

# THE MONSTER BOOK



## of Language Teaching Activities

*A Teacher's Resource Book of Fun Template Activities  
For Use in the English Language Classroom*



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# Introduction

*The Monster Book of Language Teaching Activities* is a collection of activities intended to liven up the language classroom, engage students in learning, and give instructors straightforward active options for practicing the four skills, grammar points, vocabulary, critical thinking, interactive activities and aspects of America culture. Many of these activities have been used in the field for several years and are compiled here with simple, clear instructions and variations to fit a wide range of classroom contexts.

The activities are organized into thirteen sections including the four skills: Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing as well as more specific areas for the classroom such as Lead Ins, Music, Vocabulary, Critical Thinking, Pictures, Interactive Activities, Games, and American Culture. These sections are a starting point for categorizing the activities rather than hard divisions. The Table of Contents uses descriptive icons to further illustrate the scope and flexibility of each activity.

Each activity is set up with a standard format including 1) an overview; 2) preparation; 3) procedures; and 4) variations. In addition to these subheadings, a box with basic information is also provided for each activity: sample aims, possible levels, skills, materials needed, estimated prep time and activity time.

The activities are considered a template so instructors can use the basic version of the activity provided, tweak the activity using the variations listed, or bring their own ideas to the activity to suit their context and performance objectives of the class.

In addition to the activities, the book begins with a select few articles (reprinted here with permission) from *English Teaching Forum*, the quarterly journal published by the Office of English Language Programs in Washington, D.C. ([www.forum.state.gov](http://www.forum.state.gov)) The articles are intended to provide background and context for the activities as well as to support for the notion of trying new ideas and activities in the language classroom while considering how an activity accomplishes the goals of the class and meets the needs of the students.

*The Monster Book of Language Teaching Activities* began with activities that were demonstrated as a part of English Language Specialist David Malatesta's workshops in Turkey and Brazil between 2006-2010. From these workshops, it was evident that teachers appreciated having a collection of interactive classroom activities. RELO Brazil (2010-2013) took on the task of compiling the activities to provide a common format and organized the activities into familiar categories. Additional activities and variations were contributed by educators throughout the Southern Cone, thereby creating a richer resource. A few activities were gleaned from *English Teaching Forum* articles as noted.

Care has been taken to ensure credit was given to those who contributed the ideas and sources cited whenever known. Any lack of proper credit acknowledgement in this collection is unintentional. Deep appreciation goes out to all the educators who have contributed ideas in order to create this resource. Additional ideas are always welcome for future editions. Please send them to [RELOBrazil@state.gov](mailto:RELOBrazil@state.gov)

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# Clap Snap

*Clap Snap has been around for many years and has been used with native speakers as a multi-tasking, think-fast game for kids in school yards and at camp. Students clap and snap out a rhythm that goes in this order:*

*clap hands*

*slap left thigh with left hand*

*slap right thigh with right hand*

*snap with left hand*

*snap with right hand*

*repeat*

## Preparation

Select appropriate categories to review (names, colors, verbs, clothing, cities, etc.).

## Procedure

1. Demonstrate the rhythm and have students imitate.
2. Instruct students on the rules: All students do the rhythm. Someone calls out the category and the playing begins. As the game starts, one student calls out an appropriate word (depending on category or sequence chosen) during the snaps when it's his/her turn. The next student needs to select another appropriate word during the next snap part. To change difficulty level, the pattern rate can be slowed down or increased.
3. Play a round. A round consists of everyone calling out an appropriate word during the snap portion of the pattern when it's their turn.

## Variations

1. Change up the speed as new rounds are started or change the category after one round is completed.
2. Allow students to change the pattern or add to it.

### When to Use It

- To review vocabulary
- To add a kinesthetic element to the learning
- To add competition and time pressure

### Level



### Skills



### Practice



### Materials

None

### Preparation Time

A few minutes to go over rules

### Activity Time

5-10 minutes

# Climb the Mountain

*This is a “figure out the secret” vocabulary-building game (in this example for clothing).*

## Preparation

Prepare room for students to sit in a circle.

## Procedure

1. Everyone sits in a circle.
2. Explain that every person must complete the sentence, “I will climb the mountain wearing...” and then choose some article of clothing.
3. Everyone takes turns completing the sentence around the circle.
4. After each individual finishes the sentence, the teacher tells the student if s/he made it to the top or not.
5. Students are to figure out which clothing they must use that will allow them to reach the top.

The mystery that they are trying to figure out is that they make it to the top if they mention an article of clothing that the person to their left is wearing. Keep playing and suggest answers/give hints as needed to keep them guessing and engaged. Try to get everyone to discover the secret even if they don’t make it to the top.

## Variations/Expansions

This can be done with other vocabulary or using different tenses (I crossed over the mountain) — be creative! One caveat is to make sure that you are not calling out something that would make a student uncomfortable.

### When to Use It

- To review vocabulary
- To practice particular sentences
- To engage learners in critical thinking

### Level



### Skills



### Practice



### Materials

None

### Preparation Time

None — except to prepare the class

### Activity Time

15+ minutes