

Authenticity - English inside the classroom (A 1.2)

Learning can be brought to life by using realia in the classroom. Here are some ideas for short activities to show your students that what they learn in their lessons can really help them when they are outside the classroom.



This month's activities range in duration from 5 to 15 minutes. They can be used with, or after a range of Units from *Network 1* (the Unit/Step are written with each activity).

The activities use realia including photos, menus, postcards, timetables, tourist brochures, maps - almost anything can be put to good use in the classroom!

In fact, you can bring in a variety of 'English bits of paper' - a receipt from a shop, a bus ticket, a holiday brochure, a theatre programme, an ad from a newspaper, a magazine article, a restaurant bill etc. Ask students to play detectives and find out any information they can from this piece of paper.

To be used with, or after: a range of Units in Network 1 (the Unit/Step are written with each activity)

If you have some extra time in a lesson, you might like to try some of these ideas for short activities to show your students that what they learn in their lessons can really help them when they are outside the classroom.

1. Famous people (10 minutes) *with or after Unit 2, Step 2*

Bring in some photos of famous people from magazines. Divide the students into groups of three or four and give them four or five photos. Ask them what they know about the people. You could give them prompt questions to help: What is his/her name? What is his/her job? Where does he/she come from? Which language(s) does he/she speak? Is he/she married? Does he/she have children?

For more able groups:

Pairs of students can write a short profile of their person and read it to the class - without mentioning the person's name. The class can guess who it is.

2. Menus (10 minutes) *with or after Unit 6, Step 1*

You can use both German and English-language menus in the classroom.

Make sure they are not too complicated.

If you have German menus, students work in groups of three. Two of the students explain the menu in English to the third student, their 'English speaking colleague'.

If you have English-language menus, divide the students into groups of four for a role-play. Three students are guests in a restaurant and the fourth is the waiter. They act out a restaurant scene, and order food and drink.

3. Postcards (10 minutes) *with or after Unit 5, Step 2*

Students work in groups of three or four. Put several postcards on each group's desk (placed face-up on the table). One person describes one of the postcards and the others guess which one it is.

For more able classes: Cut the postcards in half and give them out so that each student has half a card and someone else in the class has the other half. In turns, students should describe his/her half of the card and the person with the matching half should sit with his/her partner for this lesson.

Tip: Restaurants and pubs often have free postcards and it's worth making a collection of these.

4. 20 questions (10+ minutes) *with or after Unit 5, Step 2*

Students work in small groups. One person thinks of something in his/her bag. The other students ask questions, which can only have the answers Yes or No to try and guess what the person is thinking of.

5. Transport timetables (10 minutes) *with or after Unit 3, Step 1 (Prices) & Unit 4, Step 2 (Times)*

Students work in pairs to practise telling the time. Almost any timetable - bus, train, ship or plane, or even cinema programmes - can be used. Give out the timetables with questions on what time the bus etc. arrives or leaves/a specific film starts.

Some timetables also have prices on and so can also be used to practise How much does ... cost?/How much is ...? Again give out questions with the timetables.

6. Tourist information (15+ minutes) *with or after Unit 6, Step 2*

Students work in small groups. Bring in some tourist brochures from an English-speaking town and ask your students to plan a weekend in that town.

More able classes can compile a short brochure about the town they are in.

7. Maps (10+ minutes) *with or after Unit 2, Step 1*

Use local maps to practise giving and listening to directions. Students work in pairs, with one map per pair. One person asks for directions from and to a specific place, and the other student gives the directions. For more able classes, one student starts at a specific place and gives directions to a mystery place. By following the directions, the other student should be able to guess where their colleague has taken them.

8. Students' realia (5 minutes)

You can also suggest your students giving 5 minute presentations on their favourite holiday photo or their hobby using for example a magazine to show pictures of it. Start them off with: Today I'd like to tell you *something about ...*