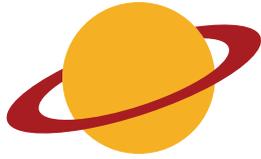


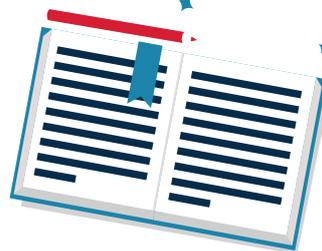
My favourite back to school activities



“Coming back to school is wonderful – you and your students have had a great holiday, are feeling rested and ready to learn again. That’s the theory, right? But in reality, we often feel worried about starting school. As teachers, we worry about how much our students may have forgotten over the summer, and about helping them achieve their learning goals in the next year. And our students are feeling worried too! All of which means it’s great to have some really effective icebreakers for the first week of school. Here are my favourite activities to help everyone get back into the swing of school.

These activities have several objectives: to ease the students into what might be new class formations, or an existing formation after the long holiday break. They’re also helpful in refreshing students’ language in an unpressured setting, getting them back into learning. They help everyone start the term on a positive note, with plenty of enjoyment and laughter. And if it’s a new group, these activities can be an effective way to get a sense of students’ language level whilst they get to know each other.”

– Michelle Mahony





Michelle Mahony

Top five back to school activities

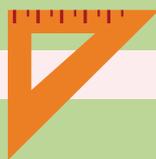
NAME PLUS ONE

Start off the class with your name and a statement about yourself. Then go round the class, each person adding to the list.

I'm Michelle and I like running up hills.

I'm Sara and I like baking cookies. She's Michelle and she likes running up hills.

This game can be used with any language: likes, dislikes, favourite colours, pets, one thing you did in the holidays.



PASS THE BAG

You will need: a bag, several pieces of paper, scissors, some prizes (fun erasers or pencils, for example).

Before the class, find a bag. Then cut up lots of strips of paper – enough for 1 per student plus some extra. On three strips of paper, draw a big smiley emoji. These will signify prizes. Put these in the bag.

Give each student a strip of paper. Ask them to write one question on that paper. Then collect all the papers and put them in a bag.

Get students sitting in a circle. Play music. While the music is playing, students pass the bag around. When it stops, the person holding the bag has to take a paper and answer the question. When a student pulls out an emoji, he or she gets a big cheer and a prize!



WHAT'S WRONG?

You will need: sticky notes

Write out items in the classroom on sticky notes. For beginners, this can be chair, table, board, etc. Where there are multiple items, like chairs, write several sticky notes for that item. Place the sticky notes around the classroom, with most in the wrong place. Students have to move the notes to the correct item. This is a great warmer, particularly if your class is in need of some energy!

For more advanced classes, you can raise the level by using more specific items in the classroom, such as a large, blue pencil or a poster on the door. You can also get students to direct each other: Put that note on this chair.



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FIRST DAY PHOTO WALL

On the first day, take photos of all the students and print them out.

Give each child the photo and a frame to decorate. Students stick photos into the frame, write their name at the top, and decorate the frames.

When you have all the decorated frames, stick or hang the photos on one wall, so you have a class photo album.





CLASS JIGSAW

Like the photo wall, this activity helps students get to know each other, but it elicits more information and language production.

Give each student a jigsaw piece and get them to complete the sentences. They can draw themselves or stick a photo on.

When all the pieces are complete, give each student some sticky tack to place on the back of their piece. Then ask students to put the jigsaw together on the wall.

For more advanced students, you can use the blank template and add your own prompts.

About me!

My name is _____

My favourite colour is _____

I like _____

I don't like _____



About me!

