

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT: HOW TO GAIN AND RETAIN FULL LEARNER ENGAGEMENT IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLASSROOM

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Engagement is both a prerequisite and an outcome of effective teaching in English language classrooms.

GOALS OF THE SESSION:

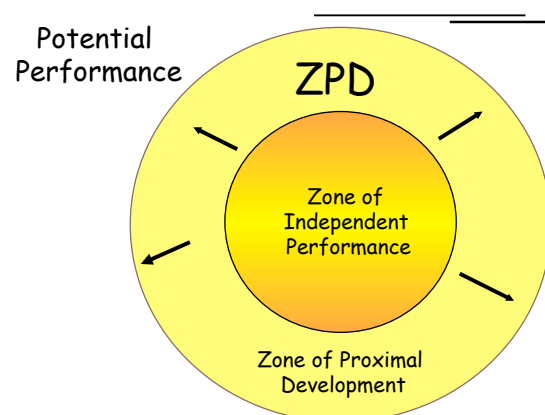
- To recognize the importance of engagement
- To see and experience what engagement looks like
- To expand a repertoire of engaging practices, strategies, and activities

WHY DO WE NEED ENGAGEMENT?

1. To equalize participation in the classroom – to reach every learner and narrow the learning gap.
2. To keep learners in school.
3. To foster higher-order thinking, development of academic language and content skills and knowledge.
4. To expand and enhance learning by incorporating both enjoyment and challenge.

BRAINS AND LEARNING:

- **Dopamine**, known as a learning-friendly neurotransmitter because it promotes focus, motivation and memory, but only during pleasant feelings.
- **Positive emotions** open the RAS (reticular activating system) to enable input to reach the PFC (prefrontal cortex)
- **The state of “Flow”** for optimal learning can be encouraged by appropriate challenges. (Csikszentmihalyi 1990)
- **Vygotsky** emphasizes the importance of language and social learning.
- Teaching is assisted performance
- Learning and development meet in the Zone of Proximal Development



WHAT DOES ENGAGEMENT LOOK LIKE?

Engaged	Not Engaged
<p>Focused on clear goals Actively involved in learning Accountable and aware of it On task and focused Feel competent and capable Work with others to learn</p>	<p>No real goals, just showing up Learning is spectator sport Don't feel accountable Often actively off task, or in an "upright siesta" Feel incompetent, act "smart" Rely on others for clarification and assistance</p>

HOW DO WE EXPAND ENGAGEMENT?

Learning is part of everything

1. **Start well--100% tuned in**
2. **Maintain interest and focus.**
3. **Incorporate movement.**
4. **Teach and structure collaboration.**
5. **Promote higher-order thinking.**
6. **Assess as you go**
7. **Facilitate enjoyment and laughter.**

1. **START WELL: MAKE LEARNING PART OF EVERYTHING -- INCORPORATE ROUTINES AND ACTIVITIES THAT KEEP EVERYONE ALERT AND THINKING.**

- **Meet and Greet:** Learners walk around the room and mingle. They must find innovative ways to greet one another in English, e.g., nod, fist bump, "yo," "hey dude" etc. Teacher observes and notes creative responses to discuss after the activity.
- **Handshake interview** (Edutopia video 3:00): Teacher shakes hands with each student as they enter the room. Then he/she asks them a question about what they're studying. If the student answers the question correctly, they enter the room. If not, they get back in line.
- **Entrance/Exit Ticket:** Learners answer a question or complete a short task in order to be able to enter/leave the room.

Examples

- Which direction is Atlanta from Green Bay?
- What is a polite form for asking a question in class?
- What is the State Bird of Wisconsin?

- **Find the Errors.** Learners work in teams to find the errors, then report on what they found. Example:

This is a true story about integrity versus money. a man told everyone he can sit on water he filled a big tank with water and sold lots of tickets for all to come see. Of course when he tried, he fell right in the tank. Why a person would disgrace himself just in order to make a few buck?!

Told by the Dalai Lama

- **Index Card Life History**

Purpose: To share information and interests with the class

Procedure: Pass out an index card (or half sheet of paper) to each student.

