

The Complete ESL/EFL Cooperative & Communicative Activity Book.
Stephen Sloan.

National Textbook Company. 1991. Pp. 156.

This black-line master book provides 35 interactive activities for the intermediate-level English classroom. Most suitable for the secondary or adult learner in any language learning setting, these activities are meant to be completed in groups in collaborative or cooperative fashion. Activities are divided into three categories: strip stories, interviews and match-ups, and jigsaw (information gap) tasks. Each of these categories requires different behaviors from the students and provides contexts for varying language experiences. Accordingly, they generate different kinds of language. Students are asked to reassemble strip stories, to connect a word with its definition by circulating around the room, to complete questionnaires, to cooperate in the solution of a problem.

Strip story units include a narrative strip, comprehension questions, a strip dialogue, and a second set of comprehension questions. They may be used in a several days' sequence and are rich reading exercises. Interviews require students to gain information from many members of the class. They use a particular grammatical structure and will generally take one class session. Vocabulary-driven match-ups are accompanied by crossword puzzles that can be used to reinforce target vocabulary. Jigsaw activities include directions to the teacher and the students. They seem well-conceived and challenging. The activities in this resource should offer many lively and vocal class sessions. Instructions are simple. Results should be rewarding. ■

Five Minute Activities: A Resource Book of Short Activities.

Penny Ur and Andrew Wright.

Cambridge University Press. 1992. Pp. 105.

This book provides plenty of engaging activities for the secondary, adult, and college classroom. Selections may be chosen as starters to prepare

students for work, as reviews before stepping ahead to something new, as games or fillers within a lesson, or as the closing activities of an hour. All have been selected for inclusion because the authors believe that these activities have "genuine learning value." Each activity is described in terms of what is being practiced (i.e., use of past tense, listening comprehension of isolated words, writing revision) and includes the basic procedure and, in many cases, variations. Sample material enclosed in a box shows how tasks can be used at different levels of instruction. Activities are intended to provide the most mileage with the least preparation. One need simply read through the directions to implement the activity. Tasks are arranged alphabetically in the book and indexed by type of task or grammar point (affixes, conditional, discussions, errors) in order to make the text accessible and easy to use. While not all activities are new, the authors have compiled quite a unique assortment of over 130 activities. Some will no doubt become class favorites. ■

The ESL Teacher's Book of Lists.

Jacqueline E. Kress.

Center for Applied Research in Education. 1993. Pp. 226.

This resource is a compilation of 80 practical lists which can be reproduced for student use or be used as a reference. Divided into seven sections, the lists cover vocabulary, grammar, usage, pronunciation, assessment, and curriculum and instruction. Many whole language instructors teach without a formal grammar text and may not be using the kind of series which includes vocabulary lists. Accordingly, this resource may provide general and academic vocabulary that may be assigned for mastery. Within this category the author includes an extensive list of English idioms as well as a list of idioms across five languages. Thirteen lists and charts will help students learn to distinguish and make English sounds. The grammar section includes reproducible handouts describing basic rules of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. An additional set of lists provides classroom examples and drills. A wide variety of instructional activities is organized into lists of aural, oral, vocabulary, grammar instruction, and writing skills. These activities are comprised of time-tested techniques and games. All the instructor will need is access to paper and a copy machine and/or the time to develop lessons with these materials. This resource has utility for most ESL teachers regardless of teaching situation. ■

Curious and Creative: Critical Thinking and Language Development.

Nancy Sokol Green.

Addison-Wesley. 1993. Pp. 179.

Designed as a supplementary enrichment program for elementary school LEP students, *Curious and Creative* is intended to develop critical thinking and language skills simultaneously. Each lesson has three parts: a classroom discussion based on a black-line master (to be shown on an overhead projector) precedes the primary activity which is then followed by another black-line master "designed to foster independent critical and creative thinking." Forty lessons are divided into five units: thought displays, group curiosity, brain sharing, experimenting, amazing creations. Lessons are indexed by content area, ESL topics, and critical thinking skills. The author follows Terrell's Natural Approach in her attention to communicative, whole language tasks and appropriate response types for LEP students at various levels of language development. The author stresses that all activities can be used at any level of language development.

The activities are based on Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Development and provide opportunities for hypothesizing, designing, inferring, comparing, analyzing, evaluating, synthesizing, and applying information. Lessons are drawn from across the curriculum and may be recycled from school year to school year because students will respond differently as their linguistic ability and creative expression mature from kindergarten through sixth grade. The author suggests devoting 45 minutes to each three-part lesson. An introductory section includes the rationale for the text, instructions to implement lessons, and a good restatement of Natural Approach pedagogy. With some minor adaptations the activities in this valuable resource can be successfully presented to middle school students as well as the K-6 group for which it was intended. ■