

Picture-Based Activities for English Language Learning



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Picture-Based Activities for English Language Learning

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Introduction

Parents know that reading picture books aloud is an effective strategy for helping infants and toddlers acquire vocabulary and language structures. Print journalists, newscasters and advertisers all use pictures to attract the attention of adult audiences and to convey messages and information. Similarly, teachers of English to second language learners know that language learning is enhanced by engaging multiple senses – sound, sight, and touch – in classroom instruction. Pictures connect spoken and printed words to known objects. In addition to their practical function of conveying information, pictures are fun and interesting. Adults enjoy looking at pictures of people of every shape, size, color, age and attire. They enjoy observing the details that appear in backgrounds of photos – objects shown in kitchens, on store shelves, in scenes of a busy downtown. They enjoy speculating on how the images shown in pictures compare to those in their own lives. This booklet focuses on how level-appropriate pictures – in particular those clipped from magazines – can be an indispensable tool for teachers of ESL adults.

From the teacher's perspective, pictures provide an interesting way to extend textbook activities. Due to space and cost limitations, a textbook might provide simple line drawings and three to five instances for learners to practice target language elements. However, using a folder with 10-20 pictures illustrating the same topic, a teacher can expand upon the textbook and provide additional practice in a colorful and engaging way. Picture activities add variety and new ways of interaction in adult ESL classrooms. Furthermore, pictures provide a vehicle around which students can jump off into non-scripted, free form conversation as they discuss the pictures themselves or connections that pictures make to the learners' lives.

The thirty activities in this booklet demonstrate activities for teaching ESL listening, vocabulary acquisition, grammar, reading, writing, critical thinking, and speaking fluency. These activities by no means exhaust all the ways in which pictures can be used to enhance adult ESL instruction. Teachers can use these activities as described and also as starting points for developing additional creative ways to enliven their ESL classrooms with picture-based activities.

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Best Practices Support



ESL best practices support the use of pictures with adult learners. In their article *Beginning to Work with Adult English Language Learners: Some Considerations* MaryAnn Cunningham Florez and Miriam Burt described instructional approaches that support second language development in adults. They write:

Use visuals to support your instruction. *English language learners need context in their learning process. Using gestures, expressions, pictures, and realia makes words and concepts concrete and connections more obvious and memorable.*

Similarly, Grace Massey Holt, in her article, *Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners*, includes “*pictures or photographs: personal, magazine, and others*” as the third item in her list of appropriate classroom materials for beginning level ESL learners.

The *Standards for Adult Education ESOL Programs* (2003) prepared by the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) identifies standards which top practitioners nationwide agree represent components of a quality adult ESOL program. In Section 3: Instruction, Standard F reads:

Instructional activities are varied to address the different learning styles (e.g., aural, oral, visual, kinesthetic) and special learning needs of the learners.

The second measure of this instructional standard reads:

In presenting new information or language patterns to the learners, the instructor supports a verbal presentation with appropriate visuals or print materials and a physical demonstration.

Using activities such as the ones described in this collection - *Picture Activities for English Language Learning* - can help teachers utilize best practices in their classrooms and conform to this TESOL professional standard on instruction.

References:

Florez, M., Burt, M., (2001). *Beginning to Work with Adult English Language Learners: Some Considerations*. Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) Accessed 10-20-07 from: http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/beginQA.html

Holt, G. (1995) *Teaching Low-Level Adult ESL Learners* Center for Adult English Language Acquisition (CAELA) Accessed 10-20-07 from: http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/digests/HOLT.html

Standards for Adult Education ESOL Programs (2003) Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Alexandria, VA ISBN: 1-931185-03-4

Tips for Teachers –



Obtaining pictures

Magazines are a rich source of pictures for ESL adult learners. No matter what the subject matter of the magazine you're sure to find interesting pictures in advertisements or accompanying the articles. Gather magazines from friends and family. Public libraries often give old copies for free or a nominal cost. Keep a stack of magazines and a pair of scissors in your car – you can clip photos while waiting for a doctor's appointment or waiting for your kids to finish soccer practice. If you can't find the picture you need to practice a certain language purpose, search for free clip art or other Internet resources.

Preparing pictures for classroom use

Trim your pictures to delete extraneous objects/people and to provide clean edges.

Words that appear on magazine pictures can be distracting to learners. If the print is on the edges, clip it off. If the print is in the center of the picture, trace over the letters with a fine-tipped marker that matches the color of the photo background. Alternatively, cut a strip of matching background from the edge of the photo to tape over print that appears in the center of the photo. Sometimes you may want to keep the print – it depends on how you will use the photo in a classroom activity.

Some teachers affix their pictures to construction paper. This gives pictures a nice, clean look and makes the pictures more rigid so they hold up better to frequent handling. However, this is time consuming and not always necessary.

