Beyond Conversation Sticks

Five Engaging Activities for Speaking and Collaborative Learning

Linda Bonder
Beaverton Literacy Council
Linda.Bonder@gmail.com

Agenda

Three fundamentals of successful speaking activities

Five collaborative activities

- Fundamentals
- Procedures
- Adaptations

Questions

Download presentation at:

bit.ly/ESL-speaking

(case-sensitive)

Fundamental #1

Task must be inherently collaborative

Complete the worksheet together.
Read the text together.

versus

Jointly solve a problem.
Write a joint paragraph.
Teach your partner.
Make a shared decision.

Task must have a clear, demonstrated outcome

"Talk to your partner about ____."

versus

Tell your joint story.
Introduce your partner.
Teach someone else.
Vote as a team.

Fundamental #3

Establish purposeful dictionary rules

Dictionaries allowed

or

No dictionaries. Have a question? Ask a partner.

or

One person looks it up & teaches the others.
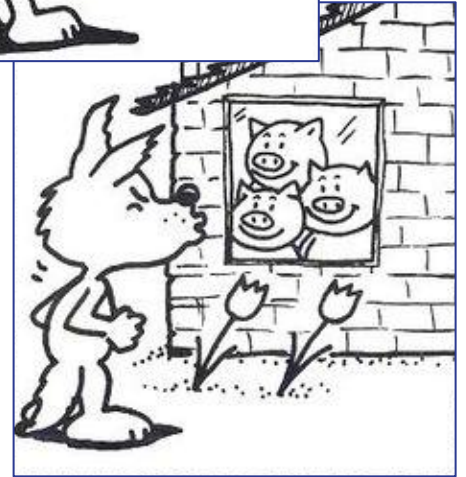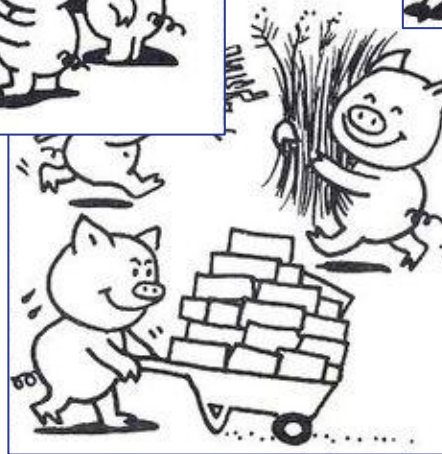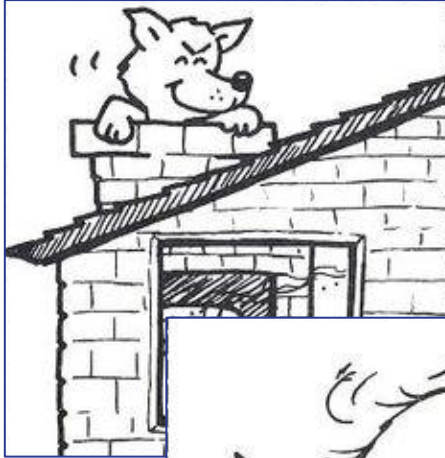
Objectives for today's activities

Increase communicative competence through:

- Negotiation of meaning
- Learner independence from teacher
- Focus on content

Possible focus on form through adaptations

#1. Sequence Stories

#1. Sequence Stories

#1. Sequence Stories

INHERENT COLLABORATION
Each student is needed to tell their part of the story.
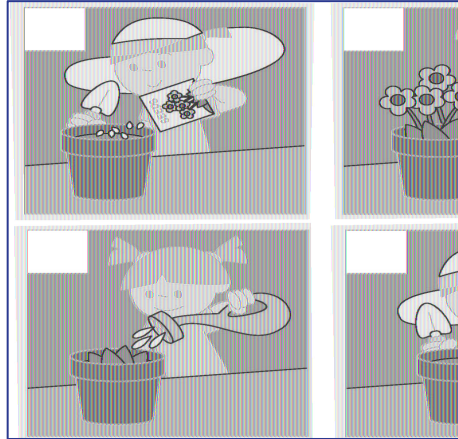
DEMONSTRATED OUTCOME
Group must tell a story that makes sense.

