Container Cards
(Elementary Vocabulary Games –Jill Hadfield; 1998: 79)

6. Combining Activities

These games ask participants to act on certain information in order to arrange themselves in groups according to a theme given by the teacher.

• **Categories**

Level: Beginner to Advanced

Materials: cards

Procedure: This is a whole class activity. Before the activity starts I post different topics in each of the four corners of the classroom. The topics can be: *fruit, vegetable, drink* etc. Each participant gets three cards with a picture on it. The cards represent a word from the posted topics. When I call out a word, the students have to check their cards whether they have it. If yes then they go to the corner that their picture belongs to. After each

student has used his or her car they repeat their words like: *The apple is a fruit.*

Object of the Game: to find out what the pictures represent and where they belong to. It is a good practice activity.

Possible Themes: family members, countries and nationalities, faces, adjectives to describe people, animals, clothing articles, colors, numbers, seasons, days of the week, months of the year, food and drink, hobbies and sports, everyday actions, means of transportation, jobs, rooms in the house and furniture, school subjects or school supplies, places in a town, shops, weather related words, materials.

Word Grouping

Write the words from the list in the right boxes according to their meaning

to like	to beat	to sell	to run

to dream	to give	to mean	to come

to look	to walk	to talk	to hear

to love	to shout	to begin	to gossip

initiate – fancy – be up in clouds – desire – cherish – prefer – be moonstruck – fantasize – advertise – commerce – barter – put up for sale – express – crazy about – suggest – indicate – glance – babble – say – communicate – gaze – peek – admire – bring about

bang
bolt
smack
hit
hasten
appear
arrive
hand over
grant
perceive
deliver
go on foot
chitchat
show up
scorch
holler
traverse
listen
march
yell
pick up
roar
babble

iSLCollective.com

https://en.islcollective.com

7. Arranging Games/ Ordering Games

Players must arrange the acquired information in a specific order. Items to be arranged can be pictures, events in a text, or even the players themselves.

• **Everyday Actions**

Level: Beginner to Advanced

Materials: story cards, action cards

Procedure: Students work in pairs. Each pair gets a story card with Sanjay's day and its set of action cards (in muddled order). One student should take the story the other should spread the cards out in front of her. The first student has to read the story, while the second arranges the pictures in order to tell the story. The purpose of the game is to get the pictures arranged in the same order as the story. When they have finished, they can put the story away, and retell it from memory using the pictures. They can check as they go by turning the pictures over to see the words on the back. Then repeat the activity with another story, with the second student telling the story this time.

Objective of the Activity: to acquire vocabulary by associating the image with the spoken text, and order them sequentially.

Possible Themes: family members, countries and nationalities, faces, adjectives to describe people, animals, clothing articles, colors, numbers, seasons, days of the week, months of the year, food and drink, hobbies and sports, everyday actions, means of transportation, jobs, rooms in the house and furniture, school subjects or school supplies, places in a town, shops, weather related words, materials.

Story 1: San jay's Day

Sanjay's alarm clock rings at 7.00, but he usually turns over and goes back to sleep because he's tired. Sometimes, he throws the alarm clock across the room. So he wakes up late and runs into the bathroom to wash and brush his teeth. He doesn't have time to have a shower. He goes downstairs and turns the radio on to listen to music while he has breakfast. He doesn't have time to eat and he has to drink his tea in a hurry, because he's always so late. He leaves the house and runs to the bus stop to catch his bus. He gets to college at 9.00 (well, usually at 9.20!) and finishes at 4.00. He comes home at about 4.30 and has dinner. After dinner, he sometimes watches TV, but he usually goes out with friends. He *comes ho-me* late - 2 or 3 o'clock sometimes - and goes to bed and sleeps at once.

Everyday Actions - Story and Action cards
(Elementary Vocabulary Games - Jill Hadfield; 1998: 86)

• **Label it!**

Level: Beginner to Advanced

Materials: written cards

Procedure: This works well with beginners of all ages who need an introduction to basic vocabulary. To teach primary school students the names of objects found in the classroom, I label everything with an index card that has the item's name on it. Then I have them repeat what I read as they point to the item. Next time, I remove the cards and go through them one at a time and we place them on the correct item together. For the third time, I let them label whatever they can on their own. This can be done either individually or in pairs. We continue this for a few days. When they are able to label most of the items without help, I trick them and label the cards incorrectly. Then they have to arrange the labels.

