

This section presents three stand-alone language learning activities related to the theme of fishing. Each activity is designed for students at the proficiency level indicated.

Go Fish!

Level: Beginner (adaptable for other levels)

Time required: 60 minutes

Goals: To review vocabulary (in this example, numbers)

Materials: paper (thick stock works best), scissors, and markers; chalk and a chalkboard or markers and a large piece of paper

Procedures:

1. Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Each group should work together to make its own deck (set) of 40 cards.

a) Half the deck—20 cards—will be “number” cards. Students should create two sets of these cards (20 total) by writing the numbers 1 through 10 in the center of the cards. They should write only one number on each card.

b) The other 20 cards will be “fish” cards. Students should create two sets of these cards (20 cards total) by writing the words for the numbers *one* through *ten* (one word on each card) in the top left corner of the cards. In the center of the cards, they should draw the same number of fish to represent the number. For example, for the card showing three fish, students should write the word *three* in the top left corner and draw three fish in the center of the card.

Encourage students to count aloud in English as they draw the fish on the cards.

2. Explain the game rules by using gestures and demonstration to supplement your instruction in English. Tell students their goal is to get pairs of

matching cards. Show them a pair (such as a card with two fish on it and a card with the number 2 on it) and explain that they will take turns asking other players in their group for a card that matches one in their hand. Explain that two cards showing the number 2 would *not* be a match; a match consists of a number card and its corresponding fish card.

3. Choose one person in each group to be the dealer. This person should shuffle (mix up) the cards and give five cards to each player; the players look at their cards but should not show the cards to one another. The remaining cards should be placed face down in a pile, called the “fish pool,” in the middle of the group.

4. Write the following questions and answers on the board or on a large piece of paper:

Do you have ___ fish? | *Yes, I do.*

Do you have the number ___? | *No, I don't. Go fish!*

5. Share the following rules with the class by using explanation, demonstration, and repetition. You might have students play one practice round first.

a) Students should locate any pairs they already have. They should take these cards out of their hands and place them where everyone can see them.

b) The player on the dealer's left (Player 1) goes first by asking one other player in the group (Player 2) for a card that forms a pair with one in Player 1's hand. For example, if Player 1 has a card showing the number 4, Player 1 would ask Player 2, “Do you have four fish?” Or, if Player 1 has a card showing

The Biggest Fish Ever Caught

Level: Intermediate

Time required: 90 minutes

Goals: To become familiar with the “fish story” genre, in which the storyteller exaggerates his or her accomplishments; to tell an original fish story and build spoken fluency

Materials: scratch paper and a pen or pencil

Optional materials: a picture of a person fishing, a chalkboard and chalk, a large piece of paper and markers

Optional Preparation: Draw pictures to illustrate parts of the provided fish story that contain vocabulary that might be difficult for your students.

Procedures:

1. Activate students’ background knowledge around the subject of fishing. You can show a picture of a person fishing and have students write down as many words as they can to describe what they see. Or you can mime the action of fishing and ask if anyone can guess what verb you are acting out; then give students two minutes to write down fishing-related vocabulary they know.

Have students share their vocabulary lists with a partner and explain in English the meaning of terms their partners do not know. After a few minutes of discussion, the pairs can report their combined lists to the class, and you can clarify terms and meanings as needed.

2. Read or summarize the following information for your students:

Today we are going to listen to a fish story, and then each of you will have a chance to tell one of your own. Fish stories are entertaining because the storyteller uses a lot of exaggeration.

3. Ask if anyone can define the word *exaggeration*. If no one can, share example sentences that incorporate exaggeration to lead the class to the meaning:

- “It is so hot today. It is the hottest day in the history of the world!”
- “My teacher gave me a lot of homework tonight. It will take me 10 years to finish it.”
- “He is so tall, his head touches the clouds.”

If the class still needs help, have a student look up the meaning in the dictionary and share it with the class, or simply explain that exaggeration is a statement that makes something or someone seem to have much more of a characteristic or quality (for example, seeming larger, or better, or worse) than it/he/she really does.

4. Tell students you are going to read them a fish story called “The One That Got Away” (see page 48). The first time they listen, they should simply try to identify the main idea. To focus their attention, you can write *Wh-* question words on the board and ask students to identify the main character, the setting, and the main events. Remind students that they don’t have to listen for every detail this first time.

5. As you read, use miming and gestures to act out parts of the story with challenging vocabulary. Be dramatic and have fun! You can also draw pictures on the board or on a large piece of paper to illustrate parts of the story (e.g., a fish nibbling on bait at the end of the line).

6. After you have read the story once, ask for student volunteers to share their answers to the *Wh-* questions. If necessary, read the story a second time. Once your students demonstrate basic comprehension of the story, you can move on to more critical thinking about the language used to tell the tale.

7. Read the story again and have students focus on parts that seem untrue or unbelievable. Ask students to remember them or write them down as they listen.

