**Grammar rules! Grammar in the Secondary Classroom**

A selection of activities

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1) **Question practice ice-breaker**

Give the students the answers to some basic personal questions and ask the students to work out the questions. They then interview each other in pairs using the questions. They could then finish by asking you the questions.

2) **Sentence hangman**

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I/ H A V E/ N E V E R/ M E T/ T H E/ Q U E E N

Play in teams. Teams get one point for guessing a letter that appears in the sentence, five points for guessing a word, and ten points for guessing the complete sentence. Negative points are given for incorrect guesses. Once the sentence has been discovered, use it to revise/ analyse a particular structure.

3) **Spaghetti lines**

To practise ‘have got’, students secretly link five different names with five different objects.

*Jack bike*

*Harry MP3 player*

*Emma laptop*

*Kate and Amy tablet*

*Oliver calculator*

They then take it in turns to guess: *Has Jack got an MP3 player?* The winner is the first person to identify who has each object.

The basic idea can be adapted for many different grammatical structures.

4) **Dream Holiday**

Students secretly choose one of three different holiday destinations, one of three months and one of three types of hotel. They can only go on their dream holiday if they find someone else who has chosen the same three elements. So they must mingle and ask: *Are you going to New York? Are you going to go in July?* etc.

5) **Grammar squares**

See Gateway A2 SBK page 54 exercise 4. Students find a minimum of two things for each square – things that they can both do, things that they can do but their partner can’t do, things they can’t do but their partner can, and things that neither of them can do. Notice that a minimum of two things means that faster students cannot simply say they have finished after a couple of minutes.

6) **VIP party list**

Tell students they can come to a party but they must offer to bring some food to be able to come. Some food you want but some you don’t. They must work out what it is you want by trial and error at first, and then working out your criteria. The criteria can be: (1) usually countable or uncountable, (2) words containing double letters (pizza, egg) or not, (3) words ending with a vowel (tomato, apple) or consonant.

7) **Grammar Grid**

Draw a grid on the board (5 x 4). How many grammatically correct sentences can the students make, using only the words in the grid, in ten minutes? Use the game to revise grammar that you have just taught, e.g. present perfect, conditionals, passives…Also, students can make their own grids.

Example of words to include at a low level, to practise present continuous, have, adjectives, word order, etc.:

singing/ green/ girl/ that/ small/ brother/ have/ I/ is/ years/ car/ a/ there/ are/ people/ ten/ my/ here/ no/ old

8) **Disappearing sentences**

Write three or four sentences containing the new structure you want to practice. Gradually rub off the sentences and ask students if they can remember what the complete sentences were. Continue until the board is empty. A fun way to make students want to repeat a new structure.

9) **Grammar charades**

Have two teams. Give students a sentence containing a particular structure (e.g. for the present perfect: ‘I have sent six emails this morning’). The students take it in turns to mime their sentence to their team who get a point if they identify the sentence correctly within a time limit. See Gateway A2 Teacher’s Book page 197.

**Further reading**

‘Teaching grammar – does grammar teaching work?’ – Michael Swan (Modern English Teacher, 2006)

‘Time to stop avoiding grammar rules’ – Catherine Walter (The Guardian, 2012)

Introduction to ‘Grammar Practice Activities: 2nd Edition’ – Penny Ur (CUP, 2009)

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