1. Ask students to write their name, school, City and country and title in the center of the card
2. Ask students to draw about their families in the left upper corner
3. Ask students to draw something about their hobbies and what they do in their free time in the right upper corner
4. Ask students to draw the type of music they like in the left lower corner
5. Ask students to draw their goals for the future in the right lower corner
6. Students find someone they do not know well and introduce themselves.
7. Then they exchange cards with that person
8. Partners introduce one another to the class using the cards as prompts.

Note: Vary questions/drawings to meet the levels and needs of the group.

2. MAINTAIN INTEREST AND FOCUS

- **Fairness Can:** Write everyone's name on a stick, put sticks in a can; select one at random to answer questions
- **Zero Noise Signal:** Zero noise, complete attention, remind a neighbor if needed
- Teach **SSLANT** expectations: Smile, Sit up, Listen, Ask, Nod when you understand, Track the speaker.
- More ways to structure fair and active participation
 - Choral Responses: Whole group; group parts

White Stallions

by Bruce Dethlefsen, 2011-2012 Poet Laureate of Wisconsin

1 the children of the street must see themselves in the greasy puddles of the forenoon	1 in the tears of the old women in the shadow of the bus
2 in the sundown storefront windows in the luster of the shoes they shine	2 the children of the street must see themselves flying purple kites on sunny beaches dining with the family after church
3 must see themselves in the reflection of a customer's sunglasses	3 riding white stallions the children of the street must see themselves

3. INCORPORATE MOVEMENT INTO LEARNING

- **Hand Clapping & Sound Patterns** Develop hand clapping routines to teach sound patterns (or number facts):
Lions and tigers and bears, oh my!
Chicken pox, and mumps, and swine flu, oh my!
Milwaukee, Sheboygan, and Green Bay, oh my!
/''/''/, oh my
- **TPR** Learners act out routines/scripts and practice language and actions.
Example: "Show me a pencil."
- **Lineups:** Have learners line up according to some criteria. If needed, teach them the language they will need to get into lines. Example: Phases of the moon.
- **Little Books:** Learners outline or summarize a topic by writing a little illustrated book. (See expanded handout on Web)

4. TEACH AND STRUCTURE COLLABORATION

- **Use Cooperative Learning to structure fair and active participation:**
SUHUPU: Stand up, Hands up, Pair up
Think – pair - share
Four corners
Numbered heads
- **Use cooperative learning activities that provide both group and individual accountability.** Example: "Ask Three Before Me"
 - If you have a question, ask three of your peers for the answer before you raise your hand to interrupt the teacher.

First-Day TPR Rap (Show Me a Pencil)



Show me a pencil.
Show me a pen.
Show me some paper.
Show me your friend.

Open the window.
Shut the door.
Hands on the table.
Feet on the floor.

Point to the ceiling.
Point to the ground.
Stand up. Sit down.
Look around.

Show me a chalkboard.
Show me a book.
Show me a chair.
Give me a look.

Point to your teacher.
Point to yourself.
Point to the trash can.
Point to the shelf.

Raise your hand high.
Take it down.
Give me a smile.
Never a frown.

Out to the left.
Over to the right.
Stand up. Sit down.
Show me the light.

Show me a pencil.
Show me a pen.
Show me some paper.
Show me your friend.

- **Teach Learners How to Collaborate**

Sample Cooperative groups rubric

How should we behave during a discussion?

- Listen to one another
- Check our understanding
- Speak one at a time
- Connect what we say to the persons before
- Try to come to consensus, or explain our disagreements and understand the other side

- **Fishbowl:** inside group participates, while outside group observes and takes notes on how the criteria are being followed. (Edutopia video 1:20)
- **Sentence Machine:** Learners respond to questions in sentences with each person providing one word.