Organizing picture files

A large picture collection can be overwhelming and not useful unless the pictures are organized. Sort your pictures into file folders according to life skill topic, language skill or classroom activity. Some possible folders are:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupations • Weather and Seasons • Clothing • Health/Illness • Housing • Family, friends, colleagues • Transportation • Sports • Consumer Goods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions/Verbs • Emotions • Faces/Bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture Halves • Look and Write a Story • Miscellaneous (and to be filed)
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Picture activities within the lesson plan

In general, the activities in this booklet are best used in the “practice” and “application” phases of an ESL lesson. That is, learners should already have been introduced to the vocabulary and language structures they will practice in the course of the picture activity. A limited number of vocabulary words, pertinent to the specific pictures you choose, may need to be pre-taught immediately before the activity. Some activities in the “VOCABULARY” section can be used both to introduce and reinforce new vocabulary.

Pictures and pre-literate learners

Pre-literate learners are those whose first language does not have a written form. These learners may come from cultures and/or school systems where students are taught orally rather than through graphic representations of physical objects. For these learners, line art is often not understood and, therefore, not a useful classroom tool. These learners may need to have a gradual progression from actual objects, to color magazine pictures of objects, to line drawings of objects. Skilled teachers of pre-literate learners note that the most successful pictures for use with pre-literate learners are photos of the learners themselves, their family members, objects in their own homes, etc. Thus, exercise caution when using the activities described in this packet if your learners are pre-literate.

Pictures in multi-level instruction

When using pictures, learners at different proficiency levels can be given different tasks while working with the same sets of pictures. Put learners together in pairs or groups at the same level of proficiency. Assign each pair a level-appropriate task. Rotate the pictures to each group.

Pictures and adult education assessments

Two assessments commonly used in adult education – BEST Plus and CASAS Functional Writing Assessment – require learners to describe pictures orally or in writing. ESL teachers can prepare learners for those assessments by using pictures in the classroom. Include activities that require learners not just to state who the main character in a picture is or what the main action is, but to describe the picture in detail and even to speculate beyond the picture. Learners can practice answering questions such as: Where and when does the picture take place? Who is in the picture? What are they wearing? What are each of the characters doing? Why are they doing those activities? How do the different people in the picture relate to each other? What probably happened before the picture was taken? What will likely happen after the picture?

Picture-based activities for LISTENING PRACTICE



Picture Descriptions

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To understand English question words and to respond appropriately. To relate aural cues to visual information.</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Beginning, Intermediate</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Look and Write a Story, Miscellaneous</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Large magazine photo or textbook illustrations that shows a specific setting (a city, park, kitchen, school, office, hospital, store etc) and several people engaged in one or a variety of activities.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Listening, speaking, writing</i>
<u>Communication task:</u>	<i>Ask and answer questions</i>

Show the picture to the entire class (or provide each student with a photocopy) and ask a series of Wh-, yes/no, and “or” (choice) questions related to the picture. Elicit responses from learners. Some responses will be based on direct evidence in the picture (e.g. “How many children are there?”); other responses will be imagined or inferred (“Why does he look so unhappy?”). For additional practice, put learners in pairs. Members of the pair each have a turn being the “teacher” who asks questions about a picture and the “learner” who answers the questions. Rotate the pictures among the pairs to give additional practice.

Extension activity: Have learners write a description of the picture.

Picture Description – That’s Not Right!

<u>Objectives:</u>	<i>To hear details. To relate aural cues to visual information. To repair communication breakdowns. To make appropriate conversation.</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>All</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Look and Write a Story, Miscellaneous</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Large magazine photo or textbook illustration that shows a specific setting (a city, park, kitchen, school, office, hospital, store etc) and several people engaged in one or a variety of activities.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Listening, speaking, writing</i>
<u>Communication task:</u>	<i>Politely correct a person’s mistake.</i>

Find a large magazine photo or textbook illustration that shows a specific setting (a city, park, kitchen, school, office, hospital, store etc) and several people engaged in one or a variety of activities. Have each learner make a 2” x 2” card, labeled “*That’s not right!*” Show the picture to the entire class (or provide each student with a photocopy). Pre-teach any key vocabulary. Give learners a few minutes to study the picture. Explain to learners that you’re going to describe the picture. If you make any mistakes, they should hold up their “*That’s not right!*” card. Orally describe the picture, using level-appropriate vocabulary and sentences, occasionally stating

something that is not true about the picture. For example, if the picture has two boys, you might say *three* boys. Or if a person in the picture is running, you might say *swimming*. Learners listen and when they hear a discrepancy between the oral account and the actual picture, they raise their card. Call on learners to say a corrected statement about the picture. For higher-level learners, teach the politeness strategies, “*I think you meant to say _____.*” or “*I think you said _____.*” *Did you mean to say _____?*”

Extension activity: Have learners write a description of the picture.

