



# Class Warm-ups for Small ESL Groups

by Kat Avila

*(from her previous presentations)*

M.A., Communication

B.A., Communicative Disorders

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Got Jenga®? *Check.*  
Card games? *Check.*  
Memory games? *Check.*

**NOTE:** *These activities are suitable for all levels of ESL.*

*"She Says Yes" music track provided by <http://stockmusicboutique.com>*

# Fortune Cookies

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** fortune cookies

Pick a **fortune cookie** and open it. When you are called, read aloud your fortune and talk about what it means to you, then call on someone else.

*Don't waste food.* If you don't want to eat your cookie, share it with someone who does.

## VARIATIONS:

1. Use holiday-oriented containers for your fortunes.
2. "Fortunes" can be sayings, proverbs, "What if?" situations, etc.



## Sample "Fortunes"

	Express who you are to the world, and opportunity will find you.	
	An empty stomach and piggy bank cannot be filled by broken promises.	
	If you can count five honest people as your friends, you are truly blessed.	
	If you want to enjoy a harvest, you must plant the seeds first.	
	A pretty bow on the box doesn't tell you what's inside.	
	Self-confidence is the best beauty aid.	
	If your garden isn't growing, maybe it's time to plant somewhere else.	
	A dull pencil can't write a book.	
	Make your mind your best friend.	
	The early bird catches the worm.	

	<p>Aladdin had a magic lamp. The lamp's genie gave him three wishes. You are the new owner of the lamp. What are your three wishes?</p>	
	<p>When the Pied Piper of Hamelin played his pipe, big ugly rats followed him out of town, then the town's children. What follows you when you play your pipe?</p>	
	<p>There was a princess who kissed a frog. The frog turned into a prince. What happened to your frog?</p>	
	<p>Cinderella's glass slipper led Prince Charming to her. When you want someone to find you, what do you leave behind?</p>	
	<p>You are the new owner of a magic carpet. It can fly anywhere in the world. Where will you go?</p>	
	<p>Jack climbed a beanstalk into the clouds and visited a giant's castle. He stole a hen that laid golden eggs. You were with him. What did you do?</p>	
	<p>You are the new owner of a magic table. It will give you anything you want to eat or drink. What will you order?</p>	
	<p>The Tooth Fairy pays for every tooth she takes. She leaves the money under the child's pillow. How much should she pay?</p>	
	<p> The children's story character Dr. Dolittle could talk to animals. Is that a good ability to have?</p>	
	<p>If Alice in Wonderland or Peter Pan were real, who would you want to meet?</p>	

# Name Game

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** sponge ball or wadded piece of paper

You say, "**Name** things that are **red**. For example, apples." Then you toss the ball. The catcher says, "A heart," and tosses the ball to another student who says, "Fire engine."

When students start to struggle for a word, give hints\* or change the category. You say, "**Name musical instruments**," or "**Name** things that **begin with the letter 'B'**."

## VARIATION:

1. On the first day of class, say **your name** after catching the ball.
2. To test recall, say **the name of the person** who tossed you the ball.

*\*For hints, you can use cards from Elmo's Hot Potato! Game (pictured below, © 2007 Sesame Workshop).*



# It's a Snake

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** 10-foot section of tulle, or a scarf

**ACTIVITY:**

Hold up the snake. You say, "This is **a snake**," and move it like a snake.

Give the snake to a student. Student stands up and says, "This **isn't** a snake. It's **a jump rope**," and pretends to jump rope. S/he gives the rope to another student and sits.

Next student stands up and says, "This **isn't** a jump rope. It's **a bow tie**," and ties a bow. Play continues until it gets old.

# I Went to the Store

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** school or office supplies, a bag

**ACTIVITY:**

Teach the vocabulary first.

Pick up a stapler and say, "I went to the store, and I bought a stapler." Put the stapler in the bag.

Student takes an eraser and says, "I bought a stapler and an eraser." The eraser goes into the bag.

Next student says, "I bought a stapler, an eraser, and some scissors." This continues until everything is in the bag.

Then the class repeats what the last student said, which is one long chain starting with "I went to the store, and . . ."



# How High Can You Count?

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** a pair of dice

**ACTIVITY:**

Roll one of the dice. Point to it and ask the class, "**What number is this?**" Write the answer on the board, e.g., **3**.

Student rolls the die and calls out the number. Write it *to the left\** of the old number. Ask the student, "**What number is this?**" while circling the entire number with your hand, e.g., **63**.

*\*For advanced students, write the number to the right since there is no need to reinforce the earlier number.*

Next student rolls and calls out the number. It's now **463**.