Directions for students

1. Don't show anyone your picture.

2. Think about your picture. Silently practice describing it.

3. Describe your picture to the group.

4. Decide together: whose picture comes first?

5. Tell the story as a group. Does it make sense?

6. Tell the story to the class.

#1. Sequence Stories: adaptations

- Familiar or unfamiliar stories / activities

- Shorter or longer sequences

- Provide vocabulary in advance - or not

- Require certain verb tense/aspect - or not

- Give each student more than 1 image - or have 2 students share an image

- Let students show their images earlier in the process - or from the start
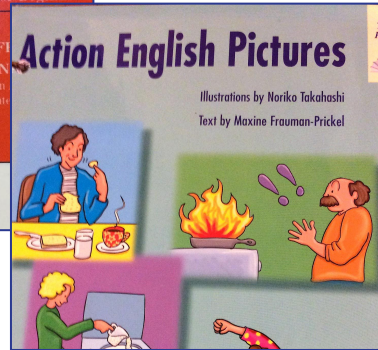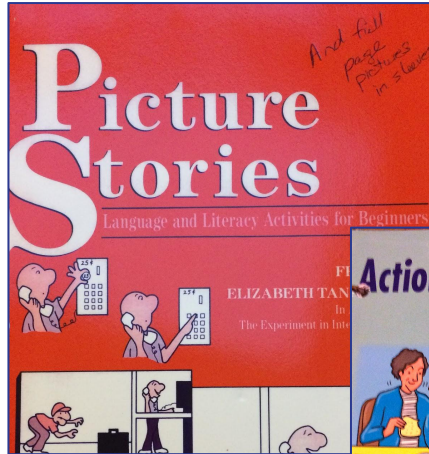
- Jointly tell or write the story

Retrieved from
http://www.kidslearningstation.com/sequencing/sequencing-work
sheet-flowers.asp

Ligon, F., & Tannenbaum, E. (1990). *Picture Stories*. White Plains, NY: Longman.

#1 Sequence Stories: Sources

Picture Stories
by Ligon & Tannenbaum

Action English Pictures
by Takahashi & Frauman-Prickel

#2. Wordless Videos

#2. Wordless Videos

Directions - Part A

1. Choose a short video (2-6 min). Divide it into 4 equal sections.

2. Divide the class into 4 groups.

3. Play the video in sections.

4. After each section, groups discuss the action.

#2. Wordless Videos

Directions - Part B

4. Assign each group to tell one section of the story. <u>Every student must talk.</u>

5. Play all sections again. Let groups practice.

6. Report out group by group so the whole story is told.

#2. Wordless Videos: Adaptations

- Use known or unknown stories / characters

- Use stories or "how to" videos.

- Explain key vocab beforehand - or not.

- Require a certain verb tense/aspect - or not.

- Groups collaboratively *write* about their section.

- Write the story as a class (LEA approach)

- Use video with words (listening component)

#2. Wordless Videos

INHERENT COLLABORATION
Every student must help tell the story.

DEMONSTRATED OUTCOME
As a class, the whole story must be told.

Source ideas

1. Search YouTube for "wordless videos"

2. Search YouTube for "how to"

3. Use recognizable fairy tales / Disney movies (with the sound off)

4. Videos on travel sites

5. Google: "14 vídeos sin palabras para clases de idiomas"

#3. Collaborative Mad Libs

#3: Collaborative Mad Libs

INHERENT COLLABORATION
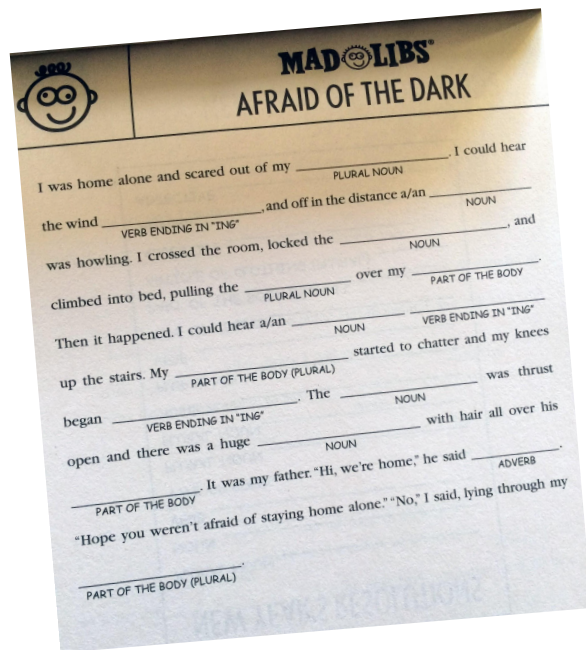Each group must collaborate to create a story.

