

## Sporting Vocabulary Activity Ideas for Teenagers, by Greg Wagstaff

### General advice:

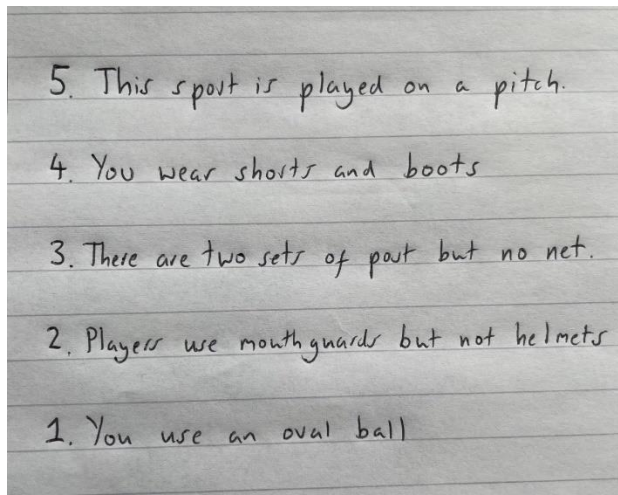
- All activities are suitable for grammar items as well as vocabulary items.
- They are suitable for all levels in their pure form. Although I have mentioned the occasional way of adapting an activity, generally the differentiation for each level will come in the target language used/the outcomes you expect of the pupils.
- In terms of age, they are most suitable for teenagers and above.
- Regardless of level or age, all activities should be modelled first.
- The product of the activities should be kept and recapped on in future lessons.

### ACTIVITY 1: '5,4,3,2,1'

#### Steps

- Pupils pick a vocabulary item (e.g., 'rugby').
- They write five clues for the item, incorporating as much target language as possible. These five clues should decrease in difficulty from numbers five to one.
- After each clue is read, pupils write what the vocabulary item might be.
- Between zero and five points are awarded to a pupil according to when they first guessed, *and then maintained*, the correct answer (see below for example scoring sheets).

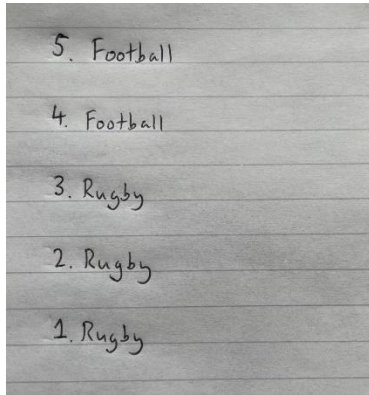
#### MODEL QUESTION



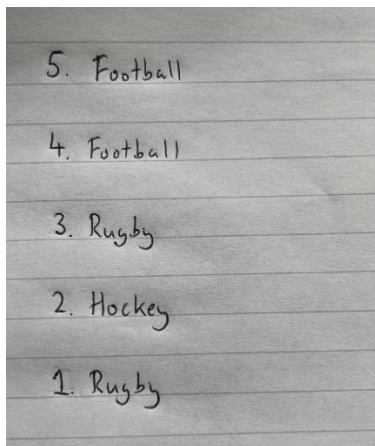
\*target language = sports equipment

## ANSWER EXAMPLES

Here, the pupil scores three points, as they guessed it right after clue number three and then maintained their answer:



However, here, the pupils only scores one point. Although they originally put the correct answer after clue number three, they then changed it after clue number two before finally putting the right answer again after clue number one:



## TIPS/VARIATIONS

To ensure pupils don't cheat, inform them they can only use a pen, they cannot change an answer once it has been written and monitor well to ensure everyone has made a guess after each clue, and not just left a blank space. For lower levels you can provide a generic template containing the target language for them to complete, while at higher levels pupils should be expected to come up the with their clues alone.

Once modelled a few times using your examples, use some examples from your pupils or put them into smaller groups and encourage them to officiate themselves.

