

## MY PROFESSIONAL FAVOURITES (IV)

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In this issue of *Open!* I would like to continue sharing my professional favourites with you. The school year is moving surely and steadily towards its end and it is time to think about revision activities. Revision activities can be implemented when you have finished with your textbook materials, before the examinations or at the beginning of the new school year.

### Vocabulary revision activities

- **ABC**

You can write a letter of the alphabet on an A4 sheet of paper. The sheet is passed around in the classroom, and every student has to add as many words as possible beginning with this letter of the alphabet. You can pass around a sheet with a letter in every lesson until you have used up all the letters. The completed sheets could be posted on the walls of the classroom. The students can also make their own ABCs for different topics (food alphabet, clothes alphabet, adjective alphabet, verb alphabet, etc). In this activity they write all the letters of the alphabet one under another on a sheet of paper and then write words starting with the corresponding letter of the alphabet. Advanced-level students can make use of the dictionary (after they have retrieved all the known words from their memory) in order to enrich their own vocabulary in the process.

- **Collective writing**

You can write the topic or an opening sentence on an A4 sheet of paper, e.g. environmental issues, hobbies and pastime, etc. The sheet is passed around. First the students write words and phrases related to the topic. Then the teacher dictates the words and phrases to the whole class. Students have to write a ... word essay using the words and phrases brainstormed by the class.

- **Explaining and defining**

Every student is provided with a wordcard with a recently learned word. The student's task is to explain or define the word. The other students have to guess the word that is written on the wordcard. As a follow-up the students can write 5-10 definitions for each other, swop the definitions, write words for each other's definitions, after that exchange the papers once again for the partner to check.

- **Write a story**

- I. Every pair/group is assigned a textbook unit and the new vocabulary of the unit. The students' task is to write a meaningful story (you can focus on one genre, e.g. detective story) using all the new words of the unit. The stories are shared with the rest of the group.

- II. Students have to write out 20-25 new words/phrases from the glossary at the back of the book. The teacher gives the students 3-5 topics to choose from and the students are asked to write a ... word essay using the words they have chosen.

### Grammar revision activities

- **Is there anything that you would like to revise**

The teacher asks the students what grammar areas they would like to practice or revise before the examination. When the possible areas have been decided upon, then for the next lesson the teacher prepares/finds both theoretical background as well as some exercises for these fields. The classroom is organised into 'stations' (a desk with 3-5 chairs) and the material packets are placed on every table. The students are grouped up into 3-5-member groups and every group starts working at one of the stations. They read through the theory part and do the tasks. When the groups are ready, they move to the next 'station' until they have fulfilled all the tasks. A public check can follow.

- **Expert groups**

Students are divided into groups. Every group gets a grammar topic they have to explain to the rest of the class. The students are encouraged to give explicit rules, explanations, clarify the function and form, and give examples. They are also asked to compile a task or exercise for practice for the rest of the class.

- **Noughts and crosses** (and other games from Mario Rinvoluceri 1995. *Grammar Games*. CUP)

The class is divided into two teams. One group will take crosses, the other noughts. The teacher draws a grid on the blackboard, e.g.

|         |            |       |
|---------|------------|-------|
| drank   | ate        | slept |
| thought | understood | heard |
| made    | took       | put   |

The boxes can be filled with any grammatical category, e.g. prepositions of place, phrasal verbs, comparative degrees of adjectives, etc. The first group will choose any of the words of the grid and make up a sentence (at least 7 words) with this word. If the sentence is correct, the teacher draws a cross or nought in the corresponding box. Then the other group chooses the word, etc. It can be played as the regular noughts and crosses game or just counting the right answers, and the winner is the team with the bigger number of right answers.

- **Right / wrong / correct it**

This is a board game that every teacher can easily make for students. All you need is a grid of 6x6 boxes. The boxes are filled with sentences (some right and some wrong). You can use the problem areas of your students and their mistakes for filling the boxes. You also need a dice and counters. The game is played like any other

board game. The student throws the dice, moves his counter and then decides whether the sentence is correct or not. If it is not correct, he has to correct it in writing for the teacher to check later. The students can also form groups of three where two students are players and the third is the judge who decides whether the sentence was corrected properly or not.

|   |                       |                                    |  |  |        |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------------------|--|--|--------|
| START: 1.<br>He must to<br>get up<br>early. | 2. Tom likes<br>music | 3. He have<br>washed his<br>blouse | 4. He does<br>not works in<br>the garden | 5. It is a<br>table. A<br>table is<br>green. | 6. etc |
| 12.   | 11.                   | 10.                                | 9.                                       | 8.   | 7.     |
| 13.   | 14.                   | 14.                                | 16.                                      | 17.  | 18.    |
| 24.   | 23.                   | 22.                                | 21.                                      | 20.  | 19.    |
| 25.   | 26.                   | 27.                                | 28.                                      | 29.  | 30.    |
| FINISH: 36.                                 | 35.                   | 34.                                | 33.                                      | 32.  | 31.    |

- **Exchanged workbooks**

Students exchange their workbooks and check each other's exercises. The teacher can provide the students with a key on an OHP transparency or on the blackboard.

### Speaking activities

- **I answer my own questions**

Students are asked to write 10 questions that they would like to answer themselves. Students are paired up and they exchange their questions. Questions are asked and answered.

- **Talk for one minute**

Every student is given a topic to speak about for one minute. More advanced students can be given the task to talk for three minutes. The topics could be the following: the clothes I like wearing, jeans, me and politics, my favourite piece of furniture at home, the book that I would recommend, etc. The students can also choose their own topics or the topics of the syllabus

- **Retell the texts**

Students go back to the first unit of the textbook and take turns telling the rest of the group about the reading texts of the units. The other students are encouraged to ask questions about the texts or add more information. The same could be done in pairs where one student takes the even number units and the other the odd number units.

Revision activities help the students to prepare for the approaching examinations, consolidate the materials covered throughout the school year or can serve as fun activities after serious and strenuous work.