Lesson Plan Ideas: Skill Building Activities

Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill)
Task Introduction

- Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks assess test takers’ overall comprehension of short, written texts.
- These tasks are included at all levels of the test.
- Each test contains 6-7 Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks.
- Test takers are presented with a short text that has one gap replacing a missing word or phrase.
- Below the text, there are three word/phrase options to choose from.
- Test takers should select the option that is best to fill the gap and complete the text.
- On screen, Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks look like this:

To select an answer option, test takers should click the circle next to it. Once selected, the circle becomes black. To select a different picture, click the circle next to that picture.

After selecting the correct picture, click ‘Next’ to move to the next task.
Strategies for Success

- Quickly read the whole text. Unlike for task types that contain longer texts, for Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks test takers should first read the whole text quickly. This will allow them to understand the general topic and help them know what kind of word they need to use to complete the gap.

- Consider the context. Test takers should focus most carefully on the words that are immediately around the gap. While doing so, they should try to predict the type of word/phrase that could logically fill the gap.

- Analyse the options carefully. After reading the whole text and particularly focusing on the words around the gap, test takers should analyse the three options to see which one matches their understanding of the kind of word missing from the text.

- Do not focus on grammar. Gap-fill activities are regularly used in language learning and they sometimes focus on understanding of English grammar. For example, learners may be used to seeing a gap in a sentence and needing to work out if they should fill it with an adjective or an adverb, or a verb or a noun. However, Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks test global understanding of a text, not knowledge of English grammar. For this reason, all three options are likely to be the same word class, and all three will usually be grammatically possible within the gap.

- Double check your choice. After selecting one of the options, re-read the passage, imagining the word/phrase in the gap, to ensure it makes sense.
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill):
Activities for all learners

The texts used in Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks vary in terms of length, vocabulary level and complexity according to the level of the test. A1/A2 Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks contain texts of approximately 10–25 words. B1/B2 tasks use texts of 10–40 words, and C1/C2 tasks feature tasks of 40–60 words.

To prepare for Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks, all learners should be helped to understand the requirements of the task. They should all practise short gap-fill tasks that focus on comprehension of a text’s main purpose or point, rather than on understanding of grammar conventions. All learners should also be trying to build their vocabulary so that they are familiar with the language that they are likely to encounter in the texts.

Understanding the task

After introducing the format of Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks to your learners and explaining the Strategies for Success on page 1, check that they have understood by using the following multiple-choice gap-fill tasks, which are presented in the style of Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks.

1. There are _______ Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks on each test.
   a) four          b) five          c) six

2. At first, test takers should read the text _______ in order to get a general idea of its topic and identify what kind of word is needed to complete the gap.
   a) carefully          b) quickly          c) slowly

3. After reading the whole text and particularly focusing on the words around the gap, test takers should _______ the three options to see which one best fits into the gap.
   a) analyse          b) combine          c) write

4. Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks test _______. For this reason, all three options are likely to be the same word class and all could fit into the gap grammatically. However, only one will make sense in the context of the passage.
   a) comprehension          b) grammar          c) writing

5. After selecting one of the options, _______ the passage again, imagining the word/phrase in the gap, to ensure it makes sense.
   a) record          b) read          c) rewind

Key: 1. c) six  2. b) quickly  3. a) analyse  4. a) comprehension  5. b) read
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill):

Activities for A1/A2

A1 learners can recognise familiar names, words and very basic phrases on notices in common everyday situations and can get an idea of the content of simpler informational material and short simple descriptions. At A2 level, learners are able to identify specific information in simpler written material such as letters, brochures and short newspaper articles describing events, and can understand everyday signs and notices. Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks assess test takers’ ability to perform these kinds of reading tasks. You can help your learners prepare for the test by using the A2 example task below and other A2 practice tasks on page 4.

TOWELS

Please take a clean towel from here.

Please ______ dirty towels in the box next to the swimming pool.

- send
- bring
- leave

(Correct answer: leave)
**Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill):**

**Activities for A1/A2**

### Best match wins

At A1 and A2 levels, Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks assess test takers’ understanding of a range of nouns and adjectives. You can help your learners to boost their range of vocabulary using a ‘best match wins’ activity similar to the Apples-to-Apples party game.