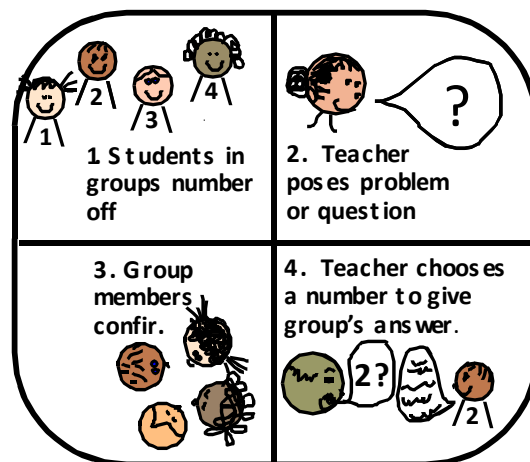
5. PROMOTE HIGHER-ORDER THINKING: USE STRATEGIES TO KEEP EVERYONE THINKING AND PREPARED

- **Heads Together:** See strategies in expanded handout.
- **Round Robin/Roundtable:** See strategies in expanded handout.
- **Use “minimal supervision” activities to provide learning every minute, even when you’re occupied.** Examples:
 - Study word cards with a partner
 - Memorize a poem
 - Quickwrite
 - Summarize a reading passage
 - Read an assignment or listen to a recording
- **Provide wait time so that all students have the opportunity to mentally answer questions.**
- **Use signaling to allow everyone to answer your questions.**
 - **Thumbs:** Show thumbs up or thumbs down to answer a question
 - **Numbers:** Hold up a number of fingers to answer a multiple choice question
 - **Cards:** Hold up or display red, yellow, green cards to show level of understanding
 - **Eye contact:** Use (and expect) eye contact to maintain attention, to show readiness

6. ASSESS AS YOU GO

- **Entrance/Exit Ticket**
- **Signals**
- **One Question Quiz**

7. FACILITATE ENJOYMENT AND LAUGHTER



COOPERATIVE LEARNING STRATEGIES

Three Syllables. Teach learners about syllables so that they understand that syllables are parts of words.

- (1) Clap out the rhythms of three-syllable words like syll-a-ble and ba-na-na. Recall and/or learn three-syllable words as a word bank for the game. Write each on a card.
- (2) Three learners volunteer to be the “guessers” and step out of earshot. The rest of the group divides into three groups that stand in different parts of the room.
- (3) Select a word from the cards as the target word. Each group is assigned one syllable of the target word. Guessers return and stand exactly in the middle of the three groups. One of the guessers counts to three, and all three groups say their syllables together.
- (4) Guessers try to figure out the word. They may repeat the counting to hear the syllables again until they “get” the word.
- (5) Three more guessers step out and a new word is chosen. (Depending on age and language level of learners, choose two-syllable words, four-syllable words, etc.)

Ask Three Before Me: Learners understand that before they ask a question of the teacher, they should ask 3 or more other students if they know the answer.

Numbered Heads together. This versatile structure can be used effectively for both memory-level and higher-order thinking activities. Instead of answering questions, learners can brainstorm ideas, solve a problem, draw a diagram, invent a product, etc.

- (1) Have students, in groups of about four, number off from 1 to 4. (If groups have 5, two students take turns as one number; if groups have 3, one student has two numbers). The teacher (or a student, after students have learned the strategy well) asks a question about the reading and gives a time limit.
- (2) Students take a few minutes to “put their heads together” to find and agree on an answer. (This may include looking up the page citation in the text.) Teacher calls a number to designate which student will answer for the team.
- (3) Students with that number give their groups’ answers (verbally, on paper, or on the board).
- (4) Teacher gives feedback as appropriate: teams may receive points for correct answers, creative answers, correct spelling, etc.

Round Robin/Roundtable. This activity is useful for brainstorming, writing, and reviewing concepts and vocabulary learned. *Oral version:* divide the students into groups of 3 or 4.

- (1) Write the topic on the board (e.g. “Religions of the World”).
- (2) The first student names a religion. The next student names another religion but he/she cannot repeat something already said. Students continue to add responses until the teacher calls time (3 to 5 minutes).

- (3) The teacher asks one student from each group to name as many answers as he/she can remember. Students are asked not to repeat an answer already stated by another group. The teacher charts each group's answers on the board or chart paper.
- (4) In Roundtable (the written version), students pass around a sheet of paper and each student adds his/her contributions. Alternatively, place papers with questions on desks and have groups of students rotate from station to station answering the questions/prompts. Create a class list as above.

