



# Straightforward

## Second edition

### The railway carriage game

by Jim Scrivener

1. Write out a number of slips of paper of some unusual (but not completely ridiculous) sentences. You will need at least one slip per student. Some examples:
  - You took it! You've stolen my newspaper! Where's my hat? I've lost my new green hat!
  - I've studied the history of this train line. It was built in 1940, you know. It's so hot in here! Bring me some water or I'll faint!
2. If possible, rearrange the seating so that students are sitting opposite each other (i.e. as in a railway carriage).
3. Hand out the sentence slips. Students must keep theirs totally secret. They should read their slip and memorize it exactly word for word.
4. Tell students how long the conversation will last (e.g. four minutes). Students should sit together in the "train carriage" as if they are strangers on a long journey together and start a conversation. Students can play themselves or roleplay any imaginary character they want.
5. Students should continue the conversation as naturally as possible. You can encourage them to include target vocabulary from the lesson (e.g. linkers such as that reminds me..., anyway, as I was saying..., by the way, etc.). At some point in the conversation they must say their sentence(s). Their aim is to do this so cleverly that nobody notices that they are saying what they had to say.
6. At the end, stop the conversations. Ask each student to write down what they think the original sentence given to each of their fellow travellers was.
7. If a student gets the gist of another traveller's original sentence correct, they get a point. Students also get points for each person in their carriage who did not spot their given sentence.