Objective of the Activity: to learn and practise vocabulary.

Possible Themes: family members, countries and nationalities, faces, adjectives to describe people, animals, clothing articles, colors, numbers, seasons, days of the week, seasons, months of the year, food and drink, hobbies and sports, everyday actions, means of transportation, jobs, rooms in the house and furniture, school subjects or school supplies, places in a town, shops, weather related words, materials.

8.   **Board Games or Card Games**

These are familiar game types where the player who collects the most cards or gets rid of the cards first, is the winner. In the case of the board games the winner is the player who lands first on Finish.

• **Board Game!**

Level: Beginner to Advanced

Materials: board game, dice, beans or buttons

Procedure: Students play it in groups of four. The players put their buttons on the square Number 1. The first student throws the dice and moves his button ahead to the corresponding number of squares. The student says the name of the animal according to the picture or follows the instructions and goes to the mentioned word. Example: *This is*

a grey rabbit. If the answer is correct, the student stays, if the answer is incorrect, he has to go back where he came from. The first student who lands on *home* or surpasses it is the winner.

Objective of the Activity: to review vocabulary items.

Possible Themes: family members, countries and nationalities, faces, adjectives to describe people, animals, clothing articles, colors, numbers, seasons, days of the week, seasons, months of the year, food and drink, hobbies and sports, everyday actions, means of transportation, jobs, rooms in the house and furniture, school subjects or school supplies, places in a town, shops, weather related words, materials.

https://en.islcollective.com

31
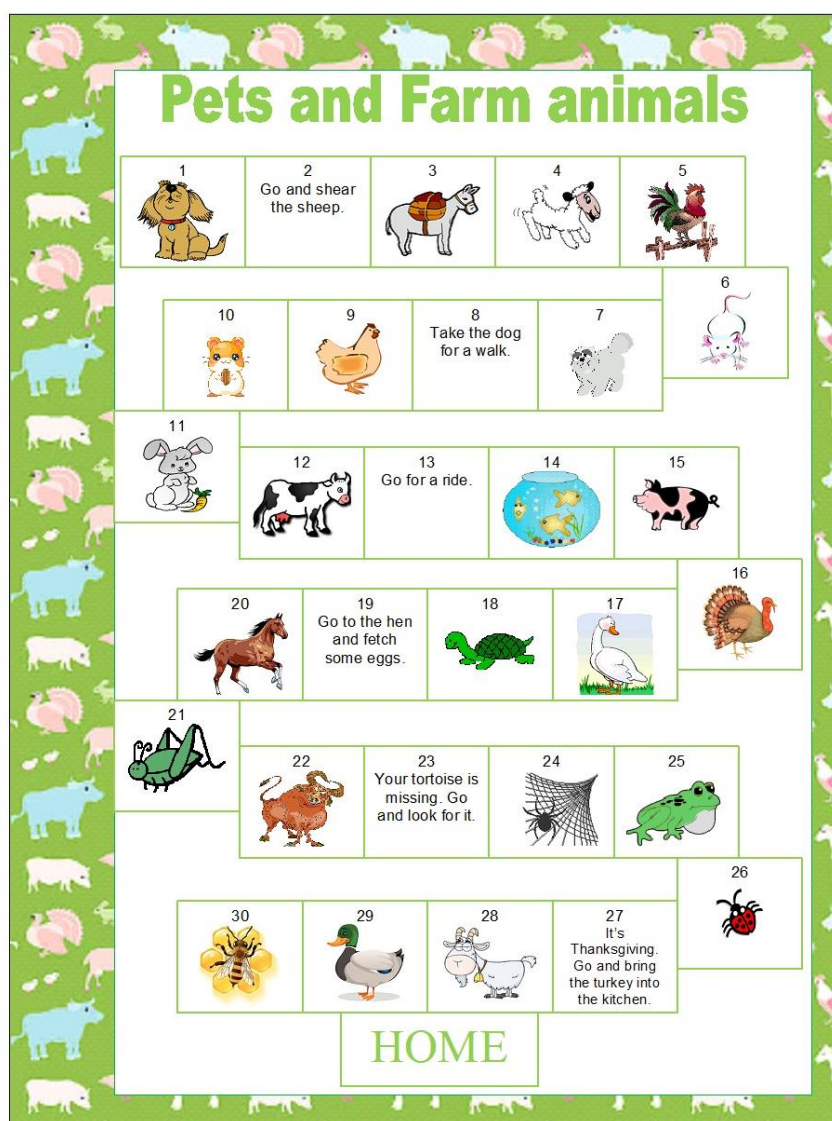
• **Card Domino Game!**

Level: Beginner to Advanced

Materials: cards

Procedure: Groups of three to four students play the game. Each student has eight or six cards.