DEMONSTRATED OUTCOME
Each group passes their story for others to read.

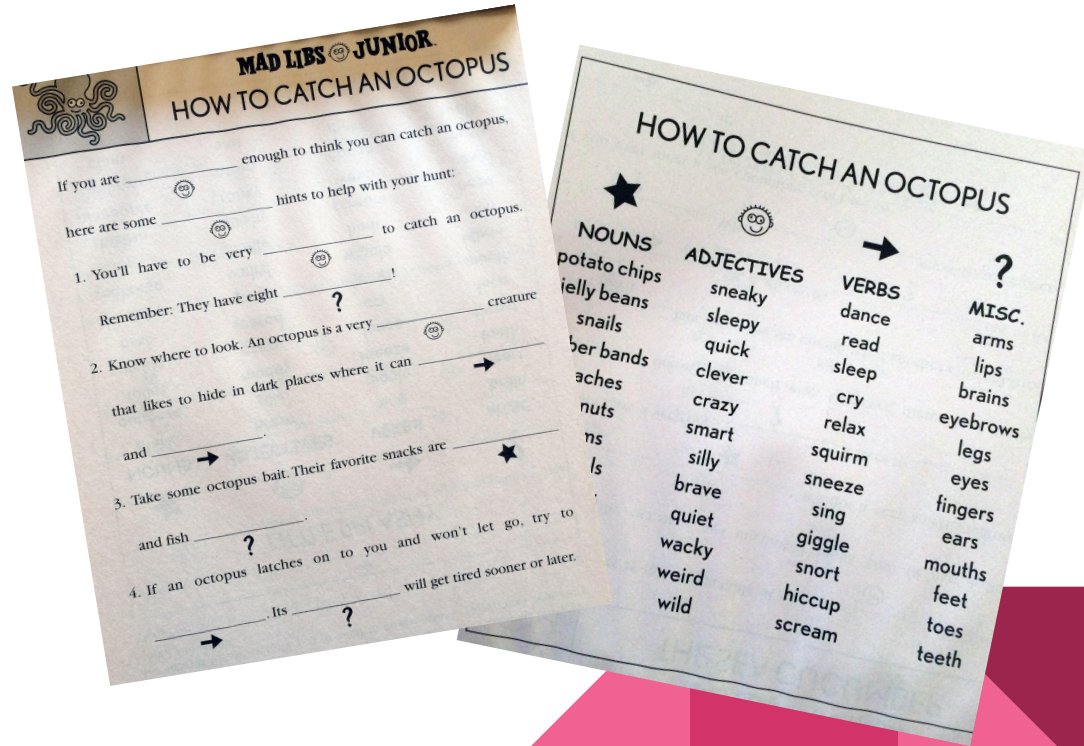# #3: Collaborative Mad Libs

Encourages discussion about:

- Parts of speech

- Sentence context

- Appropriate vocabulary

- Subject-verb agreement

#3: Collaborative Mad Libs: Adaptations (a)

- Simple or complex stories

- Focus on certain parts of speech or types of vocabulary (eg. adjectives)

- Provide word lists - or not

- Can emphasize focus on form - or not

#3: Collaborative Mad Libs: Adaptations (b)

- Multiple groups complete the same story then compare.

- Each group completes a different story. Share stories with the class.

- Pass completed stories around. Other groups must find different words to fill in the blanks.

- Groups read stories aloud to one another.

SUMMER TRIP

Last summer, my mom and dad took me and _____ (person)

on a trip to _____ (place). The weather there is very

_____ (adjective)! Northern _____ (same place) has many

_____ (plural noun), and they make _____ (adjective) _____ (plural noun) there.

Many people also go to _____ (place) to _____ (action verb) or

see the _____ (plural noun). The people that live there love to

eat _____ (plural noun) and are very proud of their big

_____ (noun). They also like to _____ (action verb) in

the sun and swim in the _____ (action verb)! It was a really

_____ (adjective) trip!

Retrieved from http://www.woojr.com/summer-mad-libs/summer-mad-libs-2/

#4. Social Questions

#4. Social Questions

You live in an apartment, and your neighbors are very noisy. You often hear screaming and violent crashes. Their noise is disturbing your peaceful living, and you are worried that someone is getting hurt. You:

1. Call the police.

2. Talk to the building manager.

3. Wait until the woman comes out by herself, and ask if she is okay.

4. Try to move to a different apartment.

5. Do something else (what?)

#4. Social Questions

Directions for students

1. Discuss the problem and choices with your group. Discuss your reasons.

2. Come to agreement or record votes for each option.

3. Write your vote on the board.

INHERENT COLLABORATION
Each group must come to a consensus.

