

1 USING REGULAR PROGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

The activities in this section all use software which is probably already on your computer or can be downloaded from the Internet, and several well-known and reliable websites. If you and your students are new to using an IWB then this familiarity should allow you to focus on the process of teaching and learning English without having to first learn a new interface or set of commands.

You can continue to employ many of the same pieces of software you are already familiar with but run through your interactive whiteboard. This means you can start using this piece of equipment quickly but using your finger or IWB pen to move around the board and to click on buttons and menus instead of reaching for the mouse.

Instead of relying on printed handouts, you can display and edit documents through the board. You can run your existing presentations via your IWB. You and your students can instantly highlight text and select images from different sources and copy and paste them into documents and presentations. You can use programs such as Google Earth, media players; online services such as search engines like Google and Yahoo! photo websites like Flickr, and Internet encyclopedias like Wikipedia; and Internet learning resources like those from the BBC and other providers. If you have a CD-ROM dictionary installed on your computer, you can keep it open and minimised in the background ready to jump to the fore when you need a definition or pronunciation model. Until you become used to using the software that comes with your IWB, you can use some of these programs to do the sort of ordering and dragging and dropping that are common IWB activities.

You can use any of these pieces of software in conjunction with the IWB software, allowing you and your students to stand at the board and use the IWB pen to draw and write on those programs. You can then save those annotations for future reference. This is a very different interaction to sitting in front of a monitor and using a mouse. Drawing on and labelling a photograph of their town is often the kind of kinaesthetic experience some students require to help keep them interested and motivated.

GRAMMAR

G1 Daily routine jigsaw

Level beginner to elementary

Interaction whole class

Aim To sort pictures of a daily routine into a chronological sequence and describe that routine.

Language focus present simple for routines

Technology presentation software

Before the class

Use the image function of a search engine to find photographs representing the stages in a daily routine. Depending on the age of your students these might include: *getting up, taking a shower, having breakfast, going to school, having lessons, having lunch, going home, doing homework, having dinner (with your family), going to the cinema, going to bed.*

Paste the photographs into presentation software, one per slide, but mix up the order.

Procedure

- 1 Run the presentation. Elicit from the students what activity is described in each photograph. For lower level students, you can write the key vocabulary, eg the main verb, onto the slide with an IWB pen.
- 2 Set the presentation into edit mode, ie with all the slides displayed on the left of the screen.
- 3 Ask the students which of the photographs should come first. Invite a student to come to the board and drag that slide to the correct position in the list.
- 4 Repeat step 3 until all the slides are in the correct order.
- 5 Run the presentation again. Ask a student ‘What time do you get up?’ Write the answer on the slide. Continue through the slides asking a different student each time.
- 6 Invite a student to come to the board to run through the presentation, explaining their daily routine.
- 7 Ask the students to practise in pairs.

Follow up

Keep the re-ordered and annotated presentation to use in a subsequent lesson for review.

Variation

If your students have access to digital cameras, ask them to create a similar presentation by taking their own photographs.

G2 Comparing with pictures

Level elementary

Interaction whole class

Aim To use pictures to introduce or practise comparatives.

Language focus *In the example:* adjectives to describe people

Alternatives: adjectives to describe towns, cars

Technology presentation software and a photosharing website

Before the class

Use the photosharing website to choose a pair of photographs. Each photo should feature a single person and the two people should be as different from each other as possible. Paste each photo into a slide in the presentation software then add a third slide with the two photos side-by-side.

Procedure

- 1 Brainstorm pairs of adjectives to describe people, eg *tall / short, old / young, fat / thin, beautiful / ugly, long hair / short hair* etc.
- 2 Display the first photograph. Ask the students to suggest the person's name, nationality, age, and job. Invite students to make sentences describing the person, using the words brainstormed in stage 1. Repeat for the person in the second photo.
- 3 Display the third slide with the two photos together and elicit comparisons between the two people, eg *Mario is older than Jennifer*.
- 4 Model a question, eg *Who is younger, Mario or Jennifer?* Invite students to ask each other questions about the two people.

Follow up

Put students in pairs to write sentences as a review.

Variation

Add a third photograph to introduce superlatives.

