

Introduction

This is a literacy activity. But it is a verbal literacy activity. It requires pupils to give a verbal response to a question or task to wake them up and get focused at the start of a lesson.

Running the activity

There are five sets (A to E) of questions or tasks. These should be done at a good pace – no hesitating is allowed! Quick fire immediate answers are the order of the day.

It is an ideal wake up and starter.

I have also seen it used as a task where each pupil had to give a satisfactory response before they were allowed to leave at the end of a lesson. Obviously teacher judgement in asking appropriate questions to pupils was important in this approach.

Safety

Not applicable

Lesson outcomes

- Improved verbal answering skills

Where the activity fits in

Lesson start or end

Skills

Vocabulary, mental agility

Acknowledgements

I saw this style of activity in an old battered copy of a book from the USA – Nigel Heslop.

Set A

Repeat these words:

- toast - nail - pickle - ocean
- bell - bone - arrow - hill
- fiddle - daisy - feather - punch - clock
- cake - board - kite - ice - lead
- gold - lamb - grass - eel - church - snow
- water - music - tail - head - cloud - work

Give a word that means the opposite:

below
shallow
loose
generous
plain
reward

Answer these questions:

Name a dramatic play.

Other than the ocean, name a body of water that is salty.

Name three things made out of brick.

Name two countries in Eastern Europe.

Name something liquid that you do not drink out of a glass.

Name three sections of a newspaper.

Set B

Give two meanings for these words:

- break, brake
- passed, past
- threw, through
- week, weak
- shone, shown
- whose, who's

Complete these sentences:

Off is to on as after is to (before).

Place is to where as time is to (when).

Happier is to happiest as better is to (best).

Bedroom is to sleep as kitchen is to (cook).

Rose is to flower as oak is to (tree).

Blow is to bugle as beat is to (drum).

Name something that is:

liquid and sticky

long and wooden

small and silver

brown and has a shell

large and valuable

important and made of paper

Set C

Give me a word that means the same as:

- pretty
- beneath
- yell
- frightened
- difficult
- error

Name something that is:

round and flat
large and full of air
long and glass
square and plastic
valuable and not worth money
paper and covered with numbers

Answer these questions:

Name a method of transportation that does not have wheels.

What could you read that isn't a newspaper, magazine or book?

Name something that gives light and is not electrical.

Name a vegetable that is not green.

What is another name for autumn?

What could you wear on your feet besides shoes?

Set D

Name something that is:

- made of paper, flies, and has a tail
- flat, metal, and sharp
- round, hard, and edible
- small, alive, and dangerous
- large, valuable, and made of stone
- large, metal, and floats

Give two meanings for the word:

sink
trip
cross
crane
drift
bridge

Try to think of several things you could do if:

You are in the middle of making dinner, and you find that you don't have one of the key ingredients.

You've been reading a great mystery, but you find that someone has torn out the last pages of the book.

You are to meet someone at 4:00, but you don't have a watch.

When you left for school it was sunny, but when school is out it is raining.

You've been invited to your friend's birthday party, but you don't have enough money for a present.

You have a book overdue at the library but you can't find it.

Set E

What relationship is:

- your mother's brother to you
- your uncle's son to your mother
- your sister's daughter to you
- your aunt's daughter to you
- your sister's husband to your father
- your parents' son to you

Replace the word "look" in these sentences:

Roger looked over the fence.

Maria looked at the television screen.

Will you help me look for my dog?

Juan looked at his opponent.

Wearing that suit will make you look older.

Karen looked over her shoulder.

What could you say if:

Your mother asks you to baby-sit, and you want to go to the cinema with friends.

You meet your headteacher out shopping.

Your friends ask you to do something that you don't approve of.

You have to break an important appointment that you made weeks ago.

Your friend is cast as the lead in the school play.

You need someone to help you move furniture.