

Tricks of the trade

## **Sing!**

When I started teaching ESL about a decade ago, I got the idea of using popular songs as a learning tool. At that time I was teaching a Beginning ESL class and spent hours going through CDs checked out of the library to find songs simple enough for my students to understand. Since then, technology has zoomed forward. Now, once I know the song I want to play, I search for it using Google. What comes up is usually a YouTube video of the song being performed. Since I have a computer and screen in my classroom, my students not only hear the song but see it performed as well.

Whether you're fortunate enough to have access to a computer rig or must rely on CDs, singing remains one of the most fun and effective ways to teach—and learn—English. While it's tempting to introduce your students to your favorites from years past, you'll maximize teachable moments if you focus on songs that use the grammar structures you're working on. Here are some suggestions for songs to accompany the units in this book:

Chapter 1: Where's the party? (Madonna)

Chapter 2: What's your name - What's your number? (Andrea True)

Chapter 3: Somewhere (A Place for Us) (West Side Story)

Chapter 4: Wonderful tonight (Eric Clapton)

Chapter 5: Do you want to know a secret? (Beatles)

Chapter 6: Sailing (Rod Stewart)

In addition to playing the song for students, I recommend that you google the lyrics, print them, and make copies so your students can follow along. If you're feeling ambitious you can create lessons around the songs that focus on vocabulary, grammar, or comprehension. But that's the icing on the cake. It's fine to just play a song, note the grammar point, and let students enjoy the experience, reminding them that you don't expect them to understand every word. I do recommend playing the same song on multiple days so students internalize the vocabulary and sentence structures.

# The Alphabet

(Class, Tutor/Tutee)

## Objective

- Review the letters of the alphabet in English.

## Note

- Many teachers assume that students know the letters of the English alphabet when, in fact, they need more practice. This activity makes sure that all students have this basic knowledge.

**When to do this activity:** During the first or second week of class.

## Supplies

- *Alphabet* handout (with pronunciation in Spanish): one copy for each student
  - White boards, dry erase markers and erasers (one for each student)
- or
- 8 1/2" x 11" scrap paper cut in half (several sheets for each student)

## How to introduce this activity

- Ask your students: *Why take the time to learn the alphabet in English?* (Possible answers: *You may have to tell other people how to spell your name if, say, you're applying for a job or want to get a cell phone. Also, if don't understand someone's name, you can ask them to spell it for you.*)

## Activity: Part 1

- Distribute the alphabet handout.
- Repeat the alphabet. Explain that, on the handout, the pronunciation is between the slashes. (Many student won't realize this.)
- Teach *capital (mayúscula)* and *lower case (minúscula)*.
- Write "problem letters" on the board and ask students to identify them. The most difficult letters are the vowels, *g, j, k, q, v, w, x, y,* and *z*.
- Almost all students have trouble distinguishing between *E* and *I*. Here's a tip you may want to pass on: Write a lower case *E* and put whiskers on it, then ask what people say when they see a mouse – *eeeeee!* Write a lower case *I* and make the dot look like an eye.
- Pass out dry erase boards, markers, and erasers or pieces of scrap paper cut in half.
- Call out a letter. Student must write the letter. Then hold it up for you to check.
- Do this for capital and lower case letters.
- Repeat this activity until students can identify letters almost automatically.

## Activity: Part 2

- Dictate whole words to the students, especially long words, like *Mississippi* and *Wisconsin*. You might also try words like *exit, exercise, electrician, interviewer,* and *engineer* which force students to distinguish between *e* and *i*.

## Extension

- Display letters of the alphabet, uppercase and lowercase, around the room and practice them as needed.

# The Alphabet

A a	/ei/*
B b	/bi/
C c	/si/
D d	/di/
E e	/i/*
F f	/ef/
G g	/chi/
H h	/eich/
I i	/ai/*
J j	/che/
K k	/quei/
L l	/el/
M m	/em/
N n	/en/
O o	/ou/*
P p	/pi/
Q q	/quiu/
R r	/ar/
S s	/es/
T t	/ti/
U u	/iu/*
V v	/vi/
W w	/dabol iu/
X x	/exs/
Y y	/uai/
Z z	/tsi/

\*Vowels: A, E, I, O, U

Consonants: all other letters (B, C, D, F, G, H, J, K, L, M, N, P, Q, R, S, T, V, W, X, Y, Z)

## Objectives

- To teach students to use a simple dictionary. Many students won't know this!
- To encourage students to use the dictionary in the back of *Paso a paso* and *Step by Step* when they're completing exercises in the book.