G3 Correcting a text

Level elementary

Interaction pairs, whole class

Aim To identify and correct mistakes in a short text.

Language focus *In the example:* present simple vs. present continuous

Alternatives: past simple vs. present perfect, *going to* vs. *will*

Technology word-processing software reviewing tool

Before the class

Type this text into a word-processing document:

My name is Klaus. I am coming from Germany. In Germany, I am living in a small town near Kassel. I am married. My wife's name is Suzanne. We are having three children. My children are going to school in Kassel. They all learn English which is very important. At the moment, I visit Ireland. I stay in Dublin for four weeks. I study English at a language school. I am having lots of problems with English grammar. I am needing English for my job.

Print copies to distribute. If necessary, you may want to pre-teach some of the vocabulary in the text since the activity is principally about recognising structure.

Make sure the reviewing tool on your word-processing software is switched on.

Procedure

- 1 Display the text on the board. Give the class a few minutes to read it then ask them what they think might be wrong with it.
- 2 Once the grammar point has been identified, divide the class into pairs and ask them to find and count the number of mistakes in the text. Ask the pairs to report back on how many mistakes they have found and invite them out to annotate the text.
- 3 Distribute the handout and ask the pairs to work together to correct the mistakes.

- 4 Invite a student from one pair to come to the board and correct the first mistake. If all the pairs agree, invite another student to correct the next mistake and so on to the end of the text.

Follow up

Use this activity as a review of this grammar point, to give you an idea of how much extra teaching is necessary.

Answer

There are nine mistakes:

*My name is Klaus. I **come** from Germany. In Germany, I **live** in a small town near Kassel. I am married. My wife's name is Suzanne. We **have** three children. My children **go** to school in Kassel. They **are** all **learning** English which is very important. At the moment, I **am visiting** Ireland. I **am staying** in Dublin for four weeks. I **am studying** English at a language school. I am having lots of problems with English grammar. I **need** English for my job.*

G4 What's happening?

Level elementary

Interaction pairs

Aim To use photographs of street scenes to practise talking about what's happening at the time of speaking.

Language focus present continuous

Technology image function of a search engine and presentation software

Before the class

Find an image of a street scene with lots of activity and paste it into a slide.

Depending on the size of your class or how long you want to do this activity for, you may want to have several pictures, each one on a different slide.

Procedure

- 1 Display the (first) photograph on the board. Tell the class what they are looking at, eg 'This is 42nd Street in New York' or 'This is the centre of Mumbai' and ask them to describe the picture with a partner.
- 2 Point to a person in the photograph who is engaged in some activity, eg walking down the street, talking to another person, etc and ask 'What's s/he doing?'
- 3 Repeat step 2 for other people in the photograph(s). If your students do not know the verb necessary to describe the action, write it onto the photograph with the IWB pen.
- 4 Continue with further questions about the people in the photographs, eg *What are they talking about? Where are they going? Who are they going to visit? Why are they (doing that)?*

Variation

This activity can also be combined with one practising future forms. For example, after *Where are they going?* you could ask *What are they going to do there?* or *What do you think will happen next?*

G5 Unscrambling sentences

Level elementary

Interaction whole class, pairs

Aim To identify parts of speech and parts of sentence and put them into the correct order.

Language focus *In the example:* present simple and past simple sentences

Alternatives: question forms

Technology website for word cloud creation, eg Wordle™ or WordItOut

Before the class

Create a word cloud for each of these sentences:

London is a big crowded city. Maria plays the piano every day. Philip usually cycles to school. Naomi reads quietly in the library after school. Graham bought some new shoes in London last week.

Save the word clouds or output them as pdfs.

Procedure

- 1 Display the first word cloud. Ask the students to identify the parts of speech, ie which word is the verb, which ones are nouns, adjectives and so on. As each one is correctly identified, label them using an IWB pen.
- 2 Ask which word they think is the subject of the sentence.
- 3 Give the students two minutes to work in pairs to unscramble the words into the correct order. Ask for a volunteer to write their answer on the board. Invite other suggestions if this not correct.
- 4 Repeat steps 1–3 with the other word clouds. Note that the time references, *every day*, *after school*, *last week* could go at the beginning as well as the end of the sentence.
- 5 Students can create and save similar word clouds to test the rest of the group.