Line-Ups. This activity provides for authentic use of language learned, repeated practice of structures being studied, along with opportunities to move around and interact.


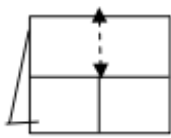

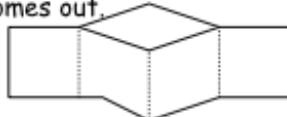
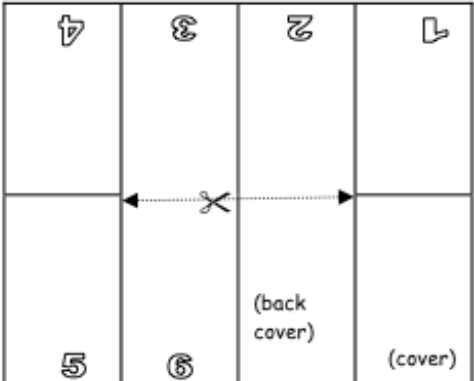
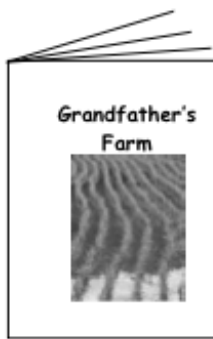
- (1) Tell learners they will line up in order along some continuum, e.g., day and month of their birth, alphabetical or numerical order, etc. Teach the language they will need to determine the order, e.g., what month and day were you born? What number do you have?
- (2) Learners then ask and answer questions in order to form the appropriate line. (You can use the line they made for a following activity, e.g., fold the line in half to form partners.)

Sentence Machine. (McCloskey & Stack, 2011). In Sentence Machine, learners cooperate to form sentences using key content vocabulary in response to questions created by the class. It can be used to review and “cement” concepts and language being developed in their studies.

- (1) Display a list of key review terms related to the concepts/topic being studied.
- (3) (2) Have learners work in groups of about 4. Assign terms to each group and ask them to construct questions, each including one of the terms assigned to their group.
- (4) (3) Each group sends one person to stand in a line across the front of the class. Introduce the process by having the front group practice the process of answering questions with sentences, each person speaking one word at a time in order. When an unfinished sentence gets to the end of a line, it “wraps” around back to the first person. Use general questions to help students get started. For example, ask, “What is your name?” Students answer the question in a complete sentence, one word at a time, e.g., student #1 says “My”, student #2 says “name”, student #3 says “is”, student #4 says “(her first name), student #5 says “(his last name) .” (Now everybody laughs.)
- (5) (4) Class members then take turns asking their group's questions, one at a time. Learners are to answer questions, using the key terms correctly, in the same way -- each learner speaks only one word of the answer at a time. As a result, learners have to think “on their feet” about the terms and the correct answers, but also about many aspects of language – including grammar (what form of words to use in what order), collocation (what words “go together”), and word choice. The teacher is available to prompt or suggest the correct form when a student gets stuck. You will also find that students in the line and the class will all be processing the sentences themselves as they are being constructed, and will be eager to make suggestions. Continue as time allows or until all the questions are answered.

Make Your Own Little Book!

