

Communicative Grammar Games

The Communicative Grammar Games are game-type activities designed to provide extra controlled practice for students to interact in a more communicative way.

- They are *games* because they have rules and a goal to achieve.
- They are *grammar games* because each activity is aimed at practicing a specific grammar point covered in each unit of the Student's Book.
- They are *communicative* because there is an information gap element in which students need to talk to a partner or to other students in order to obtain the information they need to complete a task.

Type of interaction

Depending on the game, some activities are played in pairs, others in small groups, and yet others as a whole class.

Type of activities

Activities for level 1 include guessing games, finding out about people or information, memorizing, assembling models, matching pairs, asking for information and collecting items.

When to use the Communicative Grammar Games

The Teacher's Guide suggests a lesson in which to use the Communicative Grammar Games. Alternatively, you can use them whenever you find it most convenient. Keep in mind the following:

- The grammar point or vocabulary needs to have been presented and practiced; these games are not a substitute for presentation activities found in the Student's Book
- These games do not work as five-minute activities or end-of-the-week-relaxation games; there is a specific grammar objective, and time is needed for students to achieve the task.

What is needed

Follow this procedure:

1. Read the Teacher's notes in advance to know how many copies you need in your specific class. Make sure you make the required sets.
2. Move chairs to create the space for the activities, especially when doing a whole-class activity where students have to walk around to find the information needed. If this is not possible, have students work with the people next to or near them. Make sure that schoolbags are out of the way when students need to walk around the classroom.
3. Give clear and concise instructions while you present the materials. If needed, rephrase them in students' native language. Also, ask volunteers to rephrase them in their own words.

4. Immediately after instructions, do a demonstration and make sure students understand what to do. The success of these activities depends on how well students know the purpose of the activity.
5. Divide the class into pairs or small groups, depending on the type of interaction.
6. Distribute copies and start the game.

Teacher's role

While students perform the activity, monitor and provide help as needed. Do not interrupt to correct any errors you hear. Remember that students need to focus on achieving the task and not on grammar accuracy. If a student cannot get his/her message across, however, because of pronunciation or structural problems, gently whisper the correct sentence or question for him/her to repeat. Take a notebook and write down accuracy mistakes. Plan for a follow-up session in order to deal with these.

Also remind students to use English at all times. Explain to them that part of the game is to use English because it is fun to do so. When students have finished the game, tell them that now they can revert to their native language for a while.

What to expect from students

Levels 1 and 2 Young children can only learn short sentences or questions to repeat several times during the game. This type of drilling focuses on fluency more than on accuracy. Drill the sentence or question chorally, however, to achieve accuracy prior to the game. The Communicative Grammar Games for these levels are designed to be done in a short time, or to complete a task quickly. But if students find the task challenging, stop the activity and use it in a later class when they have gained more confidence in the grammar point being practiced.