When the number becomes too long and stumps everyone, you say the number, the class repeats it back, then stop.

# Number Chart

NAME	POWERS OF 10	WORD ROOT	EXAMPLES WITH WORD ROOT	BRITISH ENGLISH
<b>m</b> illion	$10^6$	mi- = small	<u>min</u> or	
<b>b</b> illion	$10^9$	bi- = 2	<u>b</u> icycle, <u>bi</u> weekly	milliard
<b>t</b> rillion	$10^{12}$	tri- = 3	<u>tr</u> icycle, <u>tri</u> angle, <u>tri</u> athlon	billion
<b>q</b> uadrillion	$10^{15}$	quadri- = 4	<u>qu</u> adrangle, <u>qu</u> adrant, <u>qu</u> arter	
<b>q</b> uintillion	$10^{18}$	quinti- = 5	<u>quint</u> et	trillion
<b>s</b> extillion	$10^{21}$	sexti- = 6	<u>sex</u> tuplets	
<b>s</b> eptillion	$10^{24}$	septi- = 7	<u>Sept</u> ember (was the 7th month in early Rome)	quadrillion
<b>o</b> ctillion	$10^{27}$	octi- = 8	<u>oct</u> opus (has 8 arms), <u>oct</u> ave (series of 8)	
<b>n</b> onillion	$10^{30}$	noni- = 9	<u>noon</u> (was known as the 9th hour after sunrise)	quintillion
<b>d</b> ecillion	$10^{33}$	deci- = 10	<u>dec</u> ade, <u>dec</u> athlon	

2345678901234567890123456789

# Word Tag

<b>Stimulus</b>	<b>ACTIVITY:</b> Think of a word based on the stimulus.
<b>ABC's</b>	<b>Kat</b> says, " <b>A</b> pple." <b>Matt</b> says, " <b>B</b> oy." → <b>John</b> says, " <b>C</b> ountry." → <b>D</b> og
<b>last letter</b> <i>(of previous word)</i>	Apple <b>e</b> → <b>E</b> gg → <b>G</b> ift → <b>T</b> en → <b>N</b> achos → <b>S</b> ong  <i>*If there's any ambiguity, the student makes a sentence using the word, e.g., "The car turned right." (homophone: write)</i>
<b>numbers</b>	<b>O</b> ne <b>O</b> ctopus → <b>T</b> wo <b>T</b> owels → <b>T</b> hree <b>T</b> axis → <b>F</b> our <b>F</b> lags <i>(up to 20)</i>
<b>names</b> <i>(Match initial sounds.)</i>	<b>Kat:</b> " <b>K</b> at's <b>C</b> andy." → <b>Matt:</b> " <b>M</b> att's <b>M</b> agazine." → <b>John:</b> " <b>J</b> ohn's <b>J</b> et."  <b>FOR ADVANCED STUDENTS, add verbs:</b> <b>Kat:</b> "She <i>puts in</i> <b>K</b> at's <b>C</b> andy." → <b>Matt:</b> "He <i>eats</i> some of <b>K</b> at's <b>C</b> andy and <i>puts in</i> <b>M</b> att's <b>M</b> agazine." → <b>John:</b> "He <i>shares</i> <b>K</b> at's <b>C</b> andy, <i>reads</i> part of <b>M</b> att's <b>M</b> agazine, and <i>puts in</i> <b>J</b> ohn's <b>J</b> et."

# Speed Spell

**MATERIALS NEEDED:** bag of Scrabble® crossword game letters

**ACTIVITY:**

Give **7 tiles** to each student. They use the tiles to **spell words**.

Students may trade once for other tiles, e.g., 3 tiles for 3 *new* tiles, which you draw from the bag without looking. (A blank tile can be used for any letter.)

Word scores are totaled from the numbers on the tiles. The student who spells a word with the highest point total wins.

Used tiles are set aside. Play continues until the bag is empty.

# What Are Your Goals?

You say, "Take a few minutes to think about **your goals**. Write down what your **1-year**, **5-year**, and **10-year goals** are. You will be sharing them with the class."

**VOCABULARY** : will, want to, am going to, would like to

**After 1 year**, I will have . . . enough money to buy a car.

**After 5 years**, I will own . . . a house on the beach.

**After 10 years**, I will be . . . a doctor who saves people's lives.

# Final Tips

**Thrift stores** are a great place to shop for whole games or game pieces.

**Memory games** can be made into shorter games by grouping matched pairs into clear plastic sandwich bags, which are then given to student teams.

A **Jenga® tower** can become a **Q&A** session. One student asks a question, while another answers and pulls out a wood block. Then the student who answered asks a question.



***Have a great class!***

