

Macmillan Education activities using a simple ball or globe.

Do you have a globe? A ball? Or a scrunched up piece of paper? The activities here cover everything for every stage of your class, from learning your students' names, to revising language and warmers/fillers if you find yourself finishing a lesson early! Look out for the teacher tips for alternative ways to complete the activity - so you're certain to find something that will suit your class!

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Learning names

Learn your students' names by throwing the ball and asking *What's your name?* The student receiving says their name and throws the ball to another student, asking the question *What's your name?* Repeat several times and ensure everyone gets a turn.

Then, throw the ball to someone and say their name, e.g. *Sarah*. This person then throws to another person and says their name. Repeat several times.

Finally, students pass the ball with the target language *'My name is , your name is '*. Students pass the ball to the person next to them saying their name and the next person's name, i.e. *My name is Sarah. Your name is Ted*.

Teacher tip: Use a timer to count down. When the timer ends, the person with the ball leaves the game. Alternatively, you can start the game again.

Teacher tip: If your teachers are having problems catching and throwing, ask them to sit in a circle on the floor and roll the ball.

Teacher tip: Try renaming your students! Give each one the name of a food. They can draw the food and hang it round their necks or stick to their clothes. The students must say *'I'm a carrot. You're a hotdog'*.

Learning your students' names is important for classroom management and it's also a sign of respect. It helps to create a friendly class environment where students will be more likely to participate and learn.



Establishing knowledge:

Tell me about subjects ...

Either in a circle or sat at desks, elicit prior knowledge of a subject. For example, *Tell me animals that you know?* The ball gets thrown from person to person until they can't think of anymore animals.

Geographical Interest

At the beginning of a lesson about a particular country, e.g. Scotland, the teacher can generate interest/activate schema by asking students to find Scotland on a map/globe. Students pass the globe around and say what they know about the country.

Teacher Tip: If students are struggling, write some vocabulary groups on the board like food, clothes, weather, etc.

Teacher Tip: Don't correct students if they're wrong! Write the words on the board and revisit them later as a class to identify which ones were right.

Teacher Tip: Not doing a lesson with a country? Try it for any subject, such as action verbs, the home, daily routines

Vanessa Gold, Editor, Spain

Finding out what students already know can help you craft your lessons enabling your time in the classroom to be more productive. If you have a lexical group to teach, but find out students already know these from watching a cartoon, you can use this time to extend their learning or have more time for revision at the end of the lesson.

Revision:

Question and Answer

At the end of a lesson, throw the ball into the group and ask a question. Whoever catches the ball must answer. The ball then gets thrown to another person and you ask another question and so on.

Vocabulary Revision circles:

To revise vocabulary at the end of the units (in a cumulative way) on different topics, e.g. food, toys, clothes, colours, animals, etc.

Students stand in a circle. The teacher is inside the circle and says '*animal*' and throws the globe to a student who says '*tiger*'. The pupil throws it to another student who says '*cat*', and so on. The words shouldn't be repeated.

When the teacher stops the activity, or the students run out of words, the teacher chooses a different subject, or asks the student for a new topic.

Teacher tip: Give students a time limit of five seconds for them to answer.

Teacher tip: Rotate the subjects without notice and see how quickly students can react.

Natalia Galanina, Macmillan Teacher Trainer, Russia

Question Ball:

Put on some music. Students pass the ball around the classroom. Stop the music. The student with the ball must answer the question.

Teacher tip: The teacher can turn their back, but it might be a good idea to watch the class through a reflective surface such as a window, a screen, or a small mirror so you know what's going on.

Teacher tip: Give the students the questions before you pass the ball around – this will give them time to think of answer.

Studies suggest the average student needs to see/hear a word anything between 10 to 100 times before they remember it. Macmillan young learner courses offer plenty of scope for revision within each unit, through extra downloadable worksheets, extension activities and extra practice through Student Practice Kits and eBooks. Find out more about our courses at www.macmillanyounglearners.com/our-courses.

Warmers/fillers – vocabulary

A-Z of subjects:

Throw the ball around and ask students to work through the alphabet with cities, countries, food, animals, etc. e.g. apple, banana, carrot, donut. The ball can either be thrown in order around a circle or randomly.

Subjects:

Like the above, but students say topical words in a random order, not alphabetical, e.g. hotdog, donut, lemon

Food Chain:

Say: *I went to the market and bought an apple.* Throw the ball to the next student who repeats the sentence and adds another food item. *I went to the market and I bought an apple and a bottle of water.* Throw the ball to the next person who says *I bought an apple, a bottle of water and ...* adds on something else new.

