Pearson English International Certificate

Lesson Plan Ideas: Skill Building Activities

Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture)
Task Introduction

- Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture) assesses test takers’ listening comprehension.

- These tasks are only included in the A1 and A2 tests.

- Test takers are required to listen to a spoken passage and then answer three questions about what they have heard.

- The spoken passage usually features one person talking, and the questions that follow are asked by another person.

- Each spoken passage is quite short, usually between 30 and 40 words.

- For each question, test takers must select the correct image from three options.

- The questions test whether the listener has understood the gist and/or specific details of what they have heard.

- There are 6-7 Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture) tasks on each A1 and A2 test.

- The spoken passage is played only once.

- Each question is played only once.

- On screen, the task will look like this while the audio plays:
**Task Introduction**

- The question screens usually look something like this:

  ![Question Screen Example]

- Test takers must click the correct picture. Once they are happy with their choice, they can click ‘next’. They cannot go back to previous items after clicking next.
Listen carefully. The questions might relate to the overall meaning of the spoken passage or to a small detail of what has been said. Test takers must pay careful attention to everything they hear.

Take notes selectively. Test takers can use the notepad to make notes. As the spoken passages are quite short, they should not worry too much about forgetting what they have heard, but it can help some test takers to make notes of key words.

Pay attention to question words. Test takers need to understand the differences in meaning between question words (‘What...?’ ‘When...?’ ‘Where...?’) before they take the test. They should listen especially carefully to the start of each question in order to be certain what is being asked.

Focus on the details of images. There may only be small differences between the three image options. For example, all three pictures could show a dining table with a meal on it. Questions can relate to the differences between the pictures. For example, a question could be ‘What did the speaker eat for dinner?’ For a question like this, test takers would need to identify the picture containing all the food items that the speaker mentioned.

Do not assume an image is correct just because the speaker mentioned something in it. Incorrect image options may relate to what the speaker has said in some way while not being the correct answer to the question. For example, a speaker may describe going to the park after going to school before going home. The question could then ask ‘Where did the speaker go first?’ with image options being a picture of a park, a picture of a school and a picture of a home. Test takers must understand that just because they heard the words park and home, these are not the correct answers to the question.
Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture): Activities for A1/A2

The spoken passages and questions that feature within Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture) tasks will vary in terms of vocabulary level and sentence complexity according to the level of the test. On the A1 test, they will include familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases. On the A2 test, vocabulary will be a little more challenging but still feature common, frequently used words.

Learners at both A1 and A2 levels will need to understand the requirements of the task and will need to practise listening to short passages. All learners should also be trying to build their vocabulary so that they are familiar with the words they hear on the recordings.

Understanding the task

After introducing the format of Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture) tasks to your learners and explaining the Strategies for Success on page 1, check that they have understood by using the following multiple-choice questions.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1) How many questions are there for each task?
   a) 1       b) 2       c) 3

2) How should you answer the question?
   a) speak           b) write       c) choose an image

3) How many Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture) tasks are on each test?
   a) 3       b) 6       c) 10

4) Test takers should take notes ______
   a) of key words.   b) of every word they hear.   c) about their plans for after the test ends.

5) After each question, test takers should select an image very ______
   a) quickly.       b) slowly.       c) carefully.

Answers: 1) c – 3  2) c – choose an image 3) b – 6. 4) a – of key words. 5) c – carefully
Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture): Activities for A1/A2

When listening to spoken English, A1-level learners should be able to recognise familiar words and very basic phrases concerning familiar matters such as family and immediate concrete surroundings when people speak slowly and clearly. At A2, English users can understand phrases and the highest frequency vocabulary related to areas of most immediate personal relevance, such as very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment. Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture) tasks assess test takers’ ability to do this, testing their listening comprehension skills alongside the ability to process information within simple images. You can help your learners prepare for the test by using the A2 example task below and other practice tasks on page 5.

Transcript

V1 Male adult: On Natasha's birthday, she woke up to a cup of coffee but no cards or flowers. Her husband was at the office, so Natasha went shopping. After lunch she went home and discovered her husband and friends at her birthday party.