The one to get the *Starting card* puts his card on the table. Reads the question aloud.

The student with the card that has the answer puts it down on the table, below the first card. The student then reads the new question and the student with the correct answer places his card on the desk. And so it goes till one student runs out of cards. This child is the winner.

Objective of the Activity: to remember newly learned words.

Possible Themes: family members, countries and nationalities, faces, adjectives to describe people, animals, clothing articles, colors, numbers, seasons, days of the week, seasons, months of the year, food and drink, hobbies and sports, everyday actions, means of transportation, jobs, rooms in the house and furniture, school subjects or school supplies, places in a town, shops, weather related words, materials.

CARD GAME Elementary 1

(Starting Card)
It is something a spider makes.

It is a fruit. It is orange.

It is something you can ride.

What says: "Meow"?

"I look like a star."

It is nice when it is raining.

It can roll and you kick it!

You get it when it is your birthday.

I am not a girl!

https://en.islcollective.com

9. Puzzle-solving Activities

In puzzle solving activities players in the game share information in order to solve a puzzle or a mystery.

• **Drawing!**

Level: Beginner to Advanced

Materials: paper, writing utensil, and other pictures

Procedure: This activity can be done in pairs or groups. When students are working in pairs one member of the pair should have a blank piece of paper and colored pencils. The other child has got a picture to describe. The partner with the picture then starts to describe it to his/her partner. All the while, either member can ask or give clarifying information based on how the description is going.

When working in groups, I divide the students into teams of three. Each person in the group has a different role: drawer, talker and viewer. The drawer stands with his/her back to the talker and viewer, and may not talk. He/she takes directions from the talker and attempts to recreate a picture. The talker describes to the drawer the picture he has got. The viewer may help the other two members with questioning. The game ends when the viewer is satisfied with the drawing. When the groups are done we hang all the drawings up on the board and ask questions.

Objective of the Activity: to practice team work, to read in the target language, to increase vocabulary and to solve puzzles and clues.

Possible Themes: family members, countries and nationalities, body parts, adjectives to describe people, animals, clothing articles, colors, numbers, seasons, days of the week, seasons, months of the year, food and drink, hobbies and sports, everyday actions, means of transportation, jobs, rooms in the house and furniture, school subjects or school supplies, places in a town, shops, weather related words, materials.

• **Unscramble**

Level: Beginner to Advanced

Materials: whiteboard

Procedure: This is a familiar game mostly used as a team game. I write a word on the board that has all its letters mixed up. e.g. *msummre-summer*. Students have to unscramble the word and shout out the answer to win a point.

Objective of the Activity: to practice vocabulary.

Possible Themes: family members, countries and nationalities, faces, adjectives to describe people, animals, clothing articles, colors, numbers, seasons, days of the week, seasons, months of the year, food and drink, hobbies and sports, everyday actions, means of transportation, jobs, rooms in the house and furniture, school subjects or school supplies, places in a town, shops, weather related words, materials

The games I have discussed above fall under a category, and the majority of them require reusable or disposable resources. This means that, when playing one of these games or a similar one, formerly prepared copies and other materials are necessary. It is certainly worthwhile to do it but it often happens that we need a game to fill in the extra time at the end of the class or a game to vary an exercise or topic. In such situations there is usually no time to prepare any teaching tool, so I use simple games to create the efficiency and diversity of the lesson. The following games that I will present are played with pleasure by students without any specific preparation or plan.

My Favorite Vocabulary Games

Ball Pass

Students sit in a circle. I use a ball and toss it to one student. As I pass the ball I start saying one English word. The student then throws to another student and says a different English word. If a student drops the ball, he/she is out. And the game keeps going until we have one winner. It can be played with different categories, such as Food, Animals, Numbers, and Colors Etc.

