

# My English Classroom

## Topic

Classroom language, giving instructions, rules

## Aims

- To introduce classroom instructions
- To draw up a classroom contract and establish discipline
- To introduce vocabulary of classroom materials / objects

## Age group

Primary

## Level

A1 / A2

## Time

60 + minutes

## Materials

1. Action picture flashcards (preferably laminated)
2. A paper class contract
3. A tray or box
4. A tea towel
5. Scissors, glue, sellotape, blue, black and red pen, a book, a pencil case, and other classroom materials. Have some spares if possible,
6. A4 paper for everyone
7. A4 card for everyone

## Introduction

Throughout the year you'll be using classroom language and it's important for children to be introduced to it very early on so that they can understand what you want them to do. Giving clear, simple instructions is not always easy. Here are some tips to make yours effective:

- Less is more – speak naturally but with fewer words
- Actions can speak louder than words – always demonstrate
- Never ask 'do you understand?' as students won't admit to not understanding. See if they understand by asking one pair to demonstrate to the others or ask someone to explain to the class what they have understood in their L1.

This lesson focuses on vocabulary related to classroom language ("open your books", "stand up", "sit down" etc). Students will practice both listening to and producing this language with 2 simple games. Then there is an activity where students will come up with classroom rules and sign their own class contract. Finally students will review / learn vocabulary related to classroom materials (scissors, books, pens, bags, sellotape etc).

## Procedure

<p><b>1. Stage 1 – Simon Says</b></p>	<p>This is a great visual and interactive game to introduce and review instructions. Start the lesson by asking everyone to stand up. Say 'Everyone, stand up.' Show them what you mean by standing up yourself and raising your arms.</p> <p>Then say 'Everyone, sit down.' and demonstrate in the same way as before. Continue this a few times before introducing new actions. These should be actions that they will need to perform throughout the year such as; 'Put your hand up' 'Open your book' 'Close your book' 'Open your bag' etc</p> <p>Then go back to the original 'Stand up' and 'Sit down' to introduce Simon Says. Say 'Listen' and put your hand to your ear to demonstrate this very useful instruction! 'Simon says stand up' then make a show of standing up. Say 'Sit down'. When they start to sit down say 'No, and signal for them to stay standing up. Then, while emphasizing the first two words say 'Simon says sit down' and actually do it yourself to demonstrate that it's now OK for them to sit down too. Continue like this a few times before moving on to the other actions.</p> <p>To begin with you can do the actions at the same time and gradually they can do them from just hearing you say them. The objective here is not to get a winner but for all the children to get used to these instructions.</p>
<p><b>2. Stage 2 – Picture flashcard game</b></p>	<p>In the last activity the children only heard the actions. This time it's up to them to try and produce some of them orally.</p> <p>Put the class into two teams and number each child. Ask the number 1s from each team to come forward. Say 'Number 1 come here.' Point and motion with your hand to the number 1s. Show them a picture flashcard of someone doing one of the previous actions.</p>

The next stage can be done through mime or drawing. They have to draw on the board for their team the action. The first person to correctly say the instruction wins a point for their team.

You don't need to explain the scoring process as once you start writing it up on the board it'll become obvious to them.

### 3. Stage 3 – Classroom contract

It's essential to establish some classroom ground rules very early on. The class contract should be displayed and referred to during the year if you find that certain rules are being forgotten.

- On the board draw a very large contract. Give it a heading like 'My English classroom contract' or 'English rules'. Write down the numbers 1-10 and at number 1 write down 'Speak English.'
- Say 'You decide the other rules'. Simultaneously point to the space on the board for the remaining 9 rules, and point to the class as a whole.
- Put the class into groups of four. Do this by saying starting at one end of the class and counting the students '1, 2, 3, 4 and with your hands demonstrate they should come together. Say 'Talk together' Do the same for the rest of the class.
- They will no doubt speak in their mother tongue which at this stage is ok. You want them to be thinking independently ie not with you, so that the rules actually come from them.
- If they are old enough to write then one person in the group can take notes.
- Before feeding back as a class they can compare their ideas with the groups sitting next to them. For this say 'Talk together' pointing to two groups.
- When they feed back as a class you can choose someone to write the ideas up on the board. This you do by holding out the board pen and saying 'Who wants to write on the board?'
- This is good for their autonomy and it also frees you up to copy their ideas down onto the paper contract that will be signed by the children and displayed.
- As they probably have their ideas in L1 when they say the rule, simply repeat it in English and indicate to the volunteer to write this up on the board. You will probably have to help to spelling.
- Once this is done, show them the paper copy and put it in a space that is easily accessible to everyone. Show them that you're signing your name and say 'Come and sign your name'. You might want to do this table by table.

### 4. Stage 4 – Using classroom material

This stage is so that you can put the instructions learnt earlier into a context to show the children how useful they will actually be for their English class. Put giving them a fairly easy task to perform they can concentrate on the language you're using rather than the complexity of the task itself.

- Say 'Open your pencil case'. Open yours or point to one of someone's desk to jog their memories or introduce this word if you didn't use it in stage 1.
- Say 'Take out a red pen'. Again, give them a chance to do this by themselves before demonstrating yourself. Remember to have a selection of pens, glue, scissors etc in case not everyone has their own.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distribute a piece of A4 to everyone and once they all have one show and say 'Fold your paper here' as you make a fold length ways in the middle of the paper.</li> <li>• Say 'Write your name here', trying to make sure they write it on the bottom flap.</li> <li>• Then distribute some A4 card.</li> <li>• Say 'Take out your glue'. 'Stick the paper onto the card'. Remember to demonstrate.</li> <li>• Then say 'Take out your sellotape' and 'Stick your name tag to your desk'. They can stick them so that the flap with their name written on comes below the desk.</li> <li>• If you want to introduce scissors here as well you can give them card which is bigger than the paper so that they have to cut it down to size. The advantage of using card is that you can collect the name tags at the end and use them for the first few lessons until you really know their names.</li> </ul>
<b>5. Stage 5 – Kim's Game</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put an example of each object used in the previous stage onto a tray. Get the class to practise the words by using simple instructions 'listen' 'say' 'look' etc.</li> <li>• Place a tea towel over the tray and discreetly remove one of the objects.</li> <li>• Take off the tea towel and get the class to tell you what's missing.</li> <li>• After a few tries let the first person to say the word correctly come and take over your role.</li> </ul>
<b>6. Homework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write the 'homework' on the board. Say 'This is work you do at home not in the classroom.' After a couple of weeks they will be used to this word and will be ready for it at the end of the lesson.</li> <li>• Say 'Write this in your books'. If you have a special page where they write down their homework each week even better. For the very young learners you should write it yourself, copy it and get them to stick it into their books. They should recognise 'open your book' and 'stick it'.</li> <li>• They could draw a picture of their classroom.</li> <li>• They could try and write down all the classroom rules they can remember.</li> <li>• You could distribute photocopies of the action picture flashcards for them to cut, stick and colour.</li> </ul>
<b>7. Follow up suggestions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write up on the board the instructions they met in the previous for them to copy into their books, leaving enough space next to each instruction for a picture. Then they could draw the corresponding picture of someone carrying out the instruction, or draw a picture of an open book next to the instruction 'Open your books'.</li> <li>• You should bring out their name tags, refer to the classroom contract asking them to try and remember all ten rules without looking, and play 'Simon says' again to review the instructions.</li> </ul>

### Contributed by

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