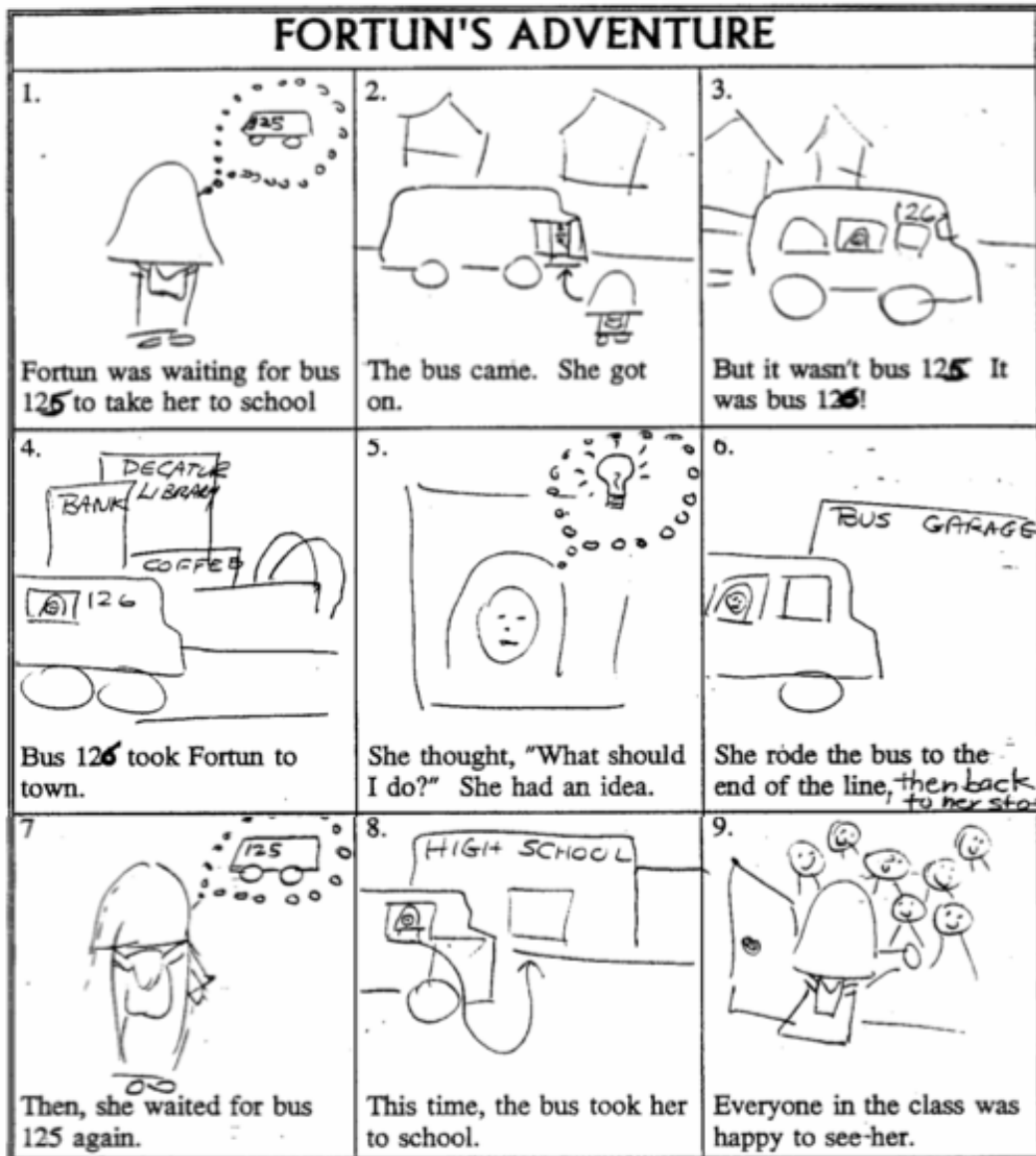
Fold-It Books (McCloskey, 1999)

8-Page Fold-It Book	
<p>1. Fold paper 3 times.</p> 	<p>2. Open. Fold the fat way. Cut halfway in from the fold side.</p> 
<p>3. Open and re-fold the skinny way.</p> 	<p>4. Push the ends together so the middle comes out.</p> 
<p>5. Pages will look like this.</p> 	<p>6. Write and draw in your book.</p> 

