

Topic: Clothes

By Sue Clarke

On LearnEnglish Kids, the British Council's website for young learners, you can find resources and activities to help children develop their English skills. The materials are typically based around topics. Here are tips for using and exploiting the materials about the topic of **clothes**, including vocabulary work, skills work to practise reading and listening, and suggestions for further development and creative work. You will find all the activities mentioned below on this page: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-topics-clothes.htm>

Introducing the topic

You can download clothes flashcards to use in the classroom for vocabulary presentation. These flashcards introduce the basic lexical set of clothes words, but you will need to introduce other vocabulary later if you use the stories and games. Use the flashcards regularly while teaching the topic for lesson warm-ups or endings with flashcard games. For further suggestions on using flashcards you could look at the separate Tips sheet on this page:

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

Practising vocabulary with worksheets



There are several worksheets available to download and print which practise reading and the spelling of clothes items. Firstly you could use the very basic level Clothes Vocabulary worksheet containing a simple matching exercise, a wordsearch and a drawing activity <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-clothes.pdf>. Use the last exercise as a basis for oral work in class. Ask children to describe their favourite clothes, or ask them to tell their partner, or ask them to extend the picture and make a display poster for the wall with labels in English.

At a slightly higher level, you could use the game 'My Favourite Clothes'

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-favourite-clothes.pdf> which involves a dice game for selecting clothes items and then completing sentences. There is quite a bit of extension vocabulary in this game.

If you wish to develop vocabulary and reading skills you could also use the match the character to the clothes worksheet <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-clothes-match.pdf> which practises the phrase "he's/she's wearing". You could exploit this worksheet with a game as follow-up. Ask one child to stand behind the door (or somewhere hidden in the classroom). Then ask the other children to remember what he/she is wearing. Alternatively ask one child to stand up at the front of the class and ask the others to turn round. Go to the back of the class and ask 'What's he/she wearing?'

Reinforcing Vocabulary with games

There are many interactive games and activities to practise the topic of clothes. These range from very simple low-level activities such as the 'Paint it' game (paint the colours on an ice skater's clothes) <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-paint-skater.htm>, through matching activities



such as pelmanism (matching words to picture cards) <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-pelmanism-clothes.htm> and a spelling activity (squash the monkey hangman game) <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-hangman-clothes.htm>, to games containing more text such as the clothes quiz <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-multiple-choice-clothes.htm>. As mentioned above you will need to provide some extra vocabulary teaching for this last game which includes items such as underwear, different types of footwear and jewellery.

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/>
<http://www.britishcouncil.org/learnenglish.htm>

Developing reading skills through the topic

You can use the stories provided on the website for topic-related skills work. There are two stories available at different levels for the topic of clothes. To develop basic listening and reading skills and reinforce simple clothes vocabulary you can use the flash-animated story 'My Favourite Clothes':

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-stories-clothes.htm>

Warm up by asking the children what their favourite clothes are – or ask them to draw a picture and label it. Pre-teach the word 'slippers'. Then present the story – ask the children to remember what the boy's favourite clothes are as they watch and listen. Follow up by using the crossword activity on the downloadable worksheet. <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-stories-clothes-activity.pdf>. Play the story a second time and ask children to complete the clues or check their answers.



If your students are at a slightly higher level, you could try using the story 'Carnival Crime':

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-stories-carnival-crime-1.htm>

Although there is quite a lot of text for young learners, the storyline is simple and the carnival topic allows more creative work in the topic of clothes. Warm up by explaining that the two children are in Brazil on holiday for 'carneval' and ask the children to guess what costumes they are going to wear. Listen and/or read the story with your students to see if they were right. After page 2 ask the children to predict/guess the end of the story. Use the colourful visuals to help you explain the story to the children. As a follow-up ask your students to design their own carnival costumes and label them in English, and/or write a few sentences describing their costumes. These would make a very nice wall display. Or you could ask the class to guess who the costume belongs to!

Developing listening skills

You could use the song 'Don't put your trousers on your head' as a listening exercise. <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-songs-clothes.htm>

This song contains a lot of extension vocabulary (e.g. buttons, zip, Velcro fasteners, do up, undone, hood, belt) which would need to be explained for the students to understand the song. You could pre-teach some of these items, write them on the board and ask your students to put their hand up when they hear the word. Use the follow up worksheet on 'Getting Dressed' <http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-print-getting-dressed.pdf>

to help your students with the more difficult vocabulary. This

worksheet can be exploited further for mime games. Ask all the

students to stand up and read out the actions for students to mime them. Or ask individual students in a sequence. Or play a game and ask them to guess the mime. Make these more fun by changing them e.g. I'm putting my trousers on my head! I'm putting my socks on my hands!



Extension games and activities



Younger learners will enjoy the online game **Teddy Dresser**, where they read and match the correct pictures to the parts of the teddy:

<http://www.britishcouncil.org/kids-games-teddy-dresser.htm>

This game also has a worksheet for children to 'dress' the teddies and then design their own dressed teddy. Find more suggestions for using this game on the teaching English website:

<http://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/download/kids/teddymdresser.pdf>

You could bring many of the above games and activities to life by providing a 'dressing up box' containing items of clothing for children to dress up in class. If this seems ambitious limit your items to a selection of small items such as hats, glasses, scarves, gloves etc which are easy for students to put on and/or pass round the class.

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