Picture-based activities for VOCABULARY DEVELOPMENT



Vocabulary Bingo

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To reinforce and assess vocabulary knowledge</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>All</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Appropriate for the life skill being studied. Examples: symptoms of common illnesses, furniture, items of clothing, weather and seasons, occupations, emotions/ facial expressions, household products, sports, actions/verbs.</i>
<u>Type of pictures:</u>	<i>Sets of 9, 16, or 25 pictures illustrating learned vocabulary. Pictures should be large enough for all students to see when displayed from the front of the room.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Listening, pronunciation</i>

Provide, or have learners draw, blank 3 x 3, 4 x 4 or 5 x 5 bingo grids with squares large enough to easily write vocabulary words. Write on the board, or dictate aloud, a list of 9, 16 or 25 key vocabulary words the learners have been studying within the given life skill unit or topic of study. Show learners how to randomly distribute the words through their grid. Give each learner a small handful of dried beans to use as markers. Remind learners that this is a silent game – they shouldn't call out or whisper the words to classmates. From the front of the class, show learners large magazine pictures one by one that illustrate the key vocabulary words. Learners match the word on the bingo grid with the picture shown by the teacher and put a bean on the bingo grid. When learners have 3, 4 or 5 beans in a row, they call out "Bingo". Have the learner read aloud their words so you can monitor pronunciation. Do not stop the game after the first person gets a bingo. Continue playing while everyone is engaged and until all or almost all learners have had a chance to read aloud a bingo.

Picture Sort

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To introduce and expand vocabulary</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Beginning</i>
<u>Picture File:</u>	<i>Appropriate for the life skill topic being studied</i>
<u>Type of pictures:</u>	<i>Collections of pictures illustrating target vocabulary.</i>

Select a wide variety of pictures that can be sorted into specific categories. For example, pictures of occupations can be sorted by those that occur in an office, a school, a factory, a retail store, a construction project, a hospital, etc. Pictures of furniture and household appliances can be sorted into those found in the kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, living room, garage, etc. Pictures of activities can be sorted according to the four seasons. Clothing can be sorted by function – officewear, weekend/leisurewear, job interview outfits, fancy evening attire, summer clothes, winter clothes. Give stacks of pictures to pairs or small groups of learners. On the whiteboard, write the categories for sorting. Have learners sort the pictures and then indicate which pictures they don't know the words for. For unknown words, tape the picture to the whiteboard (or wall poster for the category) and print the word next to the picture. Learners copy the words.

Describing People

<u>Objective:</u>	To describe the physical features of people.
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	Beginning
<u>Picture file:</u>	Faces/Bodies
<u>Type of picture:</u>	Magazine pictures of people with clearly visible faces.
<u>Language skills:</u>	Speaking

Label four columns across the whiteboard: Age, Body, Hair, Face. Elicit and/or teach vocabulary words from learners for each column as follows:

Age: old, young, middle-aged, baby, child, teenager, adult, senior

Body: tall, short, average height, thin, heavy, average weight

Hair: long, short, curly, straight, blond, black, red, brown, brunette, gray, bald

Face: (eye colors), has a beard, wears glasses, has freckles, has thick eyebrows, thin/thick lips

Show a large magazine photo of a person. Model for the class a description of the person using appropriate vocabulary from each column.

Put learners in pairs. Give each pair a stack of 5-6 magazine pictures of people. Learners take turns describing the people in their pictures. Rotate the stacks of pictures among the pairs to give more practice.

Extension: Have learners write descriptions of selected pictures.

Looking for Clothes

<u>Objective:</u>	To express a need. To identify an item of clothing and its color. To express a like or dislike.
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	Beginning
<u>Picture file:</u>	Clothing
<u>Type of picture:</u>	Magazine pictures or textbook illustrations of clothing.
<u>Language skills:</u>	Listening, speaking

Tape a wide assortment of clothing pictures on the walls or whiteboard. Model the conversation with a learner. Then put learners in pairs. All pairs stand and go simultaneously to the whiteboard or to the stations around the walls. Members of pairs take turns with the following conversation:

Student A: I'm looking for a _____ (sweater, pair of pants, shirt, etc.)

Student B: (pointing) Here's a _____ (say the color) _____ (say the item of clothing)

Student A: Thank you. I like _____ (it, that one, those.) OR
Sorry, I don't like _____ (it, those, red shoes, a pink sweater, etc.)

Picture-based activities for GRAMMAR PRACTICE (controlled practice)



Identifying People

<u>Objective:</u>	To ask questions about a person's identity. To explain a person's identity.
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	Beginning
<u>Picture file:</u>	Family, friends, colleagues
<u>Type of picture:</u>	Small 2" x 2" or 3" x 5" magazine pictures of people singly, in couples, or in small groups
<u>Language skills:</u>	Listening, speaking
<u>Grammar points:</u>	"who is" and "who are", singular and plural of nouns
<u>Communication task:</u>	Ask and answer questions

Label two columns on the whiteboard: Family/Relatives Non-Family/Non-Relatives.
Elicit vocabulary words for each column:

Family: granddaughter/s, son/s, daughter/s, brother/s, sister/s, aunt/s, uncle/s, cousins, in-laws, etc.