Questions

1. What did Natasha see in the morning on her birthday?

2. Where was Natasha's husband in the morning?
Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture): Activities for A1/A2

Audio_A2_117_1 (Continued)

3. What did Natasha find when she went home?

![Images of Natasha and balloons]

**Picture slap**

Help your A1/A2 learners to develop their vocabulary while also getting used to processing graphical information by playing a picture slap game. Select around ten words for describing objects that you want them to practice recognising. Print images that represent the words and display each image separately. You could display them on a board and ask your whole class to stand up in front of it, or you could print sets of the images and put them on tables for separate groups of learners. When you say the word related to one of the pictures, learners should race to see who can slap it first. Award points based on who has slapped the picture first. If you have given sets of images to different groups of learners, you could vary this activity by asking them to grab the image.

You could use Picture Slap activities to boost the number of nouns your learners know, for example, selecting images of different animals, furniture items or things found in a park. You could also use Picture Slap to help improve your learners’ familiarity with different adjectives/verbs. For example, you could print ten images of people and shout out descriptions for what they are wearing and/or doing.
**Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture):**

**Activities for A1/A2**

**Storyboarding**

Get learners used to associating pictures with words, while also developing their writing skills. Present your group with a series of between three and ten images or play a short clip from a video. Ask them to write a description of what happens. Guide your learners regarding the number of sentences they should produce according to their level and needs. Once they have produced their sentences, ask them to read aloud to the other learners in the group. If you have a particularly artistic group – or even just a group of learners who are willing to try drawing – you could ask them to produce their own storyboards by first drawing the pictures themselves and then writing the sentences to describe what they have drawn. You can use an online search engine to find example storyboards, which will provide you with sets of images to use.

**Compare and contrast**

For Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture) tasks, test takers need to process graphical information in three simple images and identify differences between what they see. This may not be something your learners are used to doing, so you should try to give them as much practice as possible. You can use the practice tasks on page 5. It is also a good idea to create your own sets of three images to give them further practice. Use an internet search engine to identify sets of three images related to the same topic. For example, search ‘children’s playground’ or ‘beach resort’ online and select three images for your learners to look at together. First, ask learners to describe what is in the picture. At A1/A2 level, they may not have vocabulary to describe everything. You can let them use a dictionary if necessary. Then, ask ‘what is the same about the pictures?’ and ‘what is different about the pictures?’. Depending on the needs of your learners, you may want to provide them with some example sentence structures to use, such as ‘In the first picture, there is... , but there isn’t... in the second picture’.
Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture): Practice Tasks

A2

Audio_A2_117_2

Transcript
Male adult: David was listening to music when his dad asked for help in the garden. David didn’t want to help, but it was good weather so he enjoyed it. Later, David’s dad gave him some money to buy a new DVD.

Questions
1. What was David doing in his house?

2. Why did David like it in the garden?

3. What did David’s dad give him?
Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture): Practice Tasks

A2

Audio_A2_117_3

Transcript
Female adult: Emma was happy, because today was the start of her holiday. She took a taxi to the airport, and arrived there at quarter past two. Her flight was in three hours and she couldn’t wait.

Questions
1. How did Emma feel?

2. How did she travel to the airport?

3. What time did she get to the airport?
Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture): Practice Tasks

Transcript
Female adult: The friends couldn’t agree. Ben wanted to go hiking in the mountains but Steve wanted to relax by a pool in a hotel. Jack decided for them. So they chose a hotel with a pool, in the mountains.

Questions
1. What did Ben want to do?
2. Who decided what they would all do?
3. Where did they stay?
Passage Comprehension (Choose the Right Picture): Practice Tasks

A2

Audio_A2_117_8

Transcript
Female adult: Sally ran into the building and up to the second floor. She was 20 minutes late for her first English class. The timetable on her phone said that her class was in room 27 but the room was empty.

Questions
1. Where is Sally?

2. How late was she?

3. What did Sally see in the room?
Be yourself in English.