8. Have students share with a partner or in a small group the exaggerated elements they identified. If you hear a student correctly identify an exagger-

ated element, ask him or her to share it with the class later. When you review as a class, make sure the students identify the following exaggerations:

- The storyteller was only five years old when the story happened.
- The storyteller stayed on the boat for three days.
- The fish was the biggest fish in the world; it weighed more than everyone in the room combined.
- The storyteller was strong enough to pull the fish into the boat.
- The fish and the storyteller waved goodbye to each other.

9. Read the following information to your class:

In a fish story, the storyteller exaggerates his or her own accomplishments. In other words, the storyteller makes it seem that he or she did something better than he or she actually did. Fish stories do not always have to be about fishing, though. Think about your proudest achievement, or something you would like to accomplish—like running a marathon, or writing a novel, or becoming the president of your student government. Imagine that you have achieved this goal. Tell a fish story about your real or imagined accomplishment. Take 10 minutes to outline your story and make notes about the details you plan to exaggerate. Then you will tell your story to a partner.

10. Circulate the classroom as students are brainstorming. Provide guidance as necessary. Make sure students are not writing complete sentences. Remind them that this is a chance to practice *speaking* with fluency, not writing!

11. Have students share their fish stories with a partner or two. When students are listening, they should try to identify elements that seem exaggerated or impossible. Afterwards, they should check their understanding with the storyteller. Then students swap roles and repeat.

12. When students are finished telling their stories, you may choose to ask a few volunteers to summarize for the class the funny fish stories their partners told.

Variations

Fluency Line

Fish stories are a spoken genre, so it would be fitting to have your students practice telling their stories. Instead of having students tell their fish story to one partner, have them practice telling it multiple times to different partners in order to build fluency. By the third time students tell their stories, they should be able to speak with more automaticity, pausing less to search for vocabulary. The activity takes place in three rounds.

Have students line up in two rows facing each other.

Round 1: Students in Row 1 have three minutes to tell their stories to the student facing them in Row 2. Students in Row 2 listen for exaggerations and check their understanding with the storyteller. Students swap roles and repeat.

Round 2: Students in Row 1 move one place to the left to speak with a new partner. Follow the same steps in Round 1, but give students a time limit of just two and a half minutes.

Round 3: Students in Row 1 again move one place to the left. Round 1 is again repeated, but this time students have just two minutes to tell their stories.

Collaboration

Instead of having students develop stories individually, have students form small groups to create a fish story. Students can have fun coming up with exaggerations together.

The One That Got Away

When I was five years old, I took a boat out on _____ [choose a body of water that your students are familiar with] and went fishing by myself. I really wanted to catch a fish! But they were not biting.

I stayed in my boat for three days, waiting. A couple of times, I thought I felt a fish nibbling on the bait at the end of the fishing line. The first time I pulled in my catch, it was not a fish; it was an old tire. The second time, it was a shoe. Finally, at the end of the third day, I felt a strong pull at the end of the line.

The pull was so strong that my boat raced in a hundred circles, faster than you can say the word *seafood*. I needed all my strength just to hold onto the fishing rod. I pulled, and I pulled, and I reeled in the biggest fish that ever swam on the Earth! It weighed more than everyone in this room put together! Then something terrible happened.

After I had pulled the huge fish into my boat, I realized that we were sinking under its weight! Water was pouring into the boat from all sides! I am not a very good swimmer, so I was scared.

Although it was the hardest decision I ever made, I had to let the fish go. I pushed it back over the side of the boat, and we waved good-bye to each other as it swam away.

Take Out the Trash

Level: Advanced

Time required: 60–90 minutes

Goals: To create and ask open-ended questions to learn more about marine debris; to orally summarize information learned through reading; to create persuasive outreach materials as part of an action campaign.

Materials: A plastic bag or another plastic item that is a common form of litter; chalk and a chalkboard; photocopies of the cards provided or large pieces of paper and markers to create posters instead of cards

Preparation: Your class will work in groups of four to carry out a Jigsaw Discussion. Each group will be made up of students playing the role of an Interviewer, an Example Expert, a Consequence Expert, and a Prevention Expert. Each group member will need information from only one of the cards provided (see page 52). You can give this information to your students in one of several ways:

Option 1: Write the information from each card on a large piece of paper—four pieces of paper altogether—and hang them around your classroom. Find places to hang the posters where students will focus only on the information they have been assigned to read for their role. If possible, keep the information covered until it is time to read.

Option 2: Create one copy of the cards. Give the Interviewer card to one of the Interviewers, the Example Expert card to one of the Example Experts, and so on. Those four students will share the information with other students who are playing the same role, either by reading the information aloud or writing it on a large piece of paper.

Option 3: Make photocopies of the cards so that you can give one card to each student.

Procedures:

1. Generate vocabulary and background knowledge that will aid students as they move through later activities.

a) Ask a student volunteer to define the term *litter*. If no one in the class knows this word, you could have someone look up the meaning in a dictionary. Or you could demonstrate the act of littering by throwing a candy wrapper or crumpled piece of paper on the floor and asking a student to describe, in English, what you did. (Remember to pick up the trash and throw it away after your demonstration!) Check understanding by asking students to brainstorm a list of local places where litter is commonly found and/or a list of common litter items.

b) Show the class a manmade item that has become a common form of litter (e.g., a plastic bag or the plastic rings from a six-pack of drink cans). Ask students to consider what happens when this item is not thrown away properly. Encourage students to think about the effects the item could have on the environment—both in the place where it is discarded and beyond.