Non-Family: neighbor/s, friend/s, co-worker/s, classmate/s, supervisor/s, landlord

Model the conversation. Then put learners in pairs. Give each pair a stack of 6-8 magazine pictures of people. Learners practice the following conversation, using any vocabulary they choose from the board:

Student A: Who is that man/woman? Or Who are those people?

Student B: That's my _____ . Or Those are my _____ .

Rotate the stacks of pictures among the pairs to give more practice.

Describing Symptoms of Illness

<u>Objective:</u>	To ask and respond to questions about one's health and symptoms of illness
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	Beginning
<u>Picture file:</u>	Health/Illness
<u>Type of picture:</u>	Magazine pictures or textbook illustrations that show people experiencing illness. Symptom words should already be known by learners.
<u>Language skills:</u>	Listening, speaking
<u>Grammar points:</u>	"Do" questions, pronouns, possessive pronouns. Responses with "has" and "feels".
<u>Communication task:</u>	Ask and answer questions

Model the following conversation with the learners. Hold up a series of pictures of people with health conditions, for example, a toothache, a headache, a cold, a broken arm. The teacher's cues should sometimes accurately represent what is shown in the picture and sometimes be different from what is shown in the picture. Call on learners one-by-one to respond to the different pictures.

Teacher: What's the matter?
Student: She feels sick.
Teacher: Is she nauseous?
Student: Yes, she is.
Teacher: Does she have a stomachache?
Student: Yes, she does.
Teacher: Does her stomach hurt?
Student: Yes, it does.

OR

Teacher: What's the matter?
Student: He feels sick.
Teacher: Does he have a headache?
Student: No, he doesn't, he has a toothache.
Teacher: Does his ear hurt?
Student: No, his tooth hurts.

Describing People's Occupations

<u>Objective:</u>	To ask and respond to questions about people's employment situations.
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	Beginning
<u>Picture file:</u>	Occupations
<u>Type of picture:</u>	Magazine pictures or textbook illustrations that show people dressed for certain occupations and/or actively engaged in certain types of work. In addition, photos of children and of retired seniors.
<u>Language skills:</u>	Listening, speaking
<u>Grammar points:</u>	"Do" questions, pronouns.
<u>Communication task:</u>	Ask and answer questions

Model the conversation with learners. Then put learners in pairs. Give each pair a stack of pictures. Learners take turns practicing the following conversation while rotating through the stack of pictures. Rotate the stacks of pictures among the pairs to give additional practice.

Student A: Does she/he work? OR Do they work?
Student B: Yes she/he does.
Student A: What's her/his job?
Student B: She/he is a _____.
Student A: Where does she/he work?
Student B: She/he works at a _____.

Asking for Items in a Store

<u>Objective:</u>	To ask where items can be found in a store. To understand locations within a store.
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	Beginning
<u>Picture file:</u>	Clothing, Consumer Goods
<u>Type of picture:</u>	Magazine pictures or textbook illustrations of clothing.
<u>Language skills:</u>	Listening, speaking
<u>Grammar point:</u>	Prepositional phrases of location
<u>Communication task:</u>	Ask and answer questions

On the whiteboard, draw a simple sketch representing a store. This shape looks like a very large capital A, omitting the upper triangle and showing only the crossbar and the two splayed legs. At the bottom of the board, between the splayed legs, draw boxes and stick figures representing cashiers at the front of the store. The crossbar represents the back of the store. Distribute a large collection of magazine pictures of articles of clothing, household objects, or office supplies, 3-5 per student. Have a roll of tape at hand. Students all gather at the whiteboard and, taking turns, practice the following conversation:

Student: "I'm looking for _____ (name of item shown in the picture)."
 Teacher: "Those are _____ (in the back of the store, along the left wall, near the front, in the middle of the store, in the men's department, etc.)"

The students tape their picture in the correct place on the sketch of the store. When all the pictures are on the board, practice the following conversation:

Teacher: "Where are the _____ (name of item in a picture)?"
 Student: "The _____s are _____ (description of location in the "store")."

Extension: Leave the pictures on the board. Learners choose 5-10 items and write sentences describing their location in the store.

Describing People's Activities I

<u>Objective:</u>	To ask questions about people's activities. To explain what people are doing.
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	Beginning
<u>Picture file:</u>	Actions/Verbs
<u>Type of picture:</u>	Magazine pictures of people (singly, in pairs, in groups) engaged in activities illustrating learned vocabulary.
<u>Language skills:</u>	Listening, speaking
<u>Grammar points:</u>	Pronouns, "be" verb, present progressive tense of verbs
<u>Communication task:</u>	Ask and answer questions

Model the conversation. Then put learners in pairs. Give each pair a stack of 8-10 magazine pictures. Learners practice the following conversation.

Student A: What's he/she doing? Or What are they doing?
 Student B: He/she is _____-ing_. Or They are _____-ing_.

Rotate the stacks of pictures among the pairs to give more practice.

