Stick a picture card face down in each space. Divide the class into two teams, one to play with noughts and one with crosses. Children in each team take turns to choose a card. If they can identify what's in the picture, turn over the card and write a nought or cross in the square. The first team to complete a row of three wins the game.

**18 Yes or No**

Play with the whole class and/or children play in pairs. Children place the vocabulary cards face down in a pile in front of them. Child A turns over the first card, holds it up to child B and says e.g. *Is it the scooter?* Child B says *Yes, it is* or e.g. *No, it isn't. It's the bike* depending on the picture. If Child B responds correctly, they keep the card. Child B then has the next turn. The child with most cards at the end of the game wins.

**19 Find the card**

Play with the whole class. Ask two children to wait outside the classroom door for a moment. While they are outside the door, stick one of the vocabulary cards somewhere in the classroom, where it is 'hidden' but nevertheless visible without moving anything. Involve the rest of the class in helping you to do this. Ask the two children back into the classroom and everyone asks e.g. *Where's the lion?* The two children look for the vocabulary card of the lion and the rest of the class helps by saying *Hot! Hot! Hot!* if the children move near to where the card is hidden and *Cold! Cold Cold!* if they move away. When they find the card, the two children say e.g. *Here's the lion!* and everyone claps and says *Hurray!* Repeat several times with different children.

**20 Card swop**

Play with the whole class. Give each child a picture card (from a mixture of different sets). Check the children know how to say the word on their card. Children walk around the classroom. They take turns to show another child their card. If both children can identify what is on each other's cards, they swop cards and the game continues in the same way. If a child can't identify what's on a card, the other child 'teaches' them the word. They then swop cards and the game continues in the same way. At the end, children report back on how many times they swapped cards and identify the pictures on all the cards.

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