2. Tell students that another name for litter is *debris* and that they are going to learn about a kind of litter called “marine debris,” and why it is on the minds of environmental scientists and concerned citizens. Discuss the meaning of the word *marine*. Ask for a student volunteer to define it or to look it up in a dictionary, if possible.

3. Tell students that at the end of this activity, they will work as a team to create a campaign to educate the public and reduce the effects of this kind of waste on the environment.

4. Have students count off in fours. Then assign the following roles:

a) Ones will be Interviewers. Their job is to lead the discussion by asking the marine debris “experts” questions about what they have read.

Classroom Activities

b) Twos will be Example Experts, who will provide the meaning and examples of marine debris.

c) Threes will be Consequence Experts. They will share information about the harmful effects of marine debris.

d) Fours will be Prevention Experts. They will describe actions people can take to prevent and reduce marine debris.

5. Assign the following tasks:

a) The Interviewers will brainstorm questions about aspects of marine debris to ask the Experts.

b) The Experts will read their respective information, add at least one of their own ideas, and prepare to summarize their information to their classmates. In their Expert groups, they should practice summarizing.

6. Have the Interviewers gather in one corner of the classroom, the Example Experts in another, and so on, so that they can read the information on their respective cards (or posters) and complete the assigned task. Set a 10-minute time limit. Circulate while the groups are working, offering assistance as needed.

7. Create new groups with one student from each existing group. Each new group should have one Interviewer, one Example Expert, one Consequence Expert, and one Prevention Expert.

a) The Interviewer will lead a short discussion in which the Experts share their knowledge with their new team.

b) After all the Experts have had a chance to share their information, the Interviewer can invite further questions from the Experts to extend the discussion.

c) Remind students they will need the information they discuss in these groups to complete their part of a campaign to educate the public.

d) You may wish to write the following note-taking scaffold on the board or a large piece of paper, and instruct your students to take notes:

DEFINITION:

EXAMPLES:

SOURCES:

EFFECTS:

PREVENTION:

Circulate and provide guidance as necessary.

8. Discuss the activity as a whole class by having students share new ideas they generated in sharing their expertise with one another.

9. Remind the class that one way to prevent marine debris from entering the waterways is to educate the community about the problem (by writing a letter to the editor, creating posters, or talking to other groups of students, for example). Tell the class their next task is to work together to share their new knowledge with the public to try to inspire change.

10. Assign one of the Extension tasks to the class, or divide the tasks among the groups. (The latter option might be effective if you have a multi-level class.) If you assign a variety of tasks, encourage the groups to communicate with one another and create a unified theme to the materials, with a slogan, a spokesperson, or branding colors.

Options for Extension

1. Write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper detailing the problem of marine debris and asking the public to work together to reduce marine debris.

2. Create materials to distribute as part of a public action campaign, including the following:

a) A public service announcement that can be played on the radio or on television

b) A television news interview between a reporter and

- a fisherman
- an environmental scientist or activist
- a beachgoer
- all of the above

c) An informational brochure

- d) A set of promotional materials, such as a poster, a T-shirt, and bumper stickers with campaign slogans
- e) A poster or flyer announcing a community-wide clean-up day

Variations

1. Before completing the extension activity, assign library or Internet research so students can gather more information on the problem of marine debris, which they can use when they create their campaign materials.
2. Have students research, write a letter to the editor, and/or design a public action campaign around a different environmental problem affecting your community.

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Classroom Activities

INTERVIEWER	EXAMPLE EXPERT
<p>You will ask the experts questions about the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The definition and examples of marine debris 2. Sources of marine debris and how it reaches our oceans 3. The effects of marine debris—on ocean life, the environment, and people 4. Solutions to the problem of marine debris <p>Work with other interviewers to prepare questions related to these topics.</p>	<p>DEFINITION of marine debris: Anything in oceans, rivers, lakes, and other waterways that does not occur there naturally; generally refers to trash</p> <p>COMMON EXAMPLES: plastic bags, bottles and cans, cigarette filters, bottle caps and lids, fishing nets and fishing line</p> <p>SOURCES:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Trash that is not properly thrown away on land (for example, in the street), carried by wind and/or rain into the water 2. Trash left on the beach 3. Trash that is dumped into the ocean from boats 4. [Add your own ideas.]
CONSEQUENCE EXPERT	PREVENTION EXPERT
<p>EFFECTS</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Animals that live in marine environments can get caught in the debris or swallow it and die. 2. The fish that die as a result of marine debris cannot be caught and sold or eaten. 3. Marine debris causes damage to boats. This can put people in danger, and repairs can be expensive. 4. [Add your own ideas.] 	<p>SIMPLE WAYS TO HELP</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Throw away all trash in the proper place. 2. Reduce waste. Reuse and recycle whenever possible. 3. Participate in a beach or river clean-up day or organize one in your community. 4. [Add your own ideas.]