

# Take a break!

Vanessa Clark explains why it does us all good to take a break!

You probably start and end your lessons with a fun activity, but what about taking a break in the middle? We don't mean a coffee break or a toilet break (though those are vital too!), but a change of activity within the lesson. Time for a quick game or just 'something a bit different' for a change.

## Brain breaks

It does us all good to take a break – learners and teachers alike! None of us can concentrate with full focus for 60 or 90 minutes. A break of just a couple of minutes doing something different gives us a change of pace and a boost of energy – and it actually improves the memory. Experts call these 'brain breaks' and they are vital for good learning.

## When to take a break?

It's up to you! You can schedule a break mid-lesson, or just play it by ear. Take a break whenever you feel your learners are starting to get restless, or if you've just completed a demanding activity. Whenever you feel like mixing things up a bit, then go for it!



## Zur Autorin

Vanessa Clark is an author and has 30 years' experience as a teacher in both Germany and the UK, and now teaches English at a boarding school in Oxfordshire.

***“It does us all good to take a break – learners and teachers alike!”***

## Time to refresh

Breaks don't only refresh our tired brains, they can refresh language too! A game is a great way to revise words from the previous lesson, or to reactivate older language from earlier in the course. Brain breaks aren't a chance for the students to switch off, but to stay fresh and learn better.

## Keep it simple

For a break to be enjoyable it has to be easily doable. A quick game with simple instructions or a puzzle that takes a minute or two to work out. Of course, a break should never include new vocabulary or unknown concepts. You want your students to scratch their heads about your intriguing puzzle, not the difficult words in it!

## Just do it!

The ideal break activity takes minimal preparation, no printing or photocopying and no special equipment. Some teachers keep a list of quick game ideas in the front of their planners, ready for any opportunity (or emergency!).

## Failsafe favourites

You no doubt already have your own favourite games that always work for you (we'd love to hear them!) but we'd like to share a few of the quickest, easiest, failsafe favourite formats with you.

## Active games:

- Last man standing (e.g. *Sit down if you slept well last night.*)
- Line up! (e.g. *Line up in order of your birthdays.*)
- Find it! (e.g. *Find something made of wood.*)

## Creative thinking:

- Wild lies (e.g. *Tell me 5 lies about the Queen.* Then challenge them to substantiate the lies.)
- 10 best uses for a shoe/stone/potato.
- What's the question (e.g. *If the answer is 'New York', what's the question?)*

## Guessing games:

- 3 clues (e.g. *It's a sport. It starts with S. You do it on water.*)
- What's in my bag? (*Can you guess 10 things in the teacher's bag?*)

## Chain games around the class:

- *I went shopping and I bought ...*
- *In my house there's a ...*
- *Last night I ...*

## Picture games:

- Pictionary
- Slow drawing (*Can you guess what it's going to be, before I finish?*)

## Vocab games:

- Noughts and crosses
- Bingo
- Word tennis (Two players take turns to say words in a category)

# A book with built-in breaks

Fun breaks are built into every lesson in the Klett series *Let's Enjoy English*. There is always a 5-minute activity that practises language from the previous lesson in a fun way. Just look for the teapot symbol! If you haven't started using *Let's Enjoy English* yet, here are some examples for you to try.



## TAKE A BREAK

Can you work out the shorthand dialogues? Tip: The vowels (a, e, i, o, u) are missing.  
Können Sie die Kurzschrift-Dialoge erkennen? Tipp: Alle Vokale fehlen!

1 A Gd mrnng! Hw r y? B m fn, thnks. nd y? A M, t.

2 A Nc ts y gn! B Y, t!

3 A Whr r y frm? B m frm hr. A Grt! M, t.

Practise the dialogues with a partner. Üben Sie die Dialoge zu zweit.

Write a shorthand sentence for your class. Schreiben Sie einen Satz in Kurzschrift für Ihren Kurs.

*Let's Enjoy English A1.1* (978-3-12-501630-9)



## TAKE A BREAK

How many English words do you know beginning with w?

Make a sentence with as many w words as you can.

Say it as fast as you can!

*Let's Enjoy English A2.1*  
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## TAKE A BREAK

Write a caption for the holiday photo. Read it to the class. Whose caption is best?




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## TAKE A BREAK

How many words can you make with the letters below?

**I'M NEW HERE**

*Let's Enjoy English A2.2* (978-3-12-501639-2)



## TAKE A BREAK

Say the colour, don't say the word.  
Nennen Sie die Farbe, nicht das Wort.

1 brown

2 yellow

3 white

4 blue

5 red

6 black

7 green

*Let's Enjoy English First Steps* (978-3-12-501631-6)

Listen to your teacher and repeat the limerick. Then practise reading it aloud.

Can you draw the family tree?

Hören Sie Ihrem Lehrer / Ihrer Lehrerin zu und wiederholen Sie den Reim. Dann lesen Sie den Reim selbst laut vor. Können Sie den Stammbaum erstellen?

My grandmother's first name is Connie,  
Her husband's not Johnny, he's Ronnie,  
Their son's name is Boris,  
His wife's name is Doris,  
And their children are Morris and Bonnie.

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## MEHR ENTDECKEN

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