

Flashcards For Learning English



By



David Deubelbeiss

About the Author



David Deubelbeiss is a TESOL professor and teacher trainer presently living in North Bay, Ontario. He has traveled and taught around the world. A “working man’s teacher”, he enjoys red wine, good food, good conversation and just “being here”. Find out more about him through his [google profile](#).

About this book

Flashcards bring language learning to life. They really do.

How? Well, they take the constructivist principle that we learn by doing and put it into action. Students learn cooperatively and by bringing the classroom down to a small delivery level – students learn much more effectively.

The barriers to effective learning are many. But the greatest barrier is a student that just sits and listens. Language as a skill requires “doing”. Flashcards by their very “manipulative” nature, make this happen.

Find in these card sets, a lot of ground work on my part. Hopefully it will pay off in your classroom. Click on a set and print them out. Get the students cutting and playing many of the activities I’ve listed. Or, just let them decide how to use the cards. Let them teach themselves. Your faith in your student’s abilities will pay off. In both their learning and your own development as a student centered teacher.

All these sets (and more on [EFL Classroom 2.0](#)), have [Quizlet games](#) that students may access freely and play. The online games (under each set’s page) should be part of your curriculum and will really fortify the learning of the language.

The purchase of this book helps support a new model of textbook delivery – teachers helping teachers. It is supported by a large professional development community and an author that will respond to your needs. Your purchase supports all the activities to support practicing teachers through [EFL Classroom 2.0](#).

Thanks in advance, enjoy the book. Any feedback and comments much appreciated.

David Deubelbeiss

© 2011 by I’m Press





USING FLASHCARDS TO TEACH LANGUAGES

WHY?: Games are fun and motivational. They increase student talk time (production). Visuals add context to the language learning. They are quick and easy to use. They allow for repetition and proper scaffolding of the learning.

WHERE? Flashcards are now freely available all over the internet. Just download and print. (see the sites I've listed below or visit EFL Classroom's sharing area). Vocabulary power points can easily be printed [File – Print Preview – “x” slides/page – Print] and cut up by students for use. If you have the time, print an empty BINGO card and have the students draw/label their own cards! You can also just photocopy from books then cut these pictures up.

WHICH? Use flashcards in the L2! Either without a label or with a label on the back. If you print and they don't have labels – get your students to label them!

WHEN? Anytime! They can be used to assess student ability/knowledge. As a review or formative tool. As an “study” part of the lesson to practice language in a controlled fashion. Or just as a fun, “activating” part of a lesson.

- TIPS?**
- ** Laminate your “good” card sets.
 - ** Keep in labeled envelopes or zip lock bags.
 - ** Set up your classroom so it is easy for students to be grouped or spread out.
 - ** Have a strict set of signs and signals to manage students.
 - ** Model the game in front of the whole class with a few students. Go slow!
 - ** Get students to invent their own games!

HOW? There are literally a zillion ways to use flashcards to teach. Here are a few of them lumped into some main categories.

1. MEMORY

This is probably the most simple and repetitive type of game. There are many variations but they are of two sorts.

- a) Recall.** One student shows the student(s) a flashcard and the others try to make a sentence or simply state the name of the card. The student “teacher” checks on the back label and if correct puts in a “correct” pile. If incorrect, it is set aside for review later.
 - b) Memory Story.** One student picks up a card and makes a statement using some target language. For example. “Yesterday I went shopping and bought

The next student turns up a card and continues. “Yesterday I went shopping and bought a ... and a
 - c) Concentration.** There are two sets of flashcards. Either picture/picture or picture / word. Students attempt to turn over and match from both sets. If they do so, they may continue. The student with the most pairs at the end, wins. Here’s an online example. <http://tiny.cc/MZwhY>
 - d) Snap.** The cards are face up on the table. The teacher says a sentence and the first student to “snap” or slap the right card gets to keep it. The most cards at the end, wins. You can play this full class by putting large flashcards on the board and having students run up to the blackboard and slap the correct flashcard.
-

2. GRAMMAR

These games use some target language which the teacher models and puts in the board. Students play the game using the flashcards and the designated language structure. Many times, the language can be a closed question / answer (ex. Did you last night? – Yes, I did / No, I didn't)

Some example grammar structures:

Do you like / Do you usually / Do you have

Did you yesterday? Have you ever ? Will you tomorrow?

a) Go Fish. Use two sets. Students in groups of 3 or 4 ask each other questions using the target language. If the student asked has that card, they must give it and that student collects a pair. They may continue until they don't collect. If a student runs out of cards, they pick up some more cards to continue. Most pairs at the end wins.

b) Survey. Give each student a card. They survey others around the class using their vocabulary flashcard. Ex. Have you ever.....? Report back to the group or the class using the structure –

All
Most
Some of us
Few
None

c) Conversation prompt. There is one pile of cards in the middle. One student turns over a card and using the flashcard as a prompt – asks another student a question. That student responds with one sentence. The other students in the group must ask one follow up question each.

Some example prompts:

When did you last? / Have you ever? / Do you prefer Or?

If someone , what would you do? / What do you think about?

d) Find your match! Copy some flashcards in different numbers. 6 of one, 5 of one, 4 of one 3 of one etc... Give one card to each student. Using the target language on the board, the students must go around the classroom and find other students with a similar card. If they find a match, they link arms and continue trying to find others with a similar card. (Ex. “ I love What about you? “ “Oh, I love Bye.”) Alternatively –

students can choose their own response from the items brainstormed on the blackboard. Have them use a post it to create their own flashcard!

e) The “You Can” Game. A person in a group turns over a flashcard. They must make a statement/sentence using “can”. Ex. You can or An / A can..... Continue around the group awarding a point for each statement.

f) Guessing Game. Create some sets of flashcards with common people / places / things. One learner picks up a flashcard and describes it using

It is a thing that

It is a place where

It is a person who

The first student to correctly guess it, wins the card. Most cards when time is up, wins.

3. CLASSROOM ACTION GAMES

These games use flashcards to get students moving around the classroom and competing.

a) Charades. Bring a student to the front of the class. Show them a flashcard. They must act out the object / action. The other students guess or a team guesses as many as possible in one minute. The next team tries to beat them. Make sure they use full sentences! (ex. He is an elephant!) . After a whole class demonstration, get students doing this in small groups.

b) Pictionary. Same as charades only this time instead of acting out the flashcard, they must draw it. You can also have multiple teams drawing on the board – first team to guess the correct word wins.

c) Telephone Whisper. Put your students in rows. Show the last person in the row a flashcard. They must make a sentence with an adjective (ex. It is a huge elephant) and whisper it to the next person. Continue until it gets to the front of the class. That student writes the phrase on the board. If it is the same as the flashcard – a point is awarded.

4. OPEN ENDED GAMES

These games are for higher level students and give them an opportunity to use language in a meaningful and fuller manner.

a) Story Dominoes. One stack of cards in the middle. A student picks up a card and starts a story, stating one sentence. The next student picks up a card and continues the

story. And so on until the last card when the story concludes. Start again and see if the group can recall and repeat the story!

b) Liar, Liar pants on Fire! Each student in the group gets 3 flashcards. They must make a statement about each flashcard and their life. One must be a lie. The other students guess which one is the lie. Ex. (for animals): I like crocodiles. / I have seen a giraffe in real life. / I have kissed a dog. Which is the lie?

c) Making Connections. Use two sets of assorted flashcards. Spread them out into two groups. Students must make a sentence using a flashcard from both sides. Ex. *An elephant (a) doesn't like to swim(b).* Continue until all cards are matched.

d) Not like the others. Use a set of assorted flashcards. Students turn over 4 cards and put them face up in the middle. Students must make statements why one is different from the others using the phrase, *A/An is not like the others because* A point awarded for all logical answers. When students run out of statements, start with a new set of four flashcards.

e) Discussions Students turn over a card and state their opinion about the topic of the card. Go around the group with each student stating their opinion. Discuss.

WEB BASED FLASHCARD RESOURCES

<http://community.eflclassroom.com/page/quizlet-1>

Get hundreds of sets to download or your students can study on Quizlet, online.

