

It's 12 o'clock!

Posted by Peter on 29 April 2010

Here is a great idea for an English class, especially a children's class. It comes from [the BBC/British Council teaching English website](#) and was written by **Katherine Bilsborough**. It is reproduced here with permission. This is a drawing and speaking activity that is fun to use with primary classes to revise the present continuous form. It is easy to set up and requires no preparation or materials, except a board and a board pen. Students will need a piece of paper and a pencil. This version practises the present continuous form but other versions can practise other tenses. Children like it because it allows them to practise grammar in a safe environment. By repeating the same question and answer a number of times students become more confident and make fewer and fewer errors. They also like it because the drawing adds an element of fun to the activity and allows students who might be good at drawing but less good at English, to excel.

Level: Elementary and above

Age: Primary (can also be used with older students)

Preparation

On the board, draw a simple background scene such as a park with some gardens, a river and a few trees. As you build up the picture, elicit the vocabulary from the students by asking a few simple questions.

What's this place? What am I drawing now?

Add a simple stick drawing (of yourself) in the scene. You should be "doing" something (e.g. sitting by the river eating a banana). Label the picture of yourself with your name. Point to it and say *"This is me. It's 12 o'clock and I am sitting by the river, eating a banana."*

Procedure

>> Give each student a piece of paper and a pencil and tell them to copy the picture on the board. Give them a limited time of about 4 minutes. They should include the stick drawing of the teacher.

>> Tell the students to add a drawing of themselves and label it. They should be in a specific place and doing something. Explain that if necessary they can add other elements to the picture. Explain that students shouldn't show their picture to anybody.

>> Write these two questions and answers on the board. If possible elicit the answers. *It's 12 o'clock in the park. Where are you? And what are you doing? I'm sitting by the river. I'm eating a banana.*

>> Explain that students should walk around the classroom speaking to their classmates. They should ask and answer the question on the board. Each time a student answers, they should draw that student in the picture, doing the action. Then they should label the student.

>> The activity finishes when each student has drawn and labeled all of their classmates in their picture; all doing different things in different parts of the picture.

Extension

Students can do a follow up writing activity. They should start with the following:

_It's 12 o'clock on Saturday and everybody is in the park. Everybody is doing something.

The teacher is sitting by the river eating a banana.

I am

... is_

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Display pictures and texts around the classroom.

Other versions

>> Change It's 12 o'clock in the park for Last Saturday at 12 o'clock ... and change the tense to the past continuous

>> Change It's 12 o'clock in the park for Next Saturday ... and change the tense to the future continuous.

>> For older students, make the activity a "scene of the crime" activity, with each student being a potential witness to a crime that has occurred in the park. You will need to change the question to Where were you and what were you doing when (somebody stole the bike)?

This is the text of the podcast at <http://www.listen-to-english.com/index.php?id=528>.