

PrimaryTimes

KEEPING THE TEACHER INFORMED



Facing changes

A special warm welcome to all our readers. For the first time ever, **Tim Priesack** is not writing this page, as he passed away last February. He left a huge empty space in our hearts and in our work, but we are sure he will always be remembered by all the people who had the chance to meet him and work with him.

We would like to remember Tim by not only dedicating him this issue of **Pearson Primary Times**, but also by publishing again a couple of his best articles. We have also asked two of our best contributors ever to write an article about Tim's work, something that we all consider a priceless legacy.

Since the very first edition of **Lang Primary**, back in 2000, when facing changes we have always tried not to disrupt what the magazine means for the teachers, our readers, you. This is what Tim Priesack would want us to do now, and this is exactly what we feel like doing. For this reason, you will find different articles about didactics and the use of the new technologies in the primary school, three pages of revision exercises – which we know are very appreciated at the beginning of the new school year – and a couple of hands-on worksheets. You will also find our usual Class Project.

"Always learning, an absolute truth, as from the moment a person is born learning is taking place. The axiom **you're never too old to learn** is certainly true, although as far as young learners are concerned it should read **you're never too young to learn!**" (Tim Priesack)

Giulia Abbiati
Pearson Italia
Primary ELT

Tim and the T.S.N

di Cecilia Perillo e Joanna Carter

Joanna

It was 1999 and I was working as a full time freelance teacher at British Council when I received an email asking for proofreaders of English for course books and products for a new publishing company. I had done a proofreading course and decided to answer. It sounded like a small but very interesting role, a tiny step into the world of publishing. Or so I thought! Little did I know that the man who had sent the email, **Tim Priesack**, would have such an important and huge impact on my working life!

I went along to a proofreading meeting and that was where I first met Tim: this big, affable Englishman with a mind bursting with creative and innovative ideas for this wonderful new name in the Primary school publishing sector, Lang Edizioni. Tim was so enthusiastic, positive and persuasive, it was impossible to say no to his ideas, impossible not to get immediately involved. Very soon, I was not only proofreading Tim's new Primary English course book, but writing articles and designing worksheets for this amazing magazine, Pearson Primary Times, known back then as Lang Primary, another of Tim's many inspired and inspiring projects.

And then came along the most important project that I was to become involved in: the TSN or Teacher's Support Network...

Lia

I was teaching full time in a private catholic school and The British School in 1999 when I received an invitation to attend a meeting in Milan, held by Paravia Bruno Mondadori. The focus of the meeting was to introduce and promote their new Primary and Secondary school brand, Lang Edizioni.

Tim Priesack was at this meeting. It wasn't difficult to understand that this tall, clever and charismatic teacher turned editor with years of pedagogical and didactic experience was about to produce some of the best primary ELT course

books in Italy. In fact Tim through his unique personal and individual style, together with brilliant authors like Frances Foster and Brunel Brown, produced the most appreciated course books and materials across the country.

The second aim of the meeting was to introduce the TSN. Here is part of that original presentation...

- *Lang Edizioni has established a Teacher Support Network to work side by side with English language teachers in schools in Italy.*
- *The main objective of the TSN is to offer specialist educational advice and training to state school teachers and to meet the need for on-going support in order to enhance their professional development.*
- *We are sure you will feel as enthusiastic as we do about the Lang TSN. We look forward to working with you in the near future.*

So this was the beginning of our (Joanna and Lia's) biggest adventure with Tim Priesack. He easily convinced us to become part of the huge team of teacher trainers that made up the TSN. The Lang Primary sector was Tim's creation, passion and life and soon it became ours too!

Tim was always very determined and focused about how and what he wanted the Primary TSN to be. He wanted all the trainers to continue to do as much English teaching themselves as possible so that the information, knowledge and experience that we passed on in workshops, seminars and training sessions with Italian state school teachers was really usable, immediate and real. He also stipulated that the content of workshops and seminars should be pedagogical. The main focus was to promote Lang materials through methodology and didactics, not just a commercial promotion of the publisher's books. His philosophy was clear, keep in touch with what is going on in schools, be practical, be 'hands on'. This really was an organisation to help and support the teachers!



Here is Tim Priesack at a conference with TSN trainers (middle left to right) Joanna Carter (TSN trainer), Barbara Bettinelli (Lang author), Lia Perillo (TSN trainer); (bottom left to right) Maxine Jones (TSN trainer) and Emanuela de Marchi (TSN events organiser).