Describing People's Activities II

<u>Objective:</u>	To ask questions about people's activities. To explain what people are <u>not</u> doing.
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	Beginning/Intermediate
<u>Picture file:</u>	Actions/Verbs
<u>Type of picture:</u>	Magazine pictures of people (singly, in pairs, or groups) engaged in activities illustrating learned vocabulary.
<u>Language skills:</u>	Listening, speaking
<u>Grammar points:</u>	Pronouns, "be" verb+not, present progressive tense of verbs
<u>Communication task:</u>	Ask and answer questions

Prepare enough magazine "action" pictures for 6-10 per pair of learners. Affix a small label to each picture. The label is a verb that is different from the verb depicted in the picture. For example, a picture of a man *reading*, might have a label that says "eat dinner". Model the conversation. Then put learners in pairs. Give each pair a set of 6-10 pictures. Taking turns, learners practice the following conversation, using the label from the picture in the first line of the conversation. Model with learners before having them practice the conversation on their own.

Student A: (showing the first picture) Is she/he _____ ing? (using the verb on the printed label) OR Are they _____ ing?

Student B: No, she isn't/he isn't. She's/ he's _____ ing. (saying the action that is depicted in the picture.) OR No, they're not.

Rotate the sets of pictures among the pairs for additional practice.

Extension:

Past tense:

Student A: (showing the first picture) Yesterday, was she/he _____ ing? (using the verb on the printed label)

Student B: No, she wasn't/he wasn't. She/he was _____ ing. (saying the action that is depicted in the picture.)

Future:

Student A: (showing the first picture) Is she/he going to _____ tomorrow? (using the verb on the printed label)

Student B: No, she/he isn't. She/he is going to _____ tomorrow. (saying the action that is depicted in the picture.) Or She/he has to _____ tomorrow

A Day in the Life of My Paper Friend

<u>Objective:</u>	To describe a person's daily activities.
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	Beginning, Intermediate
<u>Picture file:</u>	Occupations
<u>Type of pictures:</u>	Large magazine pictures of people at work (housekeeper, nurse, homemaker, farmer, mechanic, cashier, teacher, waitress, etc.) – more than enough for one per learner.
<u>Grammar Point:</u>	Simple present tense (Beginning), Simple past tense (Intermediate)
<u>Language skills:</u>	Speaking, writing

Model for the class by selecting a photo and describing the routine daily activities of that “paper friend”. Let each learner select one photo they would like to be their “paper friend”. Give learners a simple daily timeline – 6:30 a.m., 7:00 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 5:00 p.m., 6:00 p.m., 9:00 p.m., 10:30 p.m. Give learners time to prepare to describe what their paper friend does daily at those times. Beginning level learners use the simple present tense; intermediate level learners use the past tense – what the picture friend did yesterday. Put learners in pairs. Have each partner orally describe the daily life of their paper friend. For additional practice, shift learners into new pairs or select certain learners to describe their paper friends to the entire class.

Extension activity #1: Have learners write a story about the daily routines of their picture friend based on the given clock times.

Extension activity #2: Have learners describe the skills of their paper friend.

This is my friend __ (Carlotta)_____.

(She) is a __ (seamstress)_____.

(She) knows how to __ (measure fabric)___ and __ (cut patterns) _____ .

(She) can also __ (operate a sewing machine)_____.

(She) likes to __ (make clothes for children) _.

On _(her)_ job, my friend has to __ (work on the weekends)_____.

Returning an Item to the Store

Objective: *To explain why one is returning an item to the store.*

Proficiency level: *Intermediate*

Picture file: *Consumer Goods*

Type of pictures: *Small magazine pictures of a wide variety of consumer goods whose vocabulary is known by learners. Provide approximately 10 per pair of students.*

Language skills: *Speaking, listening*

Brainstorm explanations for returning clothing and consumer items to a store. Examples; doesn't fit, too small, too large, broken, doesn't work, missing a button, don't need it, spouse doesn't like it, etc. Practice options for resolution – refund, money back, exchange, store credit. Write the dialogue on the board and model it with a volunteer. Then put learners in pairs. Give each pair 10-12 pictures. Taking turns with the stack of pictures, learners role play the customer and the sales clerk.

Customer: I'd like to return this __ (item in the photo)_____.

Sales clerk: What's the problem?

Customer: It's __ (reason)_____.

Sales clerk: What would you like to do?

Customer: I'd like __ (resolution) _____.

Rotate the pictures among the pairs to give additional practice.

Describing Actions of the Past

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To describe people's job duties.</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Intermediate</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Occupations</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Magazine pictures of people engaged in their work</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Listening, speaking</i>
<u>Grammar points:</u>	<i>Past tense verbs</i>

Model the activity for the class. Then put learners in pairs and give each pair a stack of 4-6 magazine pictures. Taking turns, learners state the picture person's occupation and describe 5-8 things the person did yesterday. Example: "This is a car mechanic. Yesterday he went to work and he fixed this car. He replaced a headlight. He changed a tire. He changed the oil. He repaired the brakes. He took out the broken filter and put in a new one. He washed the car. He went home and took a shower."

