

Early language learning through doing and play –

Different ideas for teaching foreign languages (to small pupils)

Tampere experiences

Statues and sights

The aim is to get to know different sights by using one's body to make statues. The more sights (like The Tower of London, The Eiffel Tower etc.) the more lessons can be started using this method.

- a) Stretching.
Have a look at the sight in photos, pictures and a small clip, if possible.
The pupils come up with a form for the sight with their body, by oneself or with a partner, depending on the sight.
When performing the sight, always say its name aloud.
- b) Freeze and release
The pupils freeze to the form of the sight. The teacher releases them by saying the name of the sight and tapping the pupil on the shoulder. After a few releases the others release the sights by saying its name when the teacher taps someone's shoulder.
- c) Colouring the sight
- d) Making one's own 3D model or other version of the sight

The group can get to know many different sights and always revise the old ones first and then take a new one.

Arts and Crafts: food

The pupils can make different kinds of crafts and create food models. E.g. French breakfast: a triangle form on felt rolled like a croissant, glued to a paper plate with a hot chocolate mug coloured in the colours of the French flag. Or one can make brezels out of play dough, tortillas of felt...

Arts and crafts can be used in versatile occasions on language lessons.



Doing a fairy tale figure

Getting to know some famous fairy tale figure and its story and drawing/colouring/ crafting it.

Physical games

Pea bag relay: when changing the pea bag to someone else, always say its colour.

Flag colour game (duck, duck, goose): The pupils stand in a circle faces towards the centre. One pupil walks behind them and says one colour of the flag (red, blue, white, red, blue, white) when touching each student. When the pupil says a different word like Hello etc. the pupils run like in *duck, duck goose*.

Hop scotch and rope skipping when learning numbers.

Zombie/ robot: The pupils sit by their desks. One of the pupils is a zombie/ a robot and moves slowly towards the pupil whose name has been said and tries to catch the pupil before they can save themselves by saying someone else's name. Like Bob says: My name is Lisa. And so the zombie/robot continues to Lisa and tries to catch her before she can save herself by saying someone else's name. This can also be played with different vocabularies by placing for instance flash cards on the pupils' desks.

Hot/ cold: One pupil goes out of the class while others hide an item (e.g. a cuddly toy). Then the one pupil comes inside and tries to find the item when the others give only hints *hot* if it's near and *cold* if it's not near.

HatchiPatchi/ HutchyButchy: The pupils sit in a circle but there isn't a chair for one pupil who is the inspector and goes out of class. The others decide or the teacher decides which one of the pupils is HatchiPatchi who the inspector tries to find. The inspector comes in and asks one pupil at a time "What is your name?" and if the pupil is not HatchiPatchi, they answer "My name is... (Their own name). If the pupil indeed is HP they answer "My name is HatchiPatchi." and everyone changes places so the inspector tries to get a chair.

Catch: Pupils stand in a tight circle. Every other pupil is in one team and every other in the other team. Each team has a cuddly toy and pupil hands it to their team member i.e. not the pupil next to them and says a word. The round ends when one team's toy reaches the other team's toy. The teacher can decide the vocabulary.

Bingo

Numbers with instruments and body percussion

Numbers with body



Touch the colour: The teacher says a colour and the pupils touch this colour as many times and at as many places as possible and repeat the colour aloud while touching before another colour is said.

Slap/ Flyswatter: There are words, pictures, numbers... on the board/ on a desk. Someone (usually the teacher) says a word loud and the pupil tries to slap the word before the others.

KABOOM!: There are lolly sticks in a jar. On the sticks there are words or pictures. Pupils take turns and lift a stick at a time and says the word. If they know it, they can keep it. If not, they must return it to the jar. The one who has the most sticks in the end wins. There are also KABOOM! sticks in the jar and if the pupil lifts a KABOOM! stick they lose all their sticks.

Pantomime

Word rhyme: The pupils stand up and take their writing hand ready. While saying the words the pupils perform the certain act. When they remember the rhyme, they can start doing it faster.

For instance:

Word 1: thumb toward oneself

word 2: index finger forward

word 3: thumb to left

word 4: thumb to right

word 5: both thumbs to one's chest

word 6: both index finger forward

word 7: arms straight and index fingers forward

Running dictation: (when the students know how to read and write). There are short sentences or just words written on paper which is not in the class. The pupils work in groups and one pupil in each group runs at a time to the paper and tries to memorise the sentence/ word and then runs back to their group and dictates the message. The pupil runs back and fort until the message is spelled correctly and then they inform the teacher who checks the spelling.

Sponge Bob: Class is divided into two teams. The teacher says a word in native language and the team which manages to say the word quicker in foreign language gets a chance to throw the wet to the black board where there is a target of different points. In the end the team which has more points, wins.