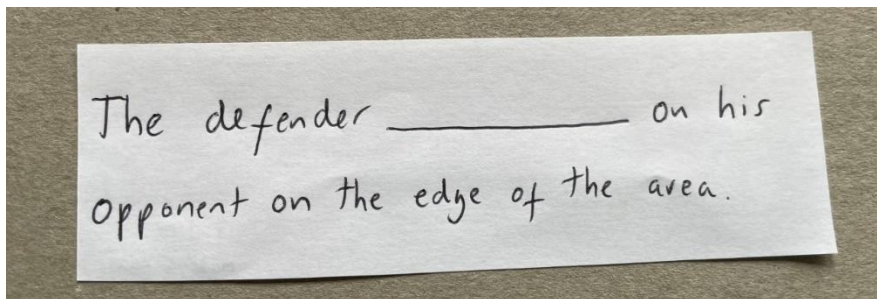
To encourage increased production of the target language, you can ask pupils to recap on the clues in small groups before the answer is revealed.

## ACTIVITY 2: 'Sentence giveaway'

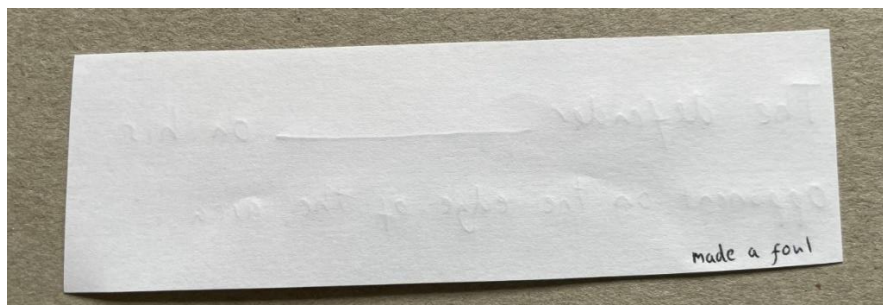
### Steps

- Pupils write five model sentences in their notebook using the target language
- They then transfer these to individual strips of paper but leave blanks instead of the target language. The missing language is written faintly in the corner on the *back* of the strip.
- Pupils then mingle and hold up the gapped sentence to another pupil. If the pupil guesses the missing language **CORRECTLY, THEY DO NOT TAKE** the paper. If they guess **INCORRECTLY, THEY TAKE** the paper.
- Pupils then move around the room repeating the process with the other pupils.
- **THE WINNER** is the pupil who has the **LEAST NUMBER OF STRIPS OF PAPER** at the end of the game.

### MODEL QUESTION (FRONT OF PAPER)



### MODEL QUESTION (BACK OF PAPER)



\*target language = football collocations

### TIPS/VARIATIONS

While they are writing their model sentences, monitor well to ensure that the sentences are correct and that sufficient context *is given*. For example, a sentence such as 'The defender \_\_\_\_\_ on the edge of the penalty area' is not specific enough: it could easily be another item from your target language (e.g., 'got a yellow card', 'dived on the floor', 'dribbled the ball'). To ensure increased oral production,

encourage pupils to read out the completed sentence fully when guessing the answer and after the answer is revealed.

To further challenge higher levels, non-target language words or phrases can also be taken out of the sentence. To make it easier for lower levels, use spaces to represent the number of missing words.

This activity works nicely as a lead-in to a Cambridge exam sentence transformation activity, as many of the same skills are practised.

Encourage pupils to keep their distance and to sanitise their hands afterwards!

### **ACTIVITY 3: *'Inventing a sport'***

#### **Steps**

- Pupils have a lesson on a level-appropriate grammatical structure or lexical set that normally feature in a rules document (e.g., modals of obligation, inversion, passives, sports equipment, sequencing language).
- In groups of four, they then invent a sport of their own using the classroom/environment around them and while using the target language. The sport must be suitable for up to four players.
- Each group then swaps rules with another group. Each group has five minutes to work out and play the game.
- The groups then come together to see if the game is being played correctly. They provide advice on how to play where necessary.
- Pupils repeat the process with another group.
- All pupils vote at the end for the best sport.

#### **TIPS/VARIATIONS**

To help scaffold their invention of the new sport, set the lesson, and its examples, in the context of rules or sports rules. If some groups struggle for inspiration, advise them to draw inspiration from an existing sport: a wastepaper bin and rolled up pieces of paper can serve as classroom equivalent of a hoop and basketball, for example. You should board functional language to be used during the establishment of the rules (e.g., 'Is this how it goes?') and the playing of the game itself (e.g., Do I go next?). To extend the activity, ask pupils to film each other playing the game and then, in the following lesson(s) ask them to watch the video back in pairs and recap on what the rules were.