

Dictionary skills for primary students

Topic

Using dictionaries

Aims

- To develop learners' dictionary skills
- To raise learners' awareness of the information they can find in a dictionary
- To develop learners' skills of prediction when they come across new vocabulary
- To encourage group collaboration in project work
- To promote creativity

Age/level

Primary
CEFR level A2–B2

Time

60 minutes +

Materials

1. Class dictionaries or online dictionary. Cambridge and Macmillan both have online dictionaries:
<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/british/>
<http://www.macmillandictionary.com/>
2. Dictionary quiz
3. Dictionary quiz answers
4. Dictionary quiz template
5. Story text

Introduction

In this lesson pupils do a fun quiz to develop their dictionary skills. They then work in small groups to create their own dictionary quiz using a template.

Procedure

1. Warmer (5 minutes)

Elicit twenty words from the pupils and write them on the board. Pupils can suggest words for things they can see in the classroom. Pupils then work in pairs to put the words into alphabetical order, using a dictionary to check.

2. Do the dictionary quiz (15–20 minutes)	<p>Put pupils into small groups or pairs and give each group a dictionary. Allow learners to use dictionary apps, online dictionaries, monolingual or bilingual dictionaries.</p> <p>Give each group a copy of the dictionary quiz. Give pupils a limited time (about 15 minutes) to work together to answer all the questions. They should use a dictionary to find out or check their answers.</p> <p>For question 6, if pupils are unable to access the internet, give them a copy of the story text.</p>
3. Check quiz answers (10 minutes)	<p>Check pupils' answers by (a) going through each question and eliciting feedback orally or (b) getting pupils to compare their answers with other pairs/groups.</p>
4. Make a new dictionary quiz (30 minutes)	<p>Give each group of pupils a copy of the dictionary quiz template. Explain that they are going to make a new dictionary quiz for their classmates. Pupils use dictionaries to make a quiz.</p>
5. Finishing off the lesson or homework	<p>If you have time at the end of step 4, groups can exchange their dictionary quizzes and race to find the answers.</p> <p>Alternatively, make enough copies of the quizzes for each pupil to have one as a homework task.</p>

Contributed by

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