

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 for classroom materials/objects

Age/level

Primary
CEFR level A1/A2

Time

60 minutes

Materials

1. classroom language flashcards, for example:
<https://learnenglishkids.britishcouncil.org/en/flashcards/classroom-language-flashcards>
2. classroom contract – draw an official-looking border, for example in a scroll shape, on an A3 piece of paper and write 'Classroom contract' at the top, the numbers 1–10 down the side and draw a box at the bottom big enough for a signature from every learner in the class
3. spare pens, glue and scissors
4. A4 card, one per learner
5. small piece of paper, one per learner
6. one example of each classroom material or object you wish to use in Kim's Game (stage 5), e.g. a pencil case, some pens in different colours, a glue stick, some scissors, paper, card, pencil, ruler, eraser, sharpener, crayons, felt tips, calculator, student book, notebook, etc.
7. a cloth or towel

Introduction

This lesson focuses on the use of classroom instructions, establishing discipline and rules at the beginning of a course and learning vocabulary related to classroom materials. 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. In this lesson, learners will practise both listening to and producing instructions with two simple games. Then there is an activity where they will come up with classroom rules and sign their own class contract. Finally learners will review or learn vocabulary related to classroom materials.

Procedure

1. Simon Says	<p>This is a great visual and interactive game to introduce and review instructions.</p> <p>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 learners 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 learners start to sit down say, 'No', and signal for them to stay standing up. Then, emphasising the first two words, say, '<u>Simon says</u> 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 practise with the other actions.</p> <p>Once they have got the idea, play the game. To begin with you can do the actions as well 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>
2. Picture flashcard game	<p>In the previous 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 actions introduced in the Simon Says game. You could use the ones from the LearnEnglish Kids website if suitable.</p> <p>The next stage can be done through mime or drawing. They have to either mime or draw on the board the action while the other children watch. The first person to correctly say the action wins a point for their team.</p>
3. Classroom contract	<p>It's essential to establish some classroom rules very early on. The classroom contract should be displayed and referred to during the year if you find that certain rules are being forgotten.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On the board draw a large copy of the paper contract you have prepared. For number 1 write, 'Speak English.' • Say, 'You decide the other rules.' Simultaneously point to the space on the contract for the remaining nine rules, and point to the class as a whole. • Put the class into groups of four. Starting at one end of the class, count the first four learners, '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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They may start discussing in their first language, which at this stage is OK. You want them to be thinking independently, so that the rules actually come from them. • Before feeding back as a class they can compare their ideas with the groups sitting next to them. For this, swap two children from one group with two children from another group and say, 'Tell each other your ideas.' • When they're finished, get some feedback as a class. You can choose people 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?' • If there are more than nine ideas on the board, hold a class vote to choose which nine will go on the contract. Copy them onto the paper contract. • Finally, show them that you're signing your name on the paper contract and say, 'Come and sign your name.' You might want to do this table by table. The contract should then be displayed in the room.
4. Using classroom material – making desk name cards	<p>This stage is so that you can put the instructions learned earlier into a context to show the children how useful they will actually be for their English class. By 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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say, 'Open your pencil case.' Open yours or borrow one from a learner to demonstrate. • Say, 'Take out a blue pen.' This time 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. • Distribute a piece of A4 card to everyone and once they all have one say, 'Fold your card here', as you fold a piece yourself in half, lengthways. • Say, 'Write your name here.' Show them they should write it across the bottom half. • Tell them 'My favourite thing is (music, reading, my cat, etc.!)' and demonstrate drawing it on a small piece of paper. Elicit some ideas from the learners by asking, 'What's your favourite thing?' Give them a small piece of paper each and say, 'Draw a picture of your favourite thing.' • Once they have finished, say, 'Take out your scissors. Cut around the picture.' Demonstrate with your own. Then say, 'Take out your glue. Stick the picture onto the card.' Again, demonstrate with your own. • Each learner should now have a personalised name card that they can stand up on the table in front of them. The advantage of making these is that you can collect the name cards at the end of the lesson and use them for the first few lessons until you really know their names.

5. Kim's Game	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put an example of each object (a pencil case, some pens in different colours, a glue stick, some scissors, paper, card) used in the previous stage onto a table or on the floor at the front of the class, where everyone can see. Drill the words as you point to each object. Depending on what your learners already know, you could add more objects and therefore more words, such as pencil, ruler, eraser, sharpener, crayons, felt tips, calculator, student book, notebook, etc. Place a cloth or towel over the objects and secretly remove one of them. Take off the cloth or towel and get the class to tell you what's missing. After a few tries let the first person to say the word correctly come and take over your role.
6. Homework	<p>Write 'homework' on the board. Say, 'This is work you do at home, not in the classroom.' They will soon be used to this word and will be ready for it at the end of the lesson!</p> <p>Say, 'Write this in your notebooks' and write the homework on the board for them to copy. If you have a special page where they write down their homework each time, even better. Ideas for homework for this lesson include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw a picture of your classroom! Write down all the classroom rules you can remember! Make your own cards! (If you used the classroom language flashcards from LearnEnglish Kids, you could give them the black-and-white version to colour in and write the words.)
7. Follow-up suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribute the name cards to the learners at the beginning of the class. Refer to the classroom contract and ask them to try to remember the rules without looking! Play Simon Says again to review instructions.

Contributed by

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