

Snap associations Units 5 – 8 Teacher's notes

Level: Pre-intermediate (equivalent to CEF levels A2 – B1)

Introduction & aim

This activity provides the opportunity to recycle a large amount of vocabulary. It is communicative and personalized and would be appropriate towards the end of a term before a test which includes a vocabulary section. It can be used with any class size from 8 to 88 and can last from about 30 minutes to an hour, depending on the procedures you follow.

Preparation

- 1 The students will need to see a set of pictures. The most economical way of doing this is to print a set of pictures onto an OHP transparency. Your pictures could be from magazines, the internet or from your personal collection. You will be dividing the class into groups of six, four or/and two. Black and white copies are fine.
- 2 Copy a sufficient number of word lists for every student in the class. The student worksheet includes a word list that you can use for Units 5 – 8 of *Straightforward* Pre-intermediate. The list contains important, high-frequency words (two stars and three stars) from the corresponding four units of the book.

Procedure

- 1 Divide the class into groups of two, four or six students. Distribute a word list to each student.
- 2 Tell the students (in their groups) to go through the words in the list, checking the words they know. They can then turn to other groups/students for help with words they are unsure about. Allow them to use dictionaries, if necessary, but for a maximum of five words only (otherwise, this will take up too much time, and it is preferable that the activity should remain collaborative). You may decide to allow students to use their mother tongue at this stage.
- 3 Show the students the pictures and ask them to look at the first word on their word list. Ask them if they can find a connection between this word and any of the pictures. Ask them to explain the connection. Alternatively, tell the class which picture *you* can associate with the first word on the list and explain why. It is important to demonstrate that there are *no* right answers. Any association, however personal, is fine. Go through four or five words from the list with the class in this way. Use only English and insist that everyone do the same.
- 4 Tell the students to continue the association activity with the rest of the words on their list. Tell them that if they can't find associations for only some words, it doesn't matter. Remind them to use English only. Monitor the students' work and make notes of any problems they have (e.g. pronunciation, syntax, colligation) with the words on their lists. You can use your notes for a correction slot at the end of the lesson.
- 5 Ask the students which words they found difficult to associate with any of the pictures. Invite suggestions from the class and/or provide a suggestion yourself.
- 6 Tell the students (in their groups) to choose one of the photos. Give them a time limit (e.g. five minutes): they must find as many words as possible from their lists that they can associate with the photo they have chosen. Remind them to do this in English. Monitor their work.

7 Ask the groups how many associations they were able to find. Go through the suggestions of one or two groups with the whole class. Correct errors connected with the use of the target words.

Variations

- Adapt the word list! Feel free to change items or reduce the number.
- Change the photos. Use your own photos, ask students to bring in interesting photos of their own, or tear attractive pictures out of a magazine
- If you use your own photos, it would perhaps be appropriate to end the activity by asking the students who they the people in the photos are and then explaining the images to the class.
- Instead of copying word lists, you could dictate a set of words. You could then tell the students to check their spelling in the word lists of the Language Reference pages of *Straightforward*.
- With some classes, you may prefer to get the students to write their associations, instead of simply talking about them.
- Extend stage 6 by mixing the groups. Half the students from every group should join a different group. The new groups talk through the picture and associations they have found.