**When to do this activity:** During the first or second week of class.

## Supplies

- *Gramática del inglés: Paso a paso 2* or *English Grammar Step by Step 2*: one copy for each student
- *Dictionary Practice*: One for every two students

## How to introduce this activity

Ask your students:

- *Why are dictionaries useful? (They tell you the meanings and pronunciations of words you don't know.)*
- *What skill do you need before you can use a dictionary? (You need to know the alphabet.)*

## Activity: Part 1

- Ask students to turn to the dictionary on page 134 in their book. Then ask them to turn to the dictionary on page 139. Ask them to explain the difference. (E.g., *On page 134 the words are in English then Spanish and on page 139 they are in Spanish then English.*)
- Choose a letter from the Spanish/English dictionary, with relatively few words, say G. Ask students to explain why the words are ordered the way they are.
- Give students a word in English and ask them to tell you what page the word is on in the English/Spanish dictionary and what that word means in Spanish. Repeat this several times.
- Give students a word in Spanish and ask them to tell you what page the word is on in the Spanish/English dictionary and what that word means in English. Repeat this several times.

## Activity: Part 2

- Divide students into pairs.
- Give each pair a worksheet. Instruct them to use their Spanish/English and English/Spanish dictionaries in the back of their grammar book to answer the questions on the worksheet.
- When students finish, review the answers as a class.

# **Using a Dictionary**

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## **Names**

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Translate these words from Spanish to English.

1 jugar     play

2 horno

3 toalla

4 entre

5 relajar

6 desayuno

7 siempre

8 una vez

9 cita

10 carne

Translate these words from English to Spanish.

1 sock     calcetin

2 next to

3 eat

4 walk

5 twice

6 kitchen

7 clothes

8 above

9 towel

10 meeting

**Extra credit.** Using the English/Spanish dictionary, find eight English words that you don't know. Then, write what those words mean in Spanish.

**English**

**Spanish**

1 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Objective**

- To teach students to identify and spell the names of furniture and the names of rooms in a house.

**When to do this activity:** After students have completed section 1.2 of *Paso a paso 2* or *Step by Step 2*.

**Supplies**

- *Vocabulary: At home*: Class set
- Scissors for each student
- Paperclip for each student to clip their vocabulary cards

**Before the class begins:** Make sure you can identify each drawing: *lamp, night table, bed, dresser, couch, chair, coffee table, end table, stove, refrigerator, blender, microwave, sink, toilet, bathtub, shower, wall, window, rug, floor*.

**How to introduce this activity**

- Ask students to name the rooms in their current house or apartment.
- Ask students to name the rooms in the house they lived in in their native country.

**Activity: Part 1**

- Distribute the worksheet *Vocabulary: At Home*.
- Students cut out their cards.
- After students have cut out their cards, hold up a card and write what it is on the board. Students write the word in English on the back of the card.
- Do this for each card.

**Activity: Part 2**

- Divide students into pairs.
- Write this conversation on the board:  
*Student A: What is this?*  
*Student B: It is a \_\_\_\_\_.*  
*Student A: Spell that please.*  
*Student B: \_\_\_\_\_.*
- Practice the conversation as a class.
- Students practice this conversation, showing their partner a vocabulary card, then asking their partner what it is and how to spell it.

## Vocabulary: At home



## Objective

- Practice using prepositions of location.

**When to do this activity:** After students have completed Section 1.4 of *Paso a paso 2* or *Step by Step 2*.

## Supplies

- Five different objects that you will hide around the classrooms (3 individual items and 2 multiple items). Students should be familiar with these objects and how to spell them.
- *Scavenge Hunt* handout: one copy for each student. You'll need to modify the handout to include the objects that students need to find.