To begin the game, you need to create two decks of cards with approximately 20 words each: the more words, the longer the activity can last. One deck should be nouns and the other adjectives. You can either create these decks yourself using target language you have set for your class or, as a review activity, you could ask your learners to create the decks using language from previous lessons. It can help to use different colours of papers for each deck.

Divide your class into groups of 4–6 learners. Ask each group to elect one judge. The judge is in charge of the decks of cards and of deciding the winner of the end of each round.

To begin the game, the judge deals four or five noun cards to each person in their group. Players can look at their hand (the cards that they have been dealt) but should not show their cards to others. During each round, the judge displays one adjective card. Each player should choose the noun card in their hand that best matches that adjective and put it down on the table. Once every player has put down their noun, each player must explain why their card is the best match for the adjective. For example, if the adjective displayed by the judge is ‘strong’ and a learner has put down the word ‘man’ they could say ‘a man is strong’. If another learner has put down the word ‘turtle’ they might say ‘turtles have a strong shell’. Once everyone in the group has explained their match, the judge chooses which they think is best and gives a point to that group member.

After each round, you can choose to change judges or to keep the same learner as judge throughout the activity. If changing judge, it can work to make the winner of the last round the judge for the next. The activity can be varied by reversing the desks – in other words, having the judge display a noun and asking learners to select adjectives to match it. You can discard used cards or, as long as the judge deals a different card to ensure different matches, you can mix them back into the decks.
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill): Activities for A1/A2

### Party mime game (Actions)

Lower-level learners can be helped to develop their range of verbs and get ready for Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks with a fun and easy miming game, similar to charades. Create a list of target verbs for your learners. (It is usually best to mostly use words they have recently learnt in class alongside a small number that they don’t yet know.) Write the verbs onto cards – one per card. Then divide the class into small groups of 3–5, giving each group a deck of face-down cards. Without showing the other members of the group, one learner should select a card, look at it, and then try to communicate its meaning to the rest of their group using only body language and facial expression. For example, if the word is ‘pour’ the learner could mime pouring a drink into a glass and then drinking from it.

You can make this activity competitive by having groups compete with each other. You can increase the amount of time the activity takes by using more/fewer cards. You can adapt the difficulty level by selecting more/less difficult words. For stronger learners, it is also possible to use phrases or short sentences such as ‘fishing in a river’ or ‘the soldier shot the gun’.

### Comparative clues

A nice activity for developing A1 and A2 learners’ vocabulary range and getting them used to the kind of language that features in Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks is ‘Comparative Clues’. This is an engaging guessing game that gives learners a chance to practise comparative sentence structures such as “… is more important than…“ and “… is larger than…“ while also learning some new nouns. First, write target vocabulary on cards – one word per card. This activity usually works best with nouns such as animal or country names. Divide your class into small groups and give each group a pile of cards.

Then, ask members of the group to take one card without showing it to one learner (‘the guesser’). They should try to help the guesser identify the word by describing it using comparative sentences. For example, if the word written is ‘crocodile’, team members could use sentence structures like ‘it is more dangerous than a frog’ or ‘it has larger teeth than a rabbit’. You can choose to set a limit on the number of sentences used before the guesser must make a guess, or you could set a time limit. Although the aim of the activity is to practise comparative sentence structures, you could also choose to allow learners to use other kinds of sentences too. Make the activity competitive by having groups compete with each other to get through their pile of words and adapt the difficulty level of target language to suit your learners’ needs.
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill): Activities for B1/B2

B1 learners can read straightforward factual texts with a satisfactory level of comprehension and can understand relevant information in everyday material, such as letters, brochures and short official documents. At B2 level, learners are able to read correspondence relating to their fields of interest and readily grasp the essential meaning of news items, articles and reports on a wide range of professional topics. Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks assess test takers’ ability to perform these kinds of reading tasks. You can help your learners prepare for the test by using the B1 example task below and B1 and B2 practice tasks on page 4.

We’re looking for a shop assistant to work in our busy store. If you have not worked in a shop before, we’ll _____ and teach you the important skills. Contact the manager for more information and an application form.