Variation

With longer or more complicated sentences, a timer could be used to add a competitive element to the pair work stage.

G6 Digital storytelling

Level pre-intermediate

Interaction groups, whole class

Aim To use narrative tenses to tell a story in the past.

Language focus past simple and past continuous tenses

Technology IWB software

Before the class

Open a flipchart page and import six pictures selected at random, either by copying pictures from a website or by using your own pictures. Include a few pictures of people. Copy the flipchart page several times, once per group.

Procedure

- 1 Divide the students into small groups. Open the flipchart and ask students to look at the six photographs. Elicit descriptions of each photograph and deal with any unknown vocabulary. Tell students to work in their groups and create a story from these six pictures. They can change the order of the pictures, depending on their story.
- 2 When the groups have finished, allow each group to go to the IWB and re-order their pictures chronologically.
- 3 Students from each group stand up in turn and deliver their story to the class. Monitor the activity and record any important language mistakes.
- 4 Give students feedback, particularly focusing on their use of the past tenses.

G7 What has changed?

Level pre-intermediate

Interaction pairs, whole class

Aim To discuss changes to a place between a point in the past and today.

Language focus present perfect

Technology presentation software and a photosharing website

Before the class

There are a couple of ways of obtaining pictures for this activity. One is to use a search engine to search for ‘*then and now*’ photographs. You can also add the name of a city, eg *Paris* to your search criteria. Another source of pictures are specific groups dedicated to comparing old pictures to current ones often found on photosharing websites

Create a presentation with three slides. The picture of *then* goes on the first slide, *now* on the second and both on the third.

Procedure

- 1 Display the first picture. If it is a place that might be familiar to your students, ask if they recognise where it is. Ask the students to describe what they see in the picture. Help with vocabulary if necessary.
- 2 Repeat step 1 with the second picture. Make sure the students are aware that the pictures show the same place.
- 3 Now ask *What has changed?* Give students five minutes to work in pairs and write from memory as many changes as they can remember. Use the third slide to confirm how well they have remembered.

Follow up

Students can work in pairs to discuss what has changed where they live during their lifetimes or an agreed period.

G8 Collocation checker

Level intermediate

Interaction whole class

Aim To use a feature of a search engine to check common collocation mistakes.

Language focus common collocation mistakes

Technology Internet search engine

Before the class

Prepare a word-processing document or screen with your IWB software which contains this list:

I am agree / I agree, make mistakes / do mistakes, it depends of / it depends on, take the train / drive by train, it is the same as / it is the same like.

Procedure

- 1 Display the list of collocations.
- 2 Ask the students to discuss in pairs which phrase in each pair of collocations they think is correct. Ask the students to vote on their choice. Use the IWB pen to record the number of votes for each collocation.
- 3 Enter the first collocation into the search engine but inside double quotation marks, ie “*I am agree*” and draw the students’ attention to the number of results (this is shown on the results page). For “*I am agree*” it should be less than a million. Now do the same for “*I agree*” and note that the number of results is over 50 million.
- 4 Repeat step 3 with the other pairs of collocations. In each case the correct collocation will have a considerably higher number of results than the incorrect one.

Variation

This process is useful for technical collocations in the ESP classroom, especially if you are unfamiliar with the terms used and they are not listed in general dictionaries.

G9 Comparing facts and figures

Level intermediate

Interaction whole class

Aim To compare detailed data about different countries.

Language focus comparatives and superlatives

Technology online encyclopedia

Before the class

Visit an online encyclopedia and find lists comparing countries. For example, search for *list of countries by population*.

Procedure

- 1 Ask the students to choose four countries from anywhere in the world. If you have a mixed nationality group, then use their home countries.
- 2 Ask the students to try and guess the population, land area, GDP per capita (per person) and average life expectancy for each country. Use the IWB software to write the range of answers on the board.
- 3 Use the online encyclopedia to look up the actual answers. Give credit to those students whose answers were the closest.