Number throw:

Students stand in a circle and pass/throw the ball whilst saying the numbers 1-10 or 1-20.

Teacher tip: Try with the times table such as 3, 6, 9, or just with even or odd numbers, or counting backwards.

Teacher tip: Try replacing claps for even numbers, e.g. 1, clap, 3, clap or for replacing a times table such as 3: 1, 2, clap, 4, 5, clap, 7 ...

Alphabet throw:

Students stand in a circle and pass/throw the ball whilst saying the alphabet.

Teacher tip: Ask students to do the alphabet backwards!

Country and City Catch:

The teacher throws the globe to a student and says 'Argentina' and the student replies with a city in Argentina, e.g. 'Buenos Aires'. The student throws it to another student and says a new country, e.g. 'Spain', and the receiving student says 'Barcelona', etc.

Teacher Tip: Try doing it in alphabetical order with just countries or cities (for those with a high English level!)

Teacher Tip: Use at the end of a unit to review countries/cities or at the end of web quest focused on cities/countries

Vanessa Gold, Editor, Spain

Spelling circles:

Students stand in a circle. The teacher says a word and throws the ball to a student. The student says the first letter of that word and throws to another student who says the second.

Musical Flashcards:

Put flashcards on the board/wall/middle of the circle. Sit students in a circle. Play a song or story and pass the ball around. Stop the music or song on a word and the student must collect the flashcard that matches the word.

Teacher tip: Students can receive help from others sitting each side of them.

Teacher tip: Attach vocabulary flashcards to the board. Say a word, and see if students can throw the ball at the correct flashcard.

Teacher tip: Add magnetic basketball hoops to the board, or create your own, so students aim the ball.

Vocabulary is key for your students to be able to express themselves. The more language they have at their disposal the more they can self-express, personalise answers to questions, participate in activities which in turn it will boost their confidence!



Warmers/fillers – grammar

The Geographical Conditional Catch:

Using the target structure: If I went to _____, I would _____. A student chooses a country, e.g. China, and passes/throws the ball to a classmate who has to complete the sentence using the country given: '*If I went to (China), I would (see pandas).*' This student then chooses a country for the next pupil and the globe goes around the class.

Teacher Tip: Revise verb collocations such as see pandas, see the Taj Mahal or visit a museum, visit my family.

Vanessa Gold, Editor, Spain

WH-Questions

Give your class some examples of who, what, where, when:

who - teacher, mum, Ghandi

what - table, Coca-Cola, igloo

where - Shanghai, school, under the chair

when - yesterday, 1 o'clock, Monday.

Ask students to stand in a circle. Throw the ball to a student saying '*mum*'. The student catches the ball and says '*who*'.

The student throws to another student and says a word. The next student says '*who, what, where or when*'. Repeat several times. Reverse the activity by saying '*who*' when you throw the ball and the student catching it says '*Carol Read*'.

Past, present or future

The teacher divides the board into past, present and future. The group/class is split into two teams and both form a line. The teacher says a sentence, such as '*I go swimming every day*'. The person at the front of each team throws the ball onto the board and aims to hit either past, present or future (the answer here is present!). Repeat so that everyone gets a go.

Teacher Tip: Ask students to create the sentences in pairs or on their own and read them out.

Teacher Tip: Practice with present and past forms of verbs by dividing the board into two sections and saying a verb in one of the forms, e.g. '*buy*' or '*bought*'

Teacher Tip: Instead of throwing the ball, add in small basketball hoops – this will ensure accuracy and a delicate throw!

Adjective Pass

Mime that the ball is a particular adjective, such as heavy, cold, dangerous. See if your students can guess the correct adjective. Pass the ball to a student, they pick a different adjective and mime this with the ball.

Grammar can be as difficult to teach as it is to learn. Try and make it as fun as possible – this will help to engage your students and get them to actively practice the grammar point.

Classroom management tips when using a globe/ball:

Ensure students throw or pass the ball to each other in a respectful manner. Before starting a game, demonstrate how to throw and catch the ball in the right and the wrong way.

If your students are very young or have bad coordination, ask them to sit on the floor and roll the ball to each other.

Assign the class five points. If anyone throws/passes the ball incorrectly, remove a point. Instruct the class of the consequence if they lose those five points – for example, no '*fun*' activities for a week, extra homework, etc.

Use a timer, or count your students down if they are holding the ball for too long. At the same time, use your judgement to allow appropriate thinking time for students if it's an open-ended question.

Looking for more activities for your classroom? Have a look at the posters, flashcards, activities and lesson planners available at macmillanenglish.com/blog-resources.