- accept training
- arrange training
- apply training

(Correct answer: arrange training)
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill):
Activities for B1/B2

Job interview

A good way to get B1 and B2 learners ready for Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks is by using Job Interview role play tasks. These activities can give learners a chance to develop their vocabulary while also using language in context. Interview role plays can be done as either a speaking or a writing activity. As a speaking activity, divide your class into groups of three and then assign roles: each group should have one interviewer and two interviewees. Assign your class a job type, such as ‘police officer’ or ‘long distance driver’, for the imagined vacancy. Interviewers should ask the same questions to both interviewees, who should compete with each other to give the best answer.

Interviewers can either be provided with a list of questions or be asked to create their own questions. Once a question has been asked, interviewees must demonstrate that they are the best person for the job. Explain that they should do this by giving clear answers with examples and explanations. Make it clear that they do not need to tell the truth about their own personal experience but can instead say whatever they think the interviewer would want to hear. If your learners might struggle to imagine suitable answers, you can use role play cards that give interviewees information about characteristics and employment history that can then be described in the interview.

Good questions for the interviewers could include:

- Why do you want to become a …?
- What makes you think you would be good at this job?
- Tell me a little bit about your employment history?
- What are your personal strengths?
- Can you give me an example of a time you…?

If you decide to do this activity as a writing task, you can display the questions on a board and ask all learners to write a short answer to each question. Then, divide learners into groups and assign one person in each group the task of being the judge. The judge should read all the answers and decide who is the best person for the job. If you would like judges not to know whose answers they are reading, learners could be asked not to write their name and answer papers could be shuffled.
**Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill): Activities for B1/B2**

**Complete the story**

To help your learners prepare for filling gaps in sentences during Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks, you can use knowledge gap activities in which they must complete a story/text.

First, find a short story/text and then create two versions by removing different information from each one. For example, you could remove descriptive words (adjectives, adverbs etc.) from one version and character names and locations (proper nouns) from the other. Divide your class into pairs and give learners in a pair a different version of the story.

Partners should not show each other their version of the story. Ask learners to work together with their partner to complete the story by asking questions to discover the missing information. Before asking each other questions, you could ask all learners to first try to make predictions about the kind of word necessary to fill the gaps in their version of the story. This can get them thinking about grammar as well as allowing them to practise the prediction skills that are useful for Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks.
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill):
Activities for B1/B2

**Missing word competition**

Missing word competitions can help your learners develop the prediction skills they will need for Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks and are very easy to prepare. First, find a text of a suitable level for your learners. Texts of 3–6 sentences are usually best but you can use longer texts too. Remove one word from each sentence of the text and replace it with a line. Write a number near to each line so that it is easy to refer to when talking to the class. Divide your learners into teams of 2–4 and display the text for everyone to see. Tell the class that within their teams they should discuss what they think the missing words are and write down their team’s prediction for each gap. Set a time limit for their discussions based on the number of missing words. Once the time is up, ask teams to submit their predictions and award points for correct answers. You can then repeat the exercise with a different text. The winning team is the one with the most points at the end of the class.

Missing word competitions can be used to get learners focused on grammar as well as overall reading comprehension. Select the missing words according to your desired focus. It is often best to remove different kinds of words from each sentence; e.g. remove a verb from the first sentence, then a noun from the second and so on. You will need to ensure that the text provides enough context for learners to be able to identify the missing words. In cases where learners’ predictions are close to but not exactly the correct answer you may decide to award half-points; e.g. in the example below you might award half-points for teams who predict ‘drawbacks’ instead of disadvantages.

**Missing Word Text:**

Nowadays, electric cars are (1) _______ in popularity. They offer many benefits, but they also have some (2) _______ when compared to conventional cars. One of the main questions facing prospective electric car (3) _______ is whether to purchase an all-electric vehicle (AEV) or a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV).

**Key:** (1) growing (2) disadvantages (3) buyers
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill):
Activities for C1/C2

At C1 level, learners can understand in detail a wide range of texts from social, professional and academic contexts, including for example complex instructions on a new machine or procedure. C2 level users of English are able to understand virtually all forms of the written language including abstract, structurally complex, or highly colloquial literary and non-literary writings. Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks assess test takers’ reading ability using a range of text types. You can help your learners prepare for the test by using the C1 example task below and other C1 practice tasks on page 4.