- 4 Write up the actual figures and use them to drill comparatives and superlatives. Challenge the students to use as many forms as possible to make the comparisons, eg *The population of China is bigger than the population of India. More people live in China than in India. India's population is not as big as China's. India's population is nearly as big as China's. China has the biggest population in the world.*

Follow up

Students can use the website for homework to create questions for the rest of the class. For example, *Which is bigger, Japan or the UK?*

Variation

You can select alternative or additional facts depending on the type of class. For example, in a CLIL classroom you might be focusing on geographic or demographic facts, a business English class may prefer to look at economic facts and figures.

G10 Missing articles

Level intermediate and above

Interaction pairs, whole class

Aim To decide which articles (*a / an, the*) are used in a text.

Language focus articles

Technology word-processing software

Before the class

Cut and paste the content of a text suitable for your students into a word-processing file. Delete any articles and print copies for students. Paste the edited text and the original into the digital flipchart.

Procedure

- 1 Display the first text and elicit the article that is missing from the first gap.
- 2 Divide the class into pairs and ask them to decide what the missing articles are. Monitor and help as necessary.
- 3 Invite the students to come out in turn and using the pen tool, write in the missing articles in the first sentence. Check the class agrees with the suggested answer. When another student disagrees, ask that student to add their suggestion using a different colour. Draw a red question mark next to the different suggestions.
- 4 Continue until students have finished annotating the text. Click to the next flipchart page to compare the group's attempt with the original. Clarify and explain as necessary. Remember that sometimes, there may be more than one possibility.

Follow up

Ask students to make any corrections on their original sheet. You may need to do more in-class work on this area if students have a lot of problems with this exercise.

G11 Dictogloss

Level upper intermediate and above

Interaction pairs or small groups, whole class

Aim To reconstruct a short text after hearing it read out loud.

Language focus *In the example:* mixed tenses, ie present simple, present continuous, present perfect, past simple

Alternatives: any grammar point or lexical set you want to review

Technology word-processing software

Before the class

Type this text into a word-processing document:

I was born in India but, when I was about ten years old, my family moved to the United States. My father worked at a university in California for eight years. That is why I speak English with an American accent. After a year back in India, I started university in the UK. I studied computer engineering at Cambridge University. After I graduated I came home again and got married. I have lived in Mumbai since 2002. Six years ago, I set up a software company with my older sister. She is an expert in marketing. The company has grown quickly. At the moment, we are working with several big clients in California.

The vocabulary in this example is deliberately simple as the focus is on the grammatical structures.

Procedure

- 1 Divide the class into pairs or small groups.
- 2 Explain that you are going to read a short text and that the students should take notes as you read in order to try and reconstruct the text as accurately as possible.
- 3 Read the text at a slow but natural pace while the students take their notes. Allow the students to compare notes before reading it once more only.
- 4 Ask the pairs or small groups to compare their notes and try and reconstruct the text.
- 5 Nominate a scribe to type and a person to moderate the discussion. The moderator invites the pairs or groups to give their version of the first sentence. The scribe types this into the word processor. This is then discussed by the class until a consensus is reached. If there are any obvious grammatical errors in the text, draw the students' attention to these and give them the opportunity to make changes. The discussion then continues to the next sentence and so on until the class is happy with the text displayed on the board.
- 6 Open the word-processing document with the original text and compare with the class's version.

Follow up

Highlight any major discrepancies and discuss the reason for them. This may form the basis for further grammar lessons or reviews.

G12 Project presentation

Level upper intermediate and above

Interaction small class

Aim To give a short presentation on a current project.

Language focus mixed tenses

Technology presentation software

This activity works well with business English classes.

Before the class

Create a presentation with the following slides:

- 1 *My Project*
 - *The background*
 - *The current situation*
 - *Our plans*
 - *The outcome*
- 2 *The background*
- 3 *The current situation*
- 4 *Our plans*
- 5 *The outcome*

Procedure

- 1 Show the students slide 1 and explain that they are going to prepare a short presentation about a current project. It could be something at work or a personal project.
- 2 Show slide 2. Ask what sort of questions would need to be answered to explain the background of the project, eg *When did the project start? What were the objectives? Have they changed? What has been done so far? What problems have there been?* Add these to the slide.
- 3 Show the remaining slides and ask questions, eg *'What is happening at the moment? What problems do you have? What are you doing to solve these problems?'*
- 4 Give the students 30 minutes to think about and prepare their presentations.
- 5 Each student uses slides to give their presentation on the IWB. Encourage the other students to ask questions.