## Before you begin the class

- Hide the objects you have collected in different locations around the classroom.

## How to introduce this activity

- Review the prepositions of location: *in, under, in front of, on, next to, behind, in back of, above, between*.
- Review conjugating the verb *to be*.
- Review the use of the pronouns *it* and *they*.

## Activity

- Distribute the *Scavenger Hunt* handout.
- Remind students that they must answer each question with a complete sentence.
- Review worksheets as a class.



# **Scavenger Hunt**

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Names \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Answer the questions using prepositions of location. Tell the truth!  
Answer with a complete sentence.

1. Where is the \_\_\_\_\_?

2. Where is the \_\_\_\_\_?

3. Where are the \_\_\_\_\_?

4. Where is the \_\_\_\_\_?

5. Where are the \_\_\_\_\_?

6. Where are you?

7. Where is your teacher?

## Four Corners (Class)

### Objective

- Reinforce the use of prepositions with locations.

**When to do this activity:** After students have completed Section 1.5 of *Paso a paso 2* or *Step by Step 2*.

### Supplies

- *Four Corners* cards. (You need enough so that each student can have one card. If you need more, make your own.)

### Before the class begins

- Cut out enough cards so that each student has one.
- On the white board, write **at**, **in**, and **on** in large letters evenly placed across the length of the board.
- If you don't have a white board, make three signs and post them around the room.

### How to introduce this activity

- Review the chart on page 10 of *Paso a paso 2* and *Step by Step 2*.
- Write these phrases on the board

**church Green Street Texas Los Angeles kitchen Central Park**

Ask students what preposition should be placed before each location.

### Activity

- Give each student a card.
- Each student takes his card and stands under the appropriate sign (E.g., If your sign says **I am \_\_\_\_ work**, you stand under the **at** sign.)
- If students are confused--and these prepositions are confusing--suggest that they use the chart on page 10 of their book to help them.
- After students are standing under the appropriate sign, students take turns reading their cards. Other students give a *thumbs up* or *thumbs down* to indicate whether the student is standing in the correct location. If the student isn't in the correct location, they move.
- Collect cards and redistribute them, or do the activity again on another day.

Maria is ___ the library.	I am ___ work.	Angela lives ___ San Francisco.	The computer is ___ the bed.
My school is ___ Webster Avenue.	Your shoes are ___ the floor.	The children are ___ home.	I live ___ 444 Main Street.
The pizza is ___ the living room.	The books are ___ the table.	Jose is ___ work.	The school is ___ 556 Emerson Street.
Lucas is ___ the bathroom.	My manager is ___ his office.	The girls are ___ MacDonalds.	My parents are ___ their bedroom.
In Mexico, I lived ___ the country.	The students are ___ the classroom.	My parents live ___ El Salvador.	The dog is ___ the yard.

## Objective

- Build fluency by providing an environment where students repeat the same sentence structure multiple times.

**When to do this activity:** After students have completed Chapter 1 of *Paso a paso 2* or *Step by Step 2*.

## Supplies

- Class set of the *Conversation Practice* you're doing that day

## How to introduce this activity

- Review *city*, *county*, *state*, and *country*. (Many students are confused about the difference between *county* and *country*.) If possible, use maps to illustrate these terms.
- Teach these new words: *breakfast*, *lunch*, *dinner*.
- Write a geographic location on the board, such as *Nicaragua* or *Houston*. Ask students to tell you if it's a city, county, state, or country. (If people are confused by this check Lesson 1.g in *Teaching English: Step by Step 1*.)
- Practice the conversation as a class, emphasizing the use of *in* and *at*.

## Activity

- Pass out the *Conversation Practice* worksheet and practice the conversation as a class, focusing on pronunciation.
- Explain that, if an answer includes two blank lines, you must add two words.
- Students stand in two lines facing each other, line 1 and line 2.
- Student A interviews the student he's facing, Student B. Then, Student B interviews Student A. When students have completed their conversations, you instruct them to change partners:
  - Students in line 1 move to the right. The student at the end of the line moves to the beginning of the line.
  - Students in line 2 don't move.
- The result: Everyone has a new partner with whom they can practice the interview again.