Over the years, with the TSN, we travelled around Italy, Joanna in the North and Lia in the South, along with many other trainers, visiting hundreds of schools and attending dozens of ELT conferences, giving seminars, workshops and advice. The teachers were wonderful welcoming, appreciative and keen to learn. But the experience was reciprocal. The knowledge we gained from them about what could and couldn't work in their different teaching situations was fed back to the publisher's and was invaluable in creating future viable and good quality teaching materials. As the TSN developed, grew and became a reference point for the teachers and the Publishing House, so did our motivation and enthusiasm for the TSN and all that it represented. It was an enriching and rewarding professional experience.

And Tim was always there at the helm of the Primary sector and Primary TSN, actively and tirelessly involved. He met literally thousands of teachers and personally gave hundreds of workshops, each one as equally dynamic, energetic, explosive and interactive as the other. He always joined in the activities presented in the workshops and loved nothing better than to dance and sing along with teachers. He kept everyone captivated and enthused from beginning to end. He was no less motivating and uplifting with the agents who organised his events along with the events office and they all adored him.

Tim Priesack and the TSN opened up many other professional opportunities for us both. Tim

commissioned Joanna to write workshops, such as 'Making the Most of Visuals', 'Sounds Like Fun' and 'Using Creative Dramatics in the Primary English Classroom' and Tim and Lia wrote and produced 'Sing Along' together, a Primary song and activity book. I (Lia) will never forget him coming to Bari, singing and dancing in my living room until we got the words and rhythm right. All three of us wrote and produced 'Let's Celebrate', a song and activity book about English festivities.

Today Lia is Field Editor with Pearson Italia and Joanna continues to write workshops and articles and do editorial work for them along side being a full time mum! We are the longest serving members of the Primary TSN and will endeavour to keep alive the ideals and philosophy that it engendered in memory of its great creator Tim Priesack. We will both always be truly honoured and grateful that we had the possibility to work alongside this big, cheerful, charismatic and creative Englishman.

Thank you Tim. We miss you and will never forget you.

Joanna Carter teaches both children and adults in a private language school in Milan. She is a long experienced teacher trainer.

Lia Perillo is a teacher at all levels in both the public and private sectors. She is a teacher trainer for Pearson and co-author of Sing Along, LANG Primary Resources and Let's Celebrate CD, LANG-Pearson Longman.



Revision

Years 2/3

1. Look at the picture and circle the correct preposition.



a. in under



b. next to on



c. under between



d. between next to



e. in between



f. under on



g. on between



h. under next to



i. under between

2. Look and write.



I've got a rabbit.



I've got a dog.



I've got a cat.



I've got a goldfish.



I've got a tortoise.



I've got two rabbits.











Revision

Years 3/4

1. Read and copy the words into the spider web.

CLOTHES

FOOD

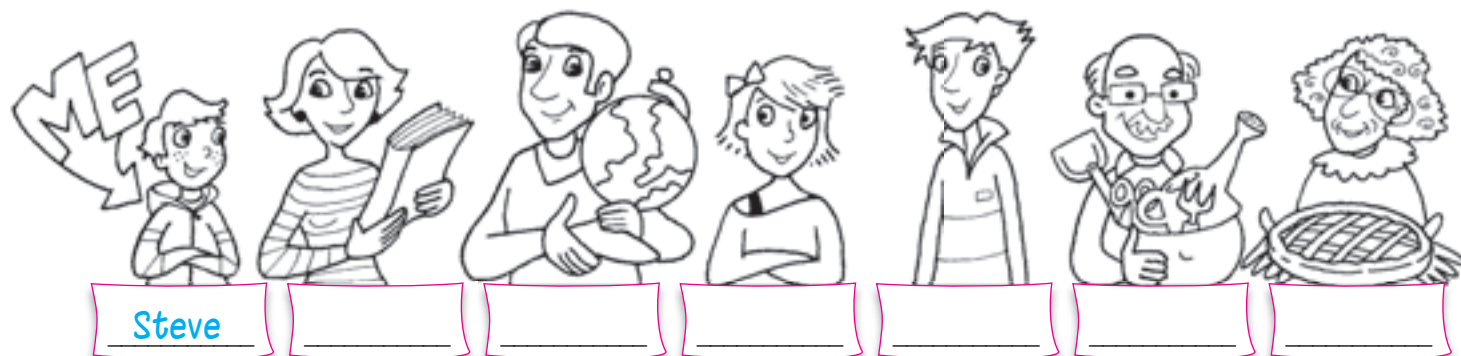


car - snake - dress - rabbit - chocolate - train -
cat - carrots - doll - pears - T-shirt - shorts -
salad - ball - ice cream - crocodile - skirt -
bike - jumper - monkey

TOYS

ANIMALS

2. Read and write the names. Then answer the questions.



Steve

Hello! I'm Steve. I'm nine years old. