

# CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES TO USE WITH *ACADEMIC WORD LIST CARDS*

Most of the activities listed here are for practice and review rather than for introducing the vocabulary. The assumption is that this vocabulary is being introduced and practiced in the classroom with textbooks and worksheets. However, if you are looking for ways of introducing and doing controlled practice of the vocabulary, some of the activities from stage one and two of the *Self Study Activities to use with Academic Word List Cards* document can easily be adapted for classroom use. We have adapted Personalizing Parts of Speech here as an example.

## Personalizing Parts of Speech

Materials needed: half a deck of cards for each group of 4 students, learner's dictionaries *or* internet access (either computers or the students' mobile devices – this is a nice opportunity to tell them to take their phones out instead of putting them away!).

Explain to class: on each card, there are different forms listed for each of the words. Note that some of these word forms are quite different from the root word in meaning. Also note that sometimes one of the word forms is more common than the root word (the red star on each card shows which form is a more commonly used word).

1. The groups distribute the cards evenly amongst themselves.
2. Tell students that they begin by working by themselves. They should take one of the cards and search the different parts of speech in the dictionary to discover which parts of speech are common. If your card is "Create", for example, you will find that most of the parts of speech for that word are quite common (good learners' dictionaries show word frequency; high frequency words in the Macmillan dictionary, for example, are shown with a star system... any words with stars are words students definitely should know!).
3. Students can prepare to keep records by using a fresh page in their notebooks and creating three columns: word, common forms, example sentence.

Word	Common Forms	Example Sentences
Create	Creative...	Keiko wants to find a career that pays well and offers her the opportunity to be creative.

4. Now students should look for an example sentence for each of these common words. For "creative", for example, the Macmillan Dictionary has the example of "we offer people the opportunity to be creative". Students should change some of these sentences so that they are about one of their groupmates or classmates and then write them down in the third column.

The example sentence noted could become, “Keiko wants to find a career that pays well and offers her the opportunity to be creative”.

5. Students continue working independently until they have completed their cards.
6. Groups come together and share the information they found about word frequency and share the personalized sentences. They should decide on the best sentence written ABOUT each of the students in their group.
7. Feedback: ask groups to report the best sentences to the group.
8. Follow-up: ideally, all of the information on word frequency and example sentences would be pooled to create one master document. As the teacher, you could do this, or you could organize the students into doing it. After the preliminary compilation is done, you could do an error-feedback exercise, asking students to go through and decide which sentences they think have any errors. Do class feedback after and make sure the document is corrected. Once the final correction is done, the document should be made available to all students.

## VOCABULARY REVIEW GAMES

### What’s that word?

1. Divide students into teams of 4-6. Each team should divide into two, with half of the students facing the other half (A side and B side). Give each side 15 cards, which they should keep away from the eyes of the other side.
2. Tell students that they are going to have to make the other side say the words on their cards. They can describe the words, give example sentences, or anything else but they cannot say the word itself or any of its forms. It is going to be done in two rounds. First side A will be describing the words and side B will be guessing. You will time two minutes... Once the timing starts, Side A has five minutes to make Side B say as many of the words as they can. If Side B is stuck on a word, the card can be skipped. Stop students after two minutes and ask how many words each team got. Any of the words that they skipped or couldn’t get should go into a “problem pile”.
3. Repeat 2 again, this time with Side B explaining words and Side A guessing. After the end of the five minutes, poll the class to find out how many words they guessed and declare the winning team (the team that got the most words).
4. Collect the “problem cards” from the students. Now you can try to elicit the problem words from the entire group. You may wish to do further practice or revision activities later on these problem words.

### I know what you know

1. Put students in pairs. Give each student 15 cards, which they should not show their partner.
2. Write “My partner” at the top of the board, and underneath, write “definitely knows” on the left, “might know” and “doesn’t know”.

3. Give students a minute or two to think.... In that time they should sit and choose three cards for their partner. One card should be of a word they think their partner definitely knows, one that their partner might know and one that their partner doesn't know.
4. Once the time is up, pairs present their words and find out if their guesses were correct.
5. Students should then be given a few minutes to discuss the conversation questions on "doesn't know" the cards.

### Words for Stages of Life

1. Start slowly drawing a baby on the board. As you are drawing, ask students to shout out guesses as to what you are drawing.
2. Once the drawing is done, write "infancy" at the left of the board. Note to students that this is the first stage of life, and that it is followed by "childhood", then "youth", then "adulthood", then "old age". Write all five across the board, as column headings.
3. Have students sit in groups of 4-6. Each group gets a deck of cards. Students write the columns in their notebooks and then work independently to associate words from the deck of cards with the various stages of life. They should write their words under the appropriate columns. Reassure students that there is no correct answer – this exercise is about their own ideas and associations.
4. After about 5 minutes, tell students to stop and to share their groupings with each other.
5. Follow-up with the whole class... ask if there were any words that most of them associated with each of the categories (go category by category).

### These words are for me!

1. Put students in pairs. Give each pair half a deck of cards. Tell them that they should work on their own for about a minute to choose 5 cards that feature words that are "for them" (meaning that they like the words or they are words that they think are very useful, etc).
2. Once the students have chosen, they explain their choices to their partner.
3. Students can then write a paragraph using their 5 words. When they are done, they can read out their paragraph to their partner, but they should pause when they come to each of the five words, waiting for their partner to say the word for them.

### AWL Sentence Competition

1. Put students into groups of 4. Give each group a deck of cards. Tell students that they must work together to write sentences – in each sentence, they should use at least 2 words from the deck of cards. The sentences should also make sense and be grammatically correct. Tell them that they will get a point for each successful sentence and that they will get a bonus point if they use three words in a sentence. Assign a time limit.
2. Once the time is up, ask the groups to present their sentences to the class. You and the class should decide if each sentence makes sense and is grammatically correct.
3. Tally up each team's points and declare a winner!

## CONVERSATION GAMES

### Ask me this question!

1. Scatter the cards across a large surface, question side up.
2. Ask students to come up and choose 1-3 cards (depending on how long you want to spend on the activity). They should choose cards that have questions they themselves would like to answer.
3. Once students have chosen, students then get into pairs. Each student gives one card to their partner and the partner asks the question... then then student answers the question they chose. You might give a time limit, saying that you want the student to spend five minutes answering the question (their partner might jump in and ask follow up questions).
4. Once the five minutes are over, the partner student then gets to answer one of the questions they chose. If you have asked the students to choose more than one card, repeat the above for each card (you may want to have the students change partners for each round).

### I have a better question!

1. Distribute cards to students. Tell them to look at the question on the card and come up with a more interesting question using the same target word.
2. Students can then in pairs or small groups as each other the questions they have written.

### That is so true!

1. Scatter the cards across a large surface, quotation side up.
2. Ask students to come up, walk around and read the quotes. Give the students a time limit. At the end of the tie limit, they should choose a card with a quote that they think "is so true".
3. Students sit down in small groups and discuss the quotations and why they agree with them.

### That is so wrong!

1. Same procedure as above, but this time students choose a quotation that they disagree with.