## Challenge

- After students have practiced the conversation with several different partners, ask them to practice the conversation without looking at their papers.
- At the end of the activity, ask pairs of students to practice the conversation in front of the class.

# Conversation Practice

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## Conversation Practice: *Where questions*

Student A: Hi.

Student B: *Hi.*

Student A: What city do you live in?

Student B: *I live in* \_\_\_\_\_ .

Student A: What county do you live in?

Student B: *I live in* \_\_\_\_\_ .

Student A: What state do you live in?

Student B: *I live* \_\_\_\_\_ .

Student A: What country do you live in?

Student B: *I live* \_\_\_\_\_ .

Student A: Where do you buy food?

Student B: *I buy food at* \_\_\_\_\_ .

Student A: Where do you buy shoes?

Student B: *I buy shoes* \_\_\_\_\_ .

Student A: Where do you eat breakfast?

Student B: *I eat breakfast* \_\_\_\_\_ .

Student A: What time do you eat breakfast?

Student B: *I eat breakfast at* \_\_\_\_\_ .

Student A: What time do you eat dinner?

Student B: *I eat dinner* \_\_\_\_\_ .

Student A: Thanks for your time.

Student B: *You're welcome.*

# Scrambled Sentences

(Class, Tutor/Tutee)

## Objectives

- Reinforce the notion that sentences are comprised of words that can be combined in many different ways.
- Reinforce the use of the prepositions *in* and *at*.

**When to do this activity:** After students have completed Section 1.5 of *Paso a paso 2* or *Step by Step 2*.

## Supplies

- *Scrambled Sentences Word Cards*: one for every two students
- *Scrambled Sentences Record Sheet*: one for every two students
- Scissors for every two students

## How to introduce this activity

- Review how to conjugate the verb *to be*.
- Review the use of *in*, *on*, and *at*.

## Activity

- Divide students into pairs. (Try to match students of similar ability levels. Less advanced students may only write five or six sentences while more advanced students can aim to complete their record sheets and then write more sentences on the back.)
- Give each pair a set of *Scrambled Sentence Word Cards*, a record sheet, and a pair of scissors.
- Students cut out the word cards.
- Working in pairs, students make as many sentences as they can using only the words on the card. Students record each sentence on the record sheet.
- There are more than 25 possible sentences.
- As students finish, ask them to write one or two sentences on the board.

## **Scrambled Sentences Word Cards**

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Ana	The teacher	Pedro and Pablo	My sister
They	MacDonalds	is	are
at	home	work	the mall
in	Mexico City	the kitchen	the classroom

# **Scrambled Sentences Record Sheet**

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**Names**

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**1**

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**2**

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**3**

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**4**

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**5**

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**6**

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**7**

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**8**

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**9**

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**10**

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**11**

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**12**

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**13**

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**14**

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**15**

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**16**

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**17**

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**18**

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**19**

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**20**

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# The Suitcase Game

(Class, Tutor/Tutee)

## Objective

- Practice using prepositions of location.

**When to do this activity:** After students have completed Chapter 1 of *Paso a paso 2* or *Step by Step 2*.

## Supplies

- A tray with objects such as a stapler, pen, apple, paper clips, books, etc. You should have at least eight objects. Arrange the objects on the tray so that students can describe them using prepositions of location. For example, you might place the pen *on* the book or put the stapler *next to* the apple.
- Scrap paper for each student (if they don't have their own).

## How to introduce this activity

- Review the name and spelling of each item on the tray.
- Review the prepositions of location: *in, under, in front of, on, next to, behind, in back of, above, between*.
- Ask students about the location of the objects on the tray, e.g., *Where is the apple?*

## Activity: Part 1

- Give each student a piece of scrap paper.
- Rearrange the items on the tray. If possible, do this in a location where students can't see you.
- Show the students the tray. Tell them that they have five minutes to write down the location of each object on the tray. Students may want to draw a picture of what's on the tray and write sentences later.
- After five minutes have elapsed, remove the tray but give students additional time to write grammatically correct sentences about the location of each object.
- Ask students to read their sentences aloud. Check the veracity of their statements against the objects on the tray.
- Repeat several times with the same or different objects.