Rotate the stacks of pictures among the pairs to give more practice.

Picture-based activities for READING PRACTICE



The Story Isn't Quite Right

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>Read and edit a text that doesn't exactly match a picture.</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>All</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Various</i>
<u>Type of pictures:</u>	<i>Simpler, one item pictures are appropriate for lower level learners; pictures showing a variety of people and activities are appropriate for higher level learners.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Reading, writing</i>

Find a large magazine photo or textbook illustration that shows a specific setting (a city, park, kitchen, school, office, hospital, store etc) and people engaged in one or a variety of activities. Using double-spaced lines, write a description of the picture, using level-appropriate vocabulary and sentences, occasionally writing something that is not true about the picture. For example, if the picture shows a black dog, you might write *white cat*. Or if a person in the picture is doing laundry, you might write *washing dishes*. Pre-teach any key vocabulary. Give copies of the picture and the written text to learners individually or in pairs. Learners refer to the picture while reading the text. When they find a discrepancy between the written account and the actual picture, they write a correction above the error.

Matching a Text to a Picture

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>Read short texts and match them to pictures</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>All</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Various</i>
<u>Type of pictures:</u>	<i>Large magazine pictures or textbook illustrations that show specific settings (a city, park, kitchen, school, office, hospital, store etc) and several people engaged in one or a variety of activities. The pictures can all relate to the specific life skill being studied or can relate to different themes.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Reading, Writing</i>

Prepare level-appropriate texts for beginning, intermediate, or advanced learners (words, sentences or paragraphs) that match a selection of 4-6 pictures. Post the pictures on the whiteboard, writing a capital letter above each one. Give learners copies of the texts. Learners read the texts and write the letter of the matching picture next to the text. Choose either of two options – give each learner only one of the texts to match, or give each learner all of the texts to match. Pictures that are dissimilar (a car, house, child) result in easier matching. Pictures that are similar (all kitchens) create greater challenge.

Extension: Give learners or pairs of learners the pictures. Have learners write the descriptive texts. Distribute the finished texts to other learners who then match the texts to the pictures.

Picture-based activities for WRITING PRACTICE



Writing Extensions to Oral Activities

The following picture activities can be extended into writing activities:

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Describing people	page 10
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Respond to Questions about a Picture.

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>Answer questions about a picture.</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>All</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Various</i>
<u>Type of pictures:</u>	<i>Simpler, one item pictures are appropriate for lower level learners; pictures showing a variety of people and activities are appropriate for higher level learners.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Writing</i>

Find a large magazine photo or textbook illustration that shows a specific setting (a city, park, kitchen, school, office, hospital, store etc) and several people engaged in one or a variety of activities. Create a worksheet with questions about the picture and lines for learners to write their responses. Pre-teach any key vocabulary. Give learners copies of the picture and the worksheet. Learners refer to the picture, read the questions, and write answers.

Picture Family Journal

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>Write about a family's life and preferences</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Beginning, Intermediate</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Family</i>
<u>Type of pictures:</u>	<i>Large magazine picture showing a family</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Writing</i>

During the first unit of the session, put learners into groups of 3-4. Give each group a picture of a family. Have the learners discuss the members of their "picture family" orally. Then have the group write a journal story about their picture family – general introductory information (names, relationships, etc). As learners move through subsequent life skill units, have them revisit their "picture family" and write additional journal entries. For example, when studying employment, learners imagine and write about the family members' jobs. When studying health they write about a family member's illness and treatment. It's best to collect the pictures and the texts after each use and save them in folders in the classroom. This prevents the loss of the picture and journal entries if a learner is absent or leaves the program.

The picture family journal is a good activity for the computer lab, if available.

Compare and Contrast Two Pictures

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To describe the similarities and differences of two pictures</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Intermediate, Advanced</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Appropriate to the life skill being studied</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Sets of magazine pictures that show similar subject matter.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Writing</i>

Model the activity by drawing a Venn diagram (two partially intersecting circles) on the whiteboard. Show a set of two pictures you have selected such as two neighborhoods, two families, two classrooms, two living rooms, two street scenes, etc. Elicit from learners items that are unique to each picture and items that are in common. Write the ideas on the Venn diagram, as appropriate, discussing "same", "different", "both", and "only". Discuss how the ideas from the sections of the diagram can be organized within a paragraph or within a multi-paragraph essay. When the class has discussed the model picture, put learners in pairs or trios. Spread out the sets of pictures and let groups self-select a set about which they would like to write. Give learners time to discuss their pictures orally and complete a Venn diagram. Learners can write about their pictures in class or as homework. Lead learners through the process of first draft, revisions, editing, and final draft.