DEMONSTRATED OUTCOME
Groups write their votes on the board for class debrief.

<u>Report out</u>: Is there class consensus? What other ideas were discussed? Are there cultural differences in solving these problems?

#4. Social Questions: Adaptations

- Adapt scenarios to student level & class topic
  - Adapt language
  - Adapt concepts
- Don't provide multiple choice answers
- Ask groups to come up with possible solutions. Compare the solutions found by different groups.

Click here for more scenarios with multiple choice answers.

Google "problem solving speaking tasks"

#5. Target Words

#5. Target Words

Directions

1. Create groups of 4+ people.

2. Make 2+ people "Guessers" and 2+ people "Explainers".

3. Give Explainers a list of target words.

4. Explainers must describe or give examples (no gestures) to help Guessers figure out the target word.

5. Each group must figure out as many target words as possible.

1. stars
2. clouds
3. helicopter
4. boy
5. church
6. Mexico

1. colors
2. tree
3. school
4. snow
5. Mexico
6. car
7. Helicopter

#5. Target Words: Adaptations

- Use vocab words from thematic unit

- Give Guessers a word bank (with or without pictures) - or not

- Vary the number of Guessers & Explainers in each group

- Encourage competition between groups - or not

- Have Explainers choose target words

INHERENT COLLABORATION
Explainers & guessers must work together

DEMONSTRATED OUTCOME
Group reports out # of target words discovered

Questions? Ideas?

#1. Sequence Stories

#2. Wordless Videos

#3. Mad Libs

#4. Social Issues

#5. Target Words

Download presentation at:

bit.ly/ESL-speaking

(case-sensitive)

Extra Stuff

#6. Group Vocabulary Learning

INHERENT COLLABORATION
Each group must collaborate to understand vocab & text.

DEMONSTRATED OUTCOME
Students teach vocab & text to other students.

Choose 2 texts:

- Generally known topics

- Understandable sentence structure & grammar

- Purposeful number of "difficult words"

- Authentic text if possible

- Adapt as needed

No dictionaries

#6. Group Vocabulary Learning

A New Invention:
Shoes that Grow with a Child

Children grow quickly, especially their feet.

But many families cannot buy new shoes each time a child needs them. As a result, about 300 million children around the world go barefoot. Those children risk picking up diseases from the soil.

An American man may have a solution for those barefoot kids – a shoe that grows with the child.

Adapted from Soh, J., & Matteo, A. (2016, November 7). A New Invention: Shoes that Grow with a Child (K. J. Kelly, Ed.). Retrieved November 7, 2016, from
http://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/health-and-lifestyle-shoes-that-grow-with-a-child/3576149.html

My guess at difficult words:

1. Invention
2. Especially
3. Barefoot
4. Diseases

New phrases / idioms
1. As a result
2. Picking up

#6. Group Vocabulary Learning: Procedure

1. Create an **even number** of small groups (2-4 students).
   Half of the groups get each text.

2. Each group **identifies difficult words**, discusses meanings, ensures common understanding.

3. Each group creates sentences with chosen words.
   Teacher checks sentences.

8 groups of 3 students each

Text A   3 3 3 3

Text B   3 3 3 3
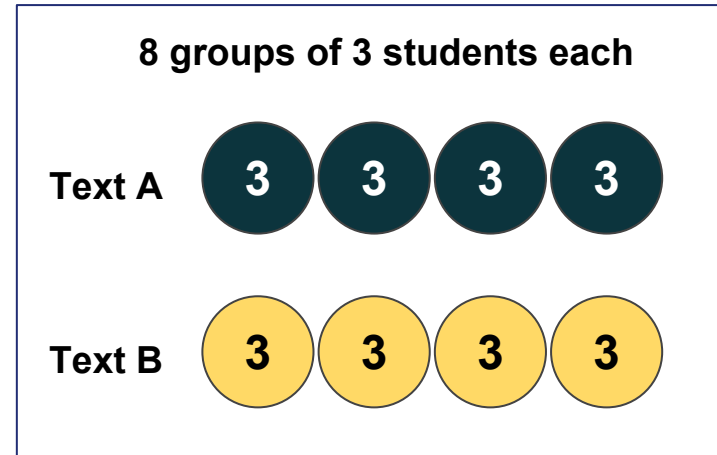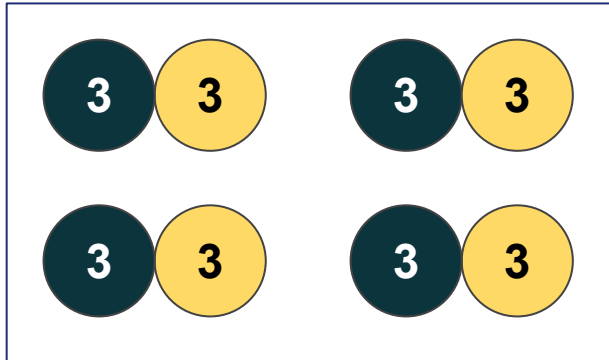
#6. Group Vocabulary Learning: Procedure

4. Put each "A" group with a "B" group. Students explain vocab & text to one another.
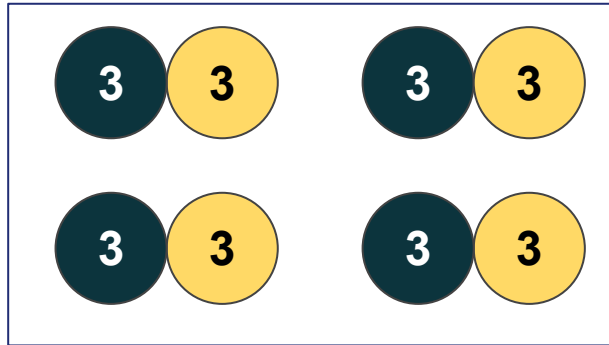
5. Report out: As a class, explain both texts.

#6. Group Vocabulary Learning: Adaptations

- Texts A & B can provide different sides of an issue

- Purposeful grouping of high & low level learners

- More focus on vocab - or more focus on texts

- Use short descriptions of places or events (CLICK for sample)

- Put "A" individuals with "B" individuals (instead of groups)
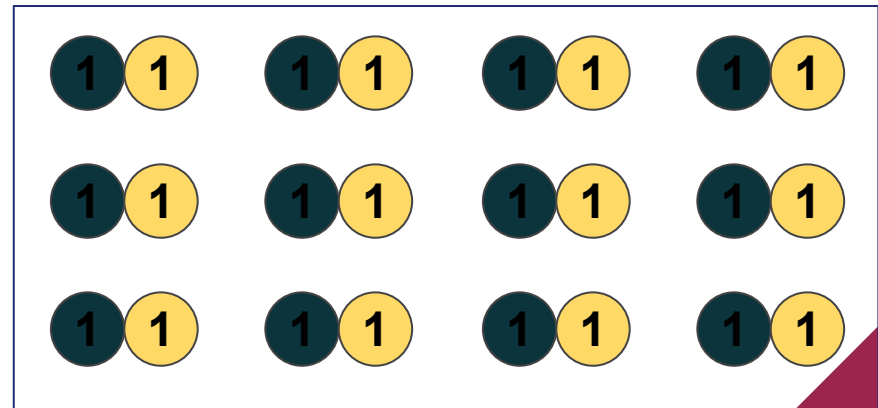
#7. Which picture is it?

#7. Which picture is it?

1. Choose images with a common element (theme, colors, people, abstract content …)

2. Post images to be seen by all

3. Groups of 2-3 students

Images from National Geographic

#7. Which picture is it?

4. Each group secretly chooses one image to describe.

5. Groups take turns describing their image. <u>Everyone must talk</u>.

6. The class guesses which image they are describing.

INHERENT COLLABORATION
Students must collaborate to describe pictures.

DEMONSTRATED OUTCOME
Others must guess which picture they are describing.

#7. Which picture is it? Adaptations

What should students describe?
- The whole image
- The faces
- The person's emotions
- The landscape
- The textures
- The colors ("mostly blue")

Many images on the wall - or few

A set of similar images -
or very different ones