Variations: While passing the ball students must say a thing they like and repeat what they heard from their classmates. Example: *I like playing football, Peter likes playing basketball and Mary likes swimming.*

Another variation of the game is when I choose a word from a category and the student sitting next to me takes the last letter of that word and makes a new word starting with that letter.

Card Game

We sit in a circle. I lay out flashcards face down on the floor. Students choose a card and identify the flashcard. If they name the card correctly they keep the card but if it is incorrect the card remains on the floor. When all the cards have been chosen we count who has the most cards to see who the winner is.

Charades

A student comes to the front of the class and I show a flashcard or whisper a word to that student. The student then acts out that word and the first student to guess can be the next player. This works very well with action verbs, sports or jobs.

Variation: I divide the class up into teams - the first student to guess wins a point for his/her team.

Draw it

We make two or three teams**.** I say a vocabulary word and the groups have to draw. If the drawing is correct then the groups roll a dice for points. This game can be played 2 ways: The fastest person to draw the picture rolls the dice. Or the other way is to allow any student to roll the dice as long as the picture is recognizable and correct.

Guess It

I blindfold a student and give him/her an object to feel. The student must guess what the object is just by feeling its shape. Students must use the structure *Is it a/an....?*

Variation: A variation of the game is when we hide the object in a bag so students can not see what it is.

Hangman

It is a familiar game for reviewing vocabulary from previous lessons. It can be played either as a whole class activity or as pair or a team game. I give the class a category, such as food, animals, numbers etc. and each pair plays hangman together deciding on the words themselves.

I spy

This is also a favorite game. I say: *I spy with my little eye something that begins with B.* Students tries to guess what it is.

Odd-One-Out

I write three or four words on the board. Students must circle the odd-one-out e.g. apple - pear - **carrot** - peach. Sometimes I encourage students to come up with their own odd-one-out words to write on the board – in teams they come to the board and solve each others exercise.

The Race

It is basically a QUIZ game in which I ask children questions from the target vocabulary, like: *How many pencils are in my hand?* or I simply draw items on the board make animal noises so the participants can guess. It is usually played in small groups. The members of the group stand up and with each correct answer they get closer to the board. The student who will approach the goal line first, in this case the board is the winner.

True or False

I put a length of rope on the floor. On one side of the rope is True and on the other side is False. I hold up an object or flashcard and say a word. If students think that I have said the correct word for the card, they jump on to the True side, if not they jump on to the False side. Incorrect students sit out until the next game.

What Am I Thinking Of?

Students work in pairs and have to think of an object. Each student should write 5-10 words describing the object on a piece of paper. When the time is up, the students swap papers and try to figure out what the other person described. The first team to have both words guessed correctly wins.

What is Missing?

I place a number of objects or pictures in front of the students. They need a few moments to memorize the objects and then they close their eyes. I take away one of the objects or pictures. The students open their eyes again and check what they can see. The first student to guess the missing object can win a point. The student with the most points is the winner.

Interactive Vocabulary Games

Apart from the traditional games of Hangman, Simon Says, or the games I have mentioned above, we can use other type of games and tools to increase students' meaningful engagement in their learning process. In the case of 21st century children things are different. There are worries about the reduction of old-fashioned activities and games in favour of time spent in front of the computer. Today's young learners are a generation who are at ease with technological tools. Technology is a huge part of their lives because they grow up with them and they are very much accustomed to digital tools. This leads to the fact that students' rave about computer games and the use of digital tools are more common in schools. When I started teaching English computers were the trendiest digital tools we could use for teaching. Nowadays not only computers but various other learning and teaching tools and strategies are used thanks to the availability of technology. This opportunity has allowed for diverse and active teaching approaches like: web-based instructions, videos and interactive online games.

As time passes and as technology evolves, teachers use more and more often digital games or interactive online games. Thanks to the interactive whiteboard (IWB), a lot of interactive activities are available for the whole class. With the help of the IWB we can provide an interactive environment with visual and immediate feedback, and several other features, which allow the interactive games to become a great environment for practicing, creativity, persistence, motivation and other skills, which are very important in the fast-paced life of the 21st century. Students get sometimes bored of the traditional pen and paper exercises or activities but the touch screen technology of the IWB makes English classes more interesting for students. Seeing the advantages of this unique digital tool I started using it with my students. The IWB is suitable for all age groups and learners of all ages love using it. They enjoy using their fingers to write and draw on the interactive screen and young learners even call it magic board.