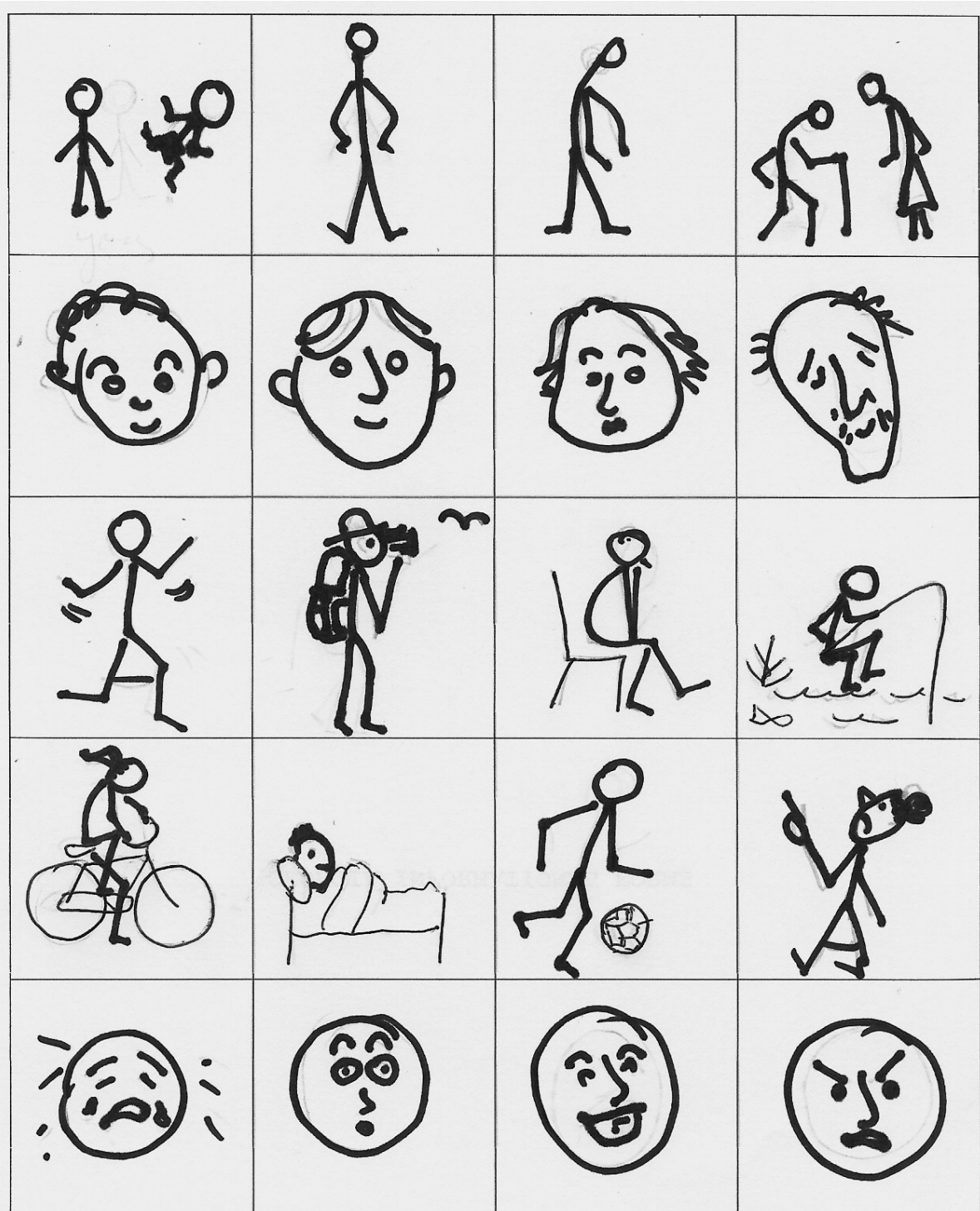
TPR Storytelling

1. Ideas are generated from events in the classroom, a story problem or concern of a particular student, or responses to a topic introduced by the teacher.
2. The teacher uses pictures and symbols to help learners tell a story, ask for information, express opinions, or sequence actions.
3. Stories are saved and language focus (grammar, vocabulary, function...) developed and categorized.
4. Lessons are taught with follow-up activities.

Resource: Shapiro, N., & Genser, C. (1994). *Chalk talks*. Berkeley: Command Performance Language Institute.



Drawing Lesson



Resource: Wright, A. (1984). 1000 pictures for teachers to copy. London: Collins ELT.

This is a true story about integrity versus money. ~~a~~A man told everyone he ~~can~~could sit on water. ~~he~~He filled a big tank with water and sold lots of tickets for all to come ~~and~~ see. Of course, when he tried, he fell right in the tank. Why ~~would~~ a person ~~would~~ disgrace himself just in order to make a few bucks?!

Told by the Dalai Lama

Resources:

Classroom Management Video Tips for Teachers from Edutopia <http://www.edutopia.org/classroom-management-teacher-tips-video>.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper and Row.

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