

Brain-Based Lesson Plan for Any Subject

India and China Workshops

Center for Accelerated Language Acquisition (CALA)



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Introduction

This is an example of how to process new information using multiple memory pathways, multiple learning styles, cooperative learning activities, celebration, moderate challenge, novelty and assessment. Use this as a springboard to create your own variations according to the subject you are teaching. Remember, when it comes to instructions, *“Give one at a time and learning will climb!”*

1. **Imagine you have 10 new words to teach.** Type out the definitions of each word.
2. **Cut them up** so that each can be read separately and put them in a hat.
3. **Frame your activity** (put a positive bias on it) by saying, “Who prefers to learn things by playing games instead of doing worksheets, raise your hand. Me too, so I’ve created some games for us today that will help us do that.” Have students count off 1-10 (or however many students and definitions you have) and when they are finished say, “When I say ‘go’ I want people to come up 1 at a time in order of their number and take a slip of paper from the hat and return to their seat and quietly. They will read their definition until everyone is finished. Then, wait for my instructions. Raise your hand if you have a question.” (If no questions, say “Okay, go.”)
4. **When everyone has their definition, say:**
 - a. “Please take a marker and 1 sheet of clean paper. Stand up and without opening your mouth, take 10 steps in any direction and then stop and wait for my instructions. Go!”
 - b. “Now, choose the person closest to you as a partner and wait for my instructions. Is there anyone without a partner, please raise your hand.” (wait until they all have partners.) “Now, when I say ‘go’ you will sit with your partner for 5 minutes. During this time you will say the definitions to each other and write them down on one side of the paper and draw one picture on the other side that will help you remember the important ideas. One picture will fill one piece of paper. I will collect these papers, so draw clearly and neatly.”
 - c. “Here is an example of a picture I have made for this definition (you state the definition and show them the picture you have drawn. If you are not familiar with ‘mind-mapping’ it involves creating a symbol to represent an abstract idea, a vital part of accessing long-term memory”
 - d. “You do these activities with your partner until you memorize the two definitions and then quiz each other. When the five minutes are up, I will tell you to stop. Raise your hand if you have a question. No questions? Okay, Go!”

5. **After 5 minutes** you say, "Who needs another minute?" You will give more time according to raised hands. Say, "For those of you who have finished, simply continue to quiz one another quietly."
6. **After the extra minute or so** say, "Stop – when I say 'go' turn to your partner, give them a high-five and say 'good job!' and return to your seat and wait for my next instructions."
7. **Once students have returned to their seats** say, "Now, will the person who knows the definition of ___ please come up to the board and bring their drawing?" When the student comes up, give him or her tape and have the student attach his or her drawing to the board. Ask the student to turn to the class and recite his or her definition. If the student falters, you simply help until complete by saying the definition and then saying, "Good job. Everyone give him / her hand!"
8. **Continue this process until all the pictures are up on the board.** They may be in a line or all over the board. This is in preparation for the game "tappette," so no special way of putting them up is needed. The only thing that is needed is that a number be placed clearly below it which identifies it. This has been a period of lengthy sitting and focused listening, so . . .
9. **It is now time to allow the students to get up and move around.** "Please stand up (wait until they do) "When I say 'go' you will go from person to person and whisper your definition slowly. When you get finished whispering your definition, the person must correctly give you the number assigned to your picture on the board before you move to the next person. Keep a record of how many people correctly pointed to your definition after you told them by recording their name w/ pencil and paper. Take pencil and paper with you. Keep whispering your definition to people until I tell you to stop. Raise your hand if you have a question. No questions? Okay, go!"
10. **During this time you write up the 10 new vocabulary words twice,** once on the left board and once on the right. After 5 minutes or whenever you feel it has gone on long enough say, "Please stop. When I say 'go' you will form 2 groups of 5 with the people closest to you and wait for my next instructions. Go."
11. **After groups have been formed** say, "Okay, now this group of 5 stands against the left wall and this group of 5 stands against the right wall. When I say 'go' you will quickly find out whose birthday is closest to mine, which is January 6. As soon as you have identified that person, everyone point to him without saying anything. Raise your hand if you have a question. Go!" Once the two people with the birthday closest to that of the teacher have been identified, say "Okay, ___ and ___ are the leaders of the two teams. When I say 'go' each team has 1 minute to choose a goofy team name and motto. For example, you might want to be called 'the budding geniuses' and your motto might be 'We rule!' When I say 'stop' the team leaders will be prepared to tell me the name and motto, which I will write up on the board. Raise your hand if you have a question. No questions? Okay, go!"
12. **Say, "Please stop" and the leaders tell you their choices of team names and mottos.** Write them up. On two different boards you have listed the 10 definitions. This is a relay. They must stand at the back of the room and run to the board and write the 10 definitions. Not everyone will know all 10, but enough of the members will be on each team to fill in most of it. Members do not have the right to yell out answers. The person running to the board has the right to put

up one definition and correct anything he wants. They can whisper to people who are lined up at the wall before they go run to the board. Tell them they will want to be as quiet as possible so that the other team does not benefit from their knowledge. The first team to finish is one type of winner, but the definitions must still be corrected, so you may have a winner for correctness and a winner for speed. The first team to finish yells, "I won!" I use this in our first game in my French class to start teaching them the past tense way before we actually learn it. When you get a winner, clap and invite everyone to the board to correct. After they have all the definitions up, you simply go over each one and say, "Raise your hand if you see how to correct this one..." Congratulate the team who won for correctness.

13. **Celebrate.** "When I say 'go' turn to all your team members, give them a high five and say 'You have a brain like Einstein!' Then form a circle with your team and start walking in a circle to the music. When I stop the music and clap, it is time to listen to my next instructions. Go!"
14. **When they are all walking in a circle,** stop the music, clap, and say, "Each time I stop the music, I will give a definition, you shout out the word it goes with." Keep doing that until you have completed about 10 definitions.
15. **Tappette.** "When I say 'go' please line up with your team against the wall and put your hand over your mouth and wait for my instructions. Go!" When they are lined up and quiet, tell them they "will now tap the picture that goes with the definition with the fly swatter. The person to run up to the board and tap first gets the point. Raise your hand if you have a question. No questions? Okay, here's the first definition . . ." (you will need to keep score)
16. **Assessment.** When finished count up points, congratulate winners by saying, "When I say 'go' give your team a high-5 and say 'good job' and return to your seats and get out a pencil. Okay – go!" Assess by giving them either a handout of a quick matching quiz or a 'cloze' exercise which would consist of all the definitions but has certain words missing. They must fill in the blanks for all 10 definitions. You collect and grade and give feedback the next class as a review.