When teaching English vocabulary with games, this magic device becomes a primary tool. Students feel excited and invest more in their work as they have to come out to the front of the class and interact with the board. They enjoy drawing, writing, moving images or objects on the board. While playing games on the IWB students become active learners and because the games are enjoyable, the players will not mind to play the same spot again until having learnt the correct word. There are different types
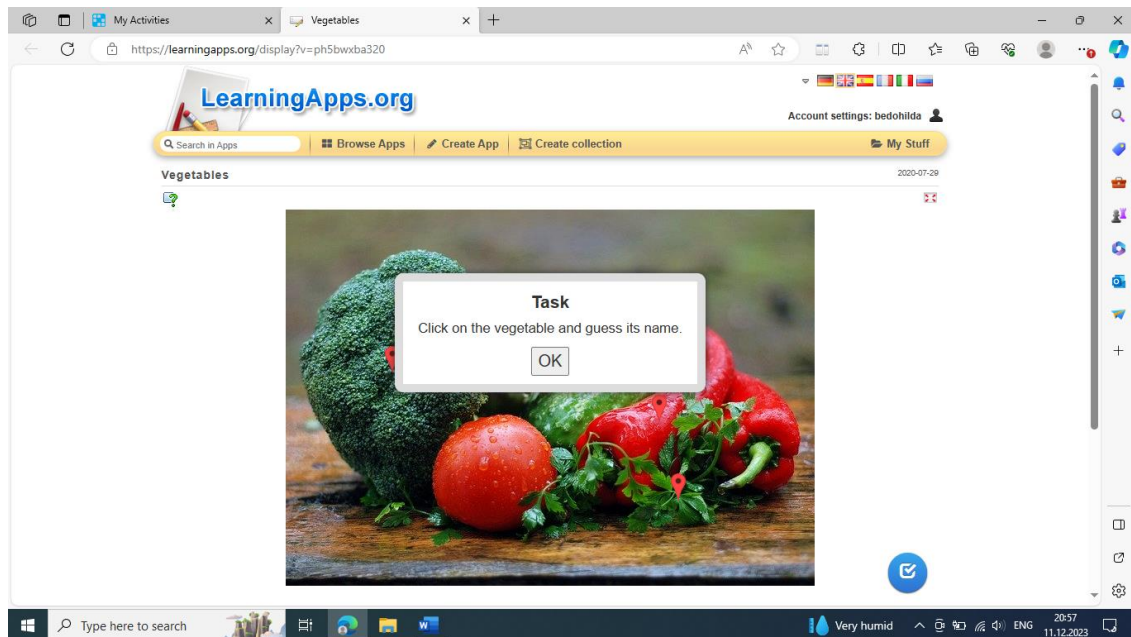
of interactive games online for vocabulary development. We very often use memory games, concentration games, labeling games, word search, crossword puzzle, picture quiz etc.
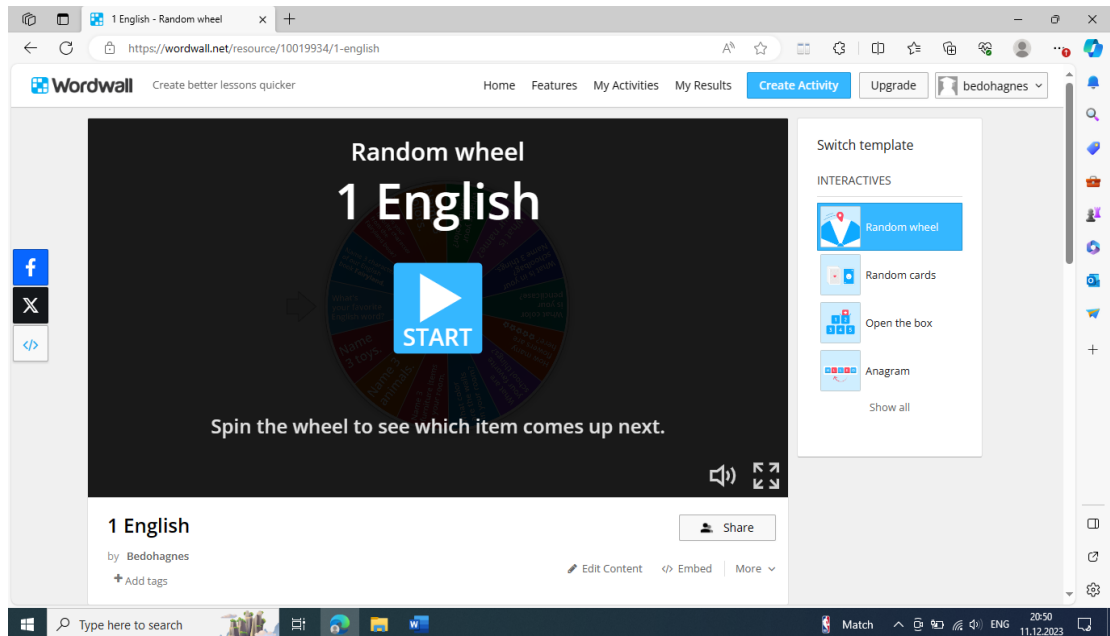
[1 English - Random wheel (wordwall.net)](https://wordwall.net/resource/10019934/1-english)

http://www.eslgamesworld.com

Based on the games and their description above, it seems clear that games can and should be used as a teaching method when teaching languages. Most of the games that have been presented are played in pairs or groups that give students a chance to be more active, while they usually place the teacher in a background role. Due to the change that has occurred in teaching, where students have been becoming much more active in the whole learning process, games work well as a class activity. In these activities, the teacher's role is that of monitor and resource centre, while moving from group to group, she/he is listening, noting errors, but not interrupting or correcting as this interrupts fluency and ruins the atmosphere. Working on their own allows the students to take on more responsibility. They are motivated to take risks and actions, persevere through failures, set and achieve goals, and devote attention, time, and effort to acquiring knowledge and skills.

All in all, games motivate children's learning and show the extent to which their language skills can improve through play. As Brougère says:

> Playing is a medium, a format to seduce the child; we must refrain from discouraging him/her with studies that are unsuited for his/her age: This softer way of communicating studies will make the latter look like a game and not work. For at this age, it is necessary to fool them with seductive carrots since they yet cannot understand the benefits, the prestige and the pleasure that studies may provide them in their future. The child is not able to foresee the benefits that studies, learning to read and write, speaking a foreign language represent for him/her. Therefore he/she must be given the impression that he/she is playing.
>
> http://www.academicjournals.org

Works Cited

Cameron, Lynne. *Teaching Languages to Young Learners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Read, Carol. *500 Activities for the Primary Classroom: Immediate Ideas and Solutions*. Oxford: Macmillan Publishers, 2007.

Harmer, Jeremy. *The Practice of English Language Teaching* (3rd Edition) Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 2001.

Hadfield, Jill and Hadfield, Charles. *Introduction to Teaching English*, Oxford: University Press, 2008.

Hadfield, Jill. *Elementary Vocabulary Games Teachers Resource Book: A Collection of Vocabulary Games and Activities for Elementary Students of English*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited, 1998.

Hadfield, Jill. *Intermediate vocabulary games*. Harlow, Essex: Longman, 1999.

Laarsen-Freeman, Diane. *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Lewis, Gordon and Bedson, Günther.*Games for Children*. Oxford University Press, 1999.

Littlewood, William. *Foreign and second language learning: Language acquisition research and its implications for the classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Nation, Paul. *New Ways in Teaching Vocabulary*. TESOL., 1994.

Pincas, Anita. *Memory and foreign language learning*, MET 5/4, 1996.

Seal, Bernard D., *Vocabulary learning and teaching*, in Celce-Murcia, M. (Ed.) *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language (*2nd Ed.), Boston, MA: Heinle & Heinle, 1991.

Stronge, H. James. *Qualities of Effective Teachers*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision &   Curriculum Development; 2nd edition, 2007.

Zoltán, Dörnyei and Tim, Murphey. *Group Dynamics in the Language Classroom,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Wright, Tony. *Roles of Teachers and Learners*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Internet sources

https://en.islcollective.com/

http://www.funenglishgames.com/

http://www.eslgamesworld.com

http://www.academicjournals.org