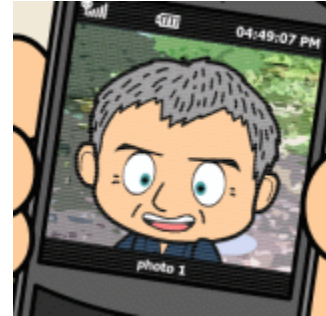


Topic: Family and Friends

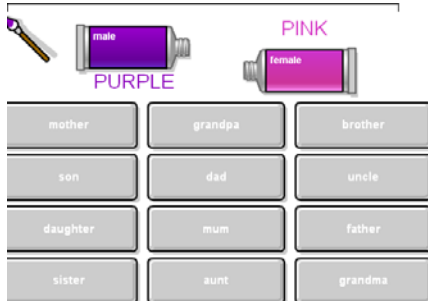
By Sue Clarke, Teacher and Teacher Trainer, British Council, Portugal

On the LearnEnglish Kids website you can find a variety of materials for teaching about Family and Friends. The topic covers personal descriptions, family relationships, daily routines and what makes a good friend. There are opportunities to practise the different skills of listening and reading as well as fun activities such as games and quizzes. You can find the materials at

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-topics-family.htm>.



Introducing and practising Vocabulary



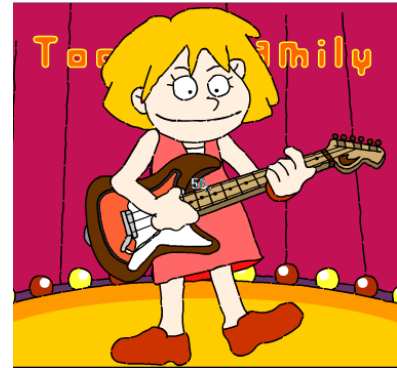
Vocabulary games are available at a range of levels of difficulty. For simple practice of basic family words try the categorising game Male or Female? at <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-multimatch-family.htm>. This is useful to check children understand the difference between aunt and uncle for example. Or use the simple wordsearch puzzle to focus on spellings of the vocabulary <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-wordsearch-family.htm>. You could also use the clues as a quick vocabulary check in their own right.

For extension vocabulary on family you could use the

worksheet Family Words which contains an example of a family tree, and more difficult lexis such as step-sister and great grandmother. Children could be encouraged to produce their own family trees and add the relationships to themselves in English. Or you might like to ask children to make a 'Family album' containing drawings and photos of their family members and labels or descriptions.

For younger learners you may like to start or revise the topic with a song. 'The Tooth Family' is a fun way of practising family words and can be used as a jump off for other cross-curricular work. Ask the children to make a list of the family members and how many teeth they have got while they listen. For more ideas on exploiting this song please see the separate tips sheet. Go to

http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/download/kids/tooth_family.pdf



Teaching the language of descriptions

There are different kinds of activities to practise descriptions. At the most simple level you could use the worksheet Describing People, a simple read and colour exercise with fun faces, leading to a short writing activity. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-describing-people.pdf>

You could exploit this further in class. Ask children to draw pictures and write about their friends without mentioning the name. When they have finished hold up the pictures or stick them up around the classroom and ask students to guess who they are.

My friend Lee has got blue eyes and very short, blond straight hair. He has got big ears and a big red nose.



Another fun activity for practising descriptions is the Face Match game. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-face-match.htm>. This game practises both reading and writing skills. The crime scenarios provide good reading practice and listening skills can be developed using the clues. Use the text off button to focus on listening with the class. This activity could be followed up in a variety of ways. For speaking skills use the descriptions as a basis for pair work – ask pairs to interview each other about the ‘suspects’, one as a witness giving descriptions and the other as a policeman/woman. Or you could ask the class to produce ‘Wanted’ posters of the suspects, with written descriptions. Display them in a Wanted gallery on the wall. For more practice on character adjectives use the game What’s your friend like? – a simple matching activity with basic adjectives. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-matching-personality.htm>.



Developing Reading Skills

For learners at lower levels you could use the Family Match worksheet for reading practice. Children read descriptions of four families and match them with pictures. These texts also provide useful models for children to write their own descriptions. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-family-match.pdf>.

At a slightly higher level use the worksheet Are you a good friend? - a quiz worksheet containing more difficult structures e.g. conditionals. After reading this would make a good pair work exercise – ask children to circle their partner’s answers and work out if he/she is a good friend. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-friends.pdf>.

Another fun quiz can be found at <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-quiz-family.htm>. Divide your class into two teams to play the two-player version. Ask the quiz questions to alternate teams and award points. You could extend this by asking students to write their own quiz questions on famous families, or ask them to prepare some more questions for homework.



The reading materials on the website also include two stories at different level. For younger learners use the story ‘My Dad’. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-stories-my-dad.htm>. This is a very simple story covering present simple and continuous, daily routine and descriptions. It puts across the message that families are not always mum, dad and 2.2 children. Use the simple follow-up worksheet to check comprehension using the true/false questions. Students can complete the profile of Lottie’s dad, then move on to writing mini-profiles of their own family members. Ask children to

prepare a presentation about someone in their own family, to include their description, daily routine and what they like doing. Ask them to present these orally to the class or write them up into a mini-book.

For more advanced learners use the story ‘Supergran’ which provides an opportunity for more extensive reading. Go to <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-stories-supergran-1.htm>.

This story could be dramatised as there is lots of action and dialogue. There are several characters and you could ask different groups in the class to prepare different ‘scenes’. Use an umbrella as a prop for grandma. Take care with the karate chop and make sure the students mime!!