We are concerned to hear that you have experienced __________. Our maintenance team will inspect your rental property on 17 May, in order to establish how this situation has arisen and the extent of the damage. To this end, please ensure that they have full access to the property, especially the guttering, overflow and mains drainage

- problems with ventilation
- power-supply problems
- problems with flooding

(Correct answer: problems with flooding)
Choose the **Right Word or Phrase** (Gap fill): Activities for C1/C2

**Collocation match race**

How well C1 and C2-level learners perform in Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks will often depend on how familiar they are with more advanced collocations. One way to focus attention on collocations is to use match race activities in which learners must create as many natural collocations as possible within a specific time limit, using words on cards in front of them.

First, create a list of advanced collocations. You could decide to focus on specific grammatical pairings, e.g. adjective + noun, or you could vary the grammatical types of collocation within the list, which is likely to make the activity more challenging. Here are some examples of advanced collocations that could be useful for your learners to focus on:

- arouse suspicion
- attainable goal
- bulk purchase
- casual acquaintance
- categorically deny
- cautiously optimistic
- clearly defined
- compelling argument
- cool head
- corrective measures
- delicate balance
- exercise caution
- freely admit
- fully appreciate
- harsh criticism
- heated debate
- heavily influence
- hidden agenda
- humble beginnings
- immediate impact
- inclement weather
- irreparable damage
- media coverage
- menial job
- mutual understanding
- mutually beneficial
- narrow margin
- painful memory
- parent company
- rough estimate
- run smoothly
- run the risk
- settle a dispute
- social interaction
- social mobility
- sound advice
- sound judgement
- standard format
- steady income
- striking contrast
- stiff competition
- strictly forbidden
- unsolicited advice
- unsubstantiated claim
- utter disbelief
- vaguely familiar
- welcome change

Once you have created a list, select 10 collocations and write each word onto a card, creating sets of 20 word cards, 2 cards per collocation. Divide your class into small groups and ask them to close their eyes until you say ‘go’. Shuffle the cards. Then, place them face up in front of each group of learners. Explain to the class that when you say ‘go’ they should try to find as many collocations as possible and put collocation cards together once they are matched. Announce a time limit and then say ‘go’. Once the time is up, the winning team is the one with the most correct collocations. You’ll need to ask learners to read out or check that each other’s collocations are correct.
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill):
Activities for C1/C2

Speed reading race

The faster test takers are able to read, the better will are likely to be able to perform in Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks. Encourage your C1 and C2 learners to develop their reading speed by regularly having speed reading races in class. You can do this using the C1 practice tasks on page 4 or other texts with related activities such as comprehension questions or gap-fill tasks. You will need 3–4 of the same type of task for the speed reading race to work effectively.

Once you have selected tasks to use, set a time limit based on the task type and length. Ensure the amount of time given is less than the average learner would need to complete all tasks. In this way, your whole class should feel a sense of time pressure when racing each other to complete all the tasks. Tell your class that the student(s) who complete(s) the most tasks within the time limit is the winner and then say ‘go’.

As well as giving learners a chance to develop their reading speed, this activity should help them get used to the pressure of doing Choose the Right Word or Phrase tasks within a time limit, which will help to prepare them for the test. Keep in mind of course that some learners will naturally read faster than others. You should emphasise that ‘winning the race’ is less important than becoming a faster reader. Encourage learners to keep a record of how long it takes them to complete the number of tasks. Then repeat the activity regularly, setting all learners the challenge of trying to improve on their previous time.
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill): Practice Tasks

A2

**APPOINTMENTS**

The appointment screens are not ______.

Please wait here until a doctor calls your name.

- working
- typing
- finding

(Correct answer: working)

Do you want to get from the hotel to the station? No problem! Just turn left, walk 100 metres, and ______ on your right.

- you’ll see it
- it is usually
- the hotel is

(Correct answer: you’ll see it)

The doctor is usually very ______ on Mondays. If possible, please make an appointment for another day.