Variation

With intermediate students add the questions to the slides at the preparation stage and set the bullet points to fly in as you discuss the questions.

G13 Predicting the content of a news article

Level upper intermediate and above

Interaction whole class, pairs

Aim To use headlines displayed in an RSS reader to speculate on and predict the content of the news report.

Language focus the language of prediction

Technology RSS reader software

Before the class

Subscribe to the RSS feed of an online newspaper or news service. For example, BBC news, Google news or France 24.

Set your RSS reader to display the headlines only, ie not the summary information.

Procedure

- 1 Display a list of headlines from the RSS feed. Ask the class to choose two headlines.
- 2 Divide the class into pairs. Ask them to discuss the headlines and predict the content of the articles.
- 3 Starting with the first headline, ask each pair to report their predictions.
- 4 Click on the headline to show the complete article. Ask students to skim read the opening paragraphs to see how close they were in their predictions.

Follow up

Focus more closely on one of the stories. See G14 *Analysing a news article*.

G14 Analysing a news article

Level upper intermediate and above

Interaction whole class, pairs

Aim To identify and analyse the grammar used in a news article.

Language focus mixed tenses

Technology newspaper or news service website

Before the class

Choose an appropriate article from the website. It should be short, display a range of grammatical forms and be interesting and relevant to your students. Make a note of the URL. You could also pre-teach any vocabulary you think necessary. This gives students a hint about the content and makes step 1 more productive.

Procedure

- 1 Display the headline of the article and ask the students to predict the content.
- 2 Display the entire text and give the students time to read.
- 3 Ask the class to identify which parts of the article talk about past or present events or are statements about the future. Invite students to highlight these in three different colours.
- 4 Divide the class into pairs. Ask them to create a timeline and order the events described in the article chronologically.
- 5 Draw a timeline on the board and invite students to the board to annotate it until the class is agreed on the order of the events from the article.

Follow up

Use the entire activity as a model for students to choose an article themselves, re-order the events chronologically, then present the story to the group. A writing task could be added as a further stage in which the pairs produce a summary of the article.

VOCABULARY

V1 Brainstorm around a topic

Level beginner to intermediate

Interaction whole class

Aim To brainstorm vocabulary and use word clouds to record it.

Language focus *In the example:* weather

Alternatives: any lexical set you wish to review

Technology website for word cloud creation, eg Wordle™ or WordItOut

Procedure

- 1 Write the vocabulary topic on the whiteboard, ie *weather*.
- 2 Divide the students into pairs. Give the pairs ten minutes to brainstorm as many words or collocations related to weather as possible (lower levels may require more time or just until they run out of ideas).
- 3 Ask each pair to read out their list. Type the words for each list into a single word-processing document or appoint a scribe from each pair to do this. Use the spell-checker.
- 4 Copy the entire list and paste it into the website text box to create your word cloud. The size of the words in the cloud depends on how often they appeared in the list.
- 5 Save the results and distribute the hyperlink to the class.

V2 Crossword

Level beginner

Interaction pairs, whole class

Aim To complete a crossword created using an online crossword creator.

Language focus *In the example:* places you find around a town

Alternatives: any set of words you wish to review

Technology online crossword creator

Before the class

There are many crossword creator programs online. Some can be bought and downloaded for a small sum while others are free, these include puzzlemaker.com and crosswordpuzzlegames.com.

Enter these words and clues into the table: *railway station – where you go to catch a train; bank – where you keep your money; post office – where you buy stamps; butchers – where you buy meat; bakers – where you get bread; supermarket – where you can buy all types of food; bus station – where you catch a bus; pool – where you can go swimming; restaurant – where you can go for dinner; cinema – where you go to see a film; theatre – where you go to see a musical; museum – where you can see things from the past.*

Use these words and hints to make the crossword, then take and save a screengrab to use in the lesson.