Look and Write a Story

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To describe a picture in detail through writing</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Intermediate, Advanced</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Various</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Large magazine pictures that show interesting scenes, people, or activities. The pictures should be those that many people can relate to. They can evoke times, places, emotions, memories, people, etc. Bring more than enough for one per learner.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Writing</i>

Prior to class select a picture of interest to you and write about it. In addition to describing the details of the actual picture, try to relate the picture to something in your own life. Show the picture to learners and read your story aloud to them. Then, spread out all the pictures and let learners self-select a picture about which they would like to write. Learners can write about their pictures in class or as homework. Lead learners through the process of first draft, revisions, editing, and final draft. With learners' permission, post the pictures and their stories on the walls of the classroom or hallway.

From Their Perspective

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To describe a situation from the perspective of one "character" in a picture</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Advanced</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Look and Write a Story, Miscellaneous</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Large magazine pictures that show interesting scenes with two or more people interacting. Bring enough for one per pair or trio of learners.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Writing, Speaking</i>

Model the activity. Show a picture you have selected. If the picture shows two "characters" divide the class in half; If the picture shows three "characters" divide the class in thirds. Ask each section of the class to say some things about their assigned "character." Ask guiding questions such as:

- Who is your character?
- How did your character get into this situation?
- How does your character feel about the situation?
- What does your character think about the other characters in the picture?
- What does your character want to do next?
- How does your character want the situation to end?

When the class has discussed the model picture, put learners in pairs or trios. Give each learner a page with the guiding questions. Spread out all the pictures and let groups self-select a picture about which they would like to write. Give learners time to choose a character from the picture they have chosen, discuss their pictures orally and brainstorm together answers to the guiding questions. Learners can write about their pictures in class or as homework. Lead learners through the process of first draft, revisions, editing, and final draft. With learners' permission, post the pictures and their stories on the walls of the classroom or hallway next to the picture they have chosen.

Picture-based activities for FLUENCY and CRITICAL THINKING



Picture Memory Game

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To describe a picture in detail</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Beginning, Intermediate</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Look and Write a Story, Miscellaneous</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Large magazine pictures or textbook illustrations that show a specific setting (a city, park, kitchen, school, office, hospital, store etc) and several people engaged in one or a variety of activities, Provide enough for one per pair or trio of learners.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Speaking</i>

Pre-teach any key vocabulary that learners will need to describe the pictures. Model the activity. Then put learners in pairs or trios. Give each pair a picture, face down. On your cue, pairs turn their picture face up and study it for one minute. On your second cue, pairs turn their pictures face down again. They then describe the pictures orally to each other, recalling as many details as possible. When learners can say no more, they turn the picture face up to check their recall.

Extension: Have learners write a description of the picture.

Picture Halves

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To locate the matching half of a picture solely by describing the other half verbally. .</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Intermediate, Advanced</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Picture Halves</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>People engaged in activities. Scenes.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Listening, speaking</i>

Select 8-10 full or half-page pictures from magazines – enough for 1 picture per two learners. For beginning-level learners select pictures where there is a clear relationship between the objects in the left half of the picture and the objects in the right half. For intermediate and advanced-level learners select pictures that, when cut down the middle, the left half has just a few hints or minor elements from the right half. Cut each picture in half and tape each picture half onto a square of black construction paper. Pass the picture halves out to learners. You may pass them out randomly or you may intentionally (but covertly) give all the left sides to speakers of one first language (all the Spanish speakers, for example) and all the right sides to speakers of other first languages. Give learners time to study their assigned picture half. They should NOT show their picture half to any other classmate. Learners prepare to describe the details of their picture half. Learners turn their picture halves face down on their desks. Learners circulate freely throughout the classroom. Each person describes the details of his/her half picture to the partners they encounter. The pair decides if they have both halves of the same picture. If not, each person

moves on to find another partner. As pairs find their partners, they retrieve their picture halves and sit together. This activity can be used as an icebreaker in the first week of class.

Extension activity: Pairs write a paragraph describing their picture.

Which Picture is it?

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To describe a picture in detail.</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Intermediate</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Family/Friends, Housing, Consumer Products</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>A set of nine closely similar pictures.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Speaking, Listening</i>

Choose sets of nine similar pictures – such as nine women’s faces, nine suburban homes, nine children playing, etc. Lay the pictures out in three rows. Have 4-5 learners gather around the pictures. Model the activity first. Then, choose one learner to secretly select one of the pictures and describe it aloud to the group. The other learners must identify which picture is being described. Encourage the “chooser” to describe the picture in detail gradually building up to feature(s) that distinguish the picture from all others, rather than to announce the single distinguishing feature first. Allow other learners to have a turn choosing and describing a picture.

Extension activity: Learners prepare a written description of a picture for homework, then read their description aloud the next day while classmates identify which picture it is.

Who Should Go to the New Town?