- full
- busy
- employed

(Correct answer: busy)
Choose the **Right Word or Phrase** (Gap fill): *Practice Tasks*

**A2**

**Marco’s restaurant**

*We serve wonderful hot meals.*

*We’re open 7 days a week.*

*We’re always busy on Saturday evenings, so don’t forget to ______.*

- make an appointment
- make a plan
- make a reservation

(Correct answer: make a reservation)
**Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill):**

**Practice Tasks**

**Basketball camp**

Saturday 23rd March

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Spend the morning learning new basketball skills with the help of a professional. In the afternoon, take part in a ______ the skills you’ve learnt.

For more details, visit www.basketballcamp.org

- match to practise
- race to practise
- show to practise

(Correct answer: match to practise)

**Visit to Marco’s Restaurant**

We had a family party there on Saturday night. The atmosphere was great. Although it took the waiter 20 minutes to serve us, the food was terrific. I really ______ it. Book a table now

- can recommend
- can suggest
- can promise

(Correct answer: can recommend)
Dear Consumer,

We are sure you will love your new laptop, but if for any reason you are not 100% happy, you should bring it back to the store. We can then exchange it or _____ for you.

• organise a complaint
• organise a discount
• organise a refund
(Correct answer: organise a refund)

Welcome to Green Town Clinic

Open 8 a.m. – 7 p.m. Monday to Friday.

From 1st December, patients can make appointments online, 24 hours a day. Visit our website at www.greentown-clinic.com and click on “appointments” if you’d like _____ for this new service.

• to enter
• to book
• to register
(Correct answer: to register)
**Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill): Practice Tasks**

**B2**

Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill):

**Practice Tasks**

If you have some free time and would like to _____ a helper at our school festival, please contact the organisers! You could assist in the kitchen with food preparation, or collect tickets at the entrance.

- volunteer as
- recommend someone as
- coordinate with

(Correct answer: volunteer as)

Welcome to our chocolate club! Every month, we will send you a selection of the finest chocolate from around the world. Your membership lasts until 31st January, when you can easily _____ it online.

- renew
- finalise
- commence

(Correct answer: to renew)
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill): Practice Tasks

B2

A local children’s charity has been _____ one of the council’s Community Hero awards. The winner will be selected from a list of twelve local organisations and will receive a substantial cash prize.

• nominated for
• announced as
• honoured with
(Correct answer: nominated for)

The College accepts no responsibility for _____ bicycles on campus. Therefore, we expect students to ensure their bicycles are secure at all times. Locked bicycles should be stored in the area by reception, where there are security cameras..

• damage to
• the theft of
• the hire of
(Correct answer: the theft of)
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill): Practice Tasks

C1

We are aware that some of our users have been experiencing _____ issues. Our engineers are working to fix the fault in order to get you back online as soon as possible. Thank you for your understanding, and we apologise for the inconvenience.

- navigation
- connectivity
- formatting

(Correct answer: connectivity)

Polite Notice

For the well-being of everyone in the building, residents are reminded to refrain from all forms of _____ behaviour. This includes excessive noise after 10 p.m., leaving rubbish in the public areas of the building, aggressive conduct, and vandalism to the building. The Housing Association does not accept liability for any damage caused by such behaviour.

Housing Association

- impetuous
- anti-social
- boisterous

(Correct answer: anti-social)
Choose the Right Word or Phrase (Gap fill): Practice Tasks

C1

Dear Guests,

Although Rainbow Hostel is open to guests around the clock, the main entrance gate will be locked after 6 p.m. The ______ that you are provided with as your room key can be used to enter or exit through the gate from then on. Guests returning to their dormitories after 10 p.m. should behave in a considerate manner.

• swipe card
• timing device
• security procedure

(Correct answer: swipe card)

Under our no-quibble returns policy, customers can return any unwanted item of merchandise within 35 days, which goes beyond your statutory rights. Simply take the item to your nearest store, along with proof of purchase. Please note that your refund will not appear in your account immediately. It may take your bank up to 3 working days to ______.

• process it
• invoice you
• settle up

(Correct answer: process it)
Be yourself in English.