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To express and justify opinions in favor or against.</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Intermediate, Advanced</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Occupations, Family/Friends</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Pictures of people, young and old, with a variety of different occupations. Enough pictures for one per learner, possibly a few extra.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Listening, speaking</i>
<u>Communicative task:</u>	<i>To politely express disagreement.</i>

Let each learner select one picture that is of interest to them. Explain that a new community is going to be established in a very distant location. Many people want to go to the new community, but only a few can be chosen. The learners’ task is to decide who will be chosen and why. Each learner must advocate on their picture’s behalf, explaining why that person should be chosen for the new community based on the skills that person would bring. Put learners in small groups of 4-5 and explain that only 2 pictures can be chosen from each group. Teach the language of offering opinions, and politely disagreeing. “I think X should be chosen because” “You could be right, but” “I see what you mean, but I think” “I see your point, but in my opinion” When all groups have chosen their final candidates, spokespersons from each group describe which pictures were chosen and why. Post those pictures on the whiteboard.

Extension activity: Learners write a paragraph or a formal business letter to a fictitious selection committee, describing why their picture candidate should be included in the new community.

Before and After

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To speculate about activities shown in a picture</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Intermediate, Advanced</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Look and Write a Story, Miscellaneous</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Large magazine pictures or textbook illustrations that show a specific setting (a city, park, kitchen, school, office, hospital, store etc) and one or several people engaged in one or a variety of activities. Provide enough for one per pair of learners.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Speaking</i>

Model the activity with the entire class before putting learners in pairs. Show a picture to the class. Ask learners to describe what is happening in the picture, answering the information questions who, what, when, where, how. Then ask learners to describe what might have happened immediately before the picture was taken. This task elicits language such as “maybe”, “probably”, “because”, “could have”, “were ...ing” (past progressive). Then ask learners to describe what might happen immediately after the picture was taken. This task elicits language such as “maybe”, “probably”, “might”, “be going to”, “will”. Put learners in pairs. Give each pair a picture. Learners speculate with each other what might have happened immediately before their picture was taken and what might happen immediately after.

Extension activity: Learners write a three-paragraph essay describing their picture and what happened before the picture was taken and after.

Two Unrelated Pictures

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To describe similarities of two unrelated pictures</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Intermediate, Advanced</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Miscellaneous, Look and Write a Story</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Large magazine pictures showing a variety of topics, scenes, people, activities, etc. Provide a large assortment.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Speaking</i>

Model the activity with the entire class before putting learners in groups. Have a volunteer select two pictures at random. As a whole group, have learners describe the two pictures. Ask learners if they can find anything in common between the two pictures (e.g. both of the women have blue eyes, both pictures were taken outdoors, both pictures have a small piece of the color red, both pictures have a tree in the background). Put learners in groups of 3 or 4. One member from each group comes and randomly selects two pictures. Another member writes the list of similarities on a piece of paper. A third (and fourth) member shows the picture to the class and reports the similarities. (If groups cannot find any similarities, allow them to choose a second set of two pictures.)

Mystery Pictures

<u>Objective:</u>	<i>To speculate about a whole picture while seeing only a part.</i>
<u>Proficiency level:</u>	<i>Advanced</i>
<u>Picture file:</u>	<i>Various</i>
<u>Type of picture:</u>	<i>Large magazine pictures generally depicting single objects.</i>
<u>Language skills:</u>	<i>Listening, speaking</i>
<u>Communicative task:</u>	<i>To politely agree or disagree.</i>

Prepare the pictures as follows. Find an assortment of full- or half-page pictures from which can be isolated smaller sections. Find sections that provide some hints about the entire picture, but don't give it away entirely. Place a piece of construction paper over the entire picture, but cut out a window over the small section you want to remain visible to learners. Paper clip the construction paper to the photo, so the two can be separated at the end of the activity. Teach the language of offering opinions, agreeing and politely disagreeing. "I think you're right." "You could be right, but . . ." "I see what you mean, but I think . . ." "I see your point, but in my opinion . . ." Model the activity for the class. Then put learners in pairs or trios and give each group one of the pictures. They describe what they see through the window and make a guess about the rest of the picture. When learners have agreed upon what the entire picture might be, they remove the construction paper cover and see the entire picture.

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Describing People's Occupations	Ask and respond to questions about people's employment.	Occupations	Listening, Speaking	Beginning	12

Picture-based activity	Objective	Picture File	Language Skills	Level: Beginning Intermed. Advanced	Page No.
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Picture-based activity	Objective	Picture File	Language Skills	Level: Beginning Intermed. Advanced	Page No.
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Picture Halves	Locate the matching half of a picture by describing the other half orally	Picture Halves	Listening, Speaking	Intermediate Advanced	23
Which Picture is It?	Describe a picture in detail.	Family/Friends, Housing, Consumer Products	Speaking, Listening, Writing	Intermediate Advanced	24
Who Should Go to the New Town?	Express and justify opinions in favor or against. Politely express disagreement	Occupations, Family/Friends	Listening, Speaking, Writing	Intermediate Advanced	24
Before and After	Speculate about activities shown in a picture.	Look and Write a Story, Miscellaneous	Speaking, Writing	Intermediate Advanced	25
Two Unrelated Pictures	Describe similarities of two unrelated pictures	Look and Write a Story, Miscellaneous	Speaking	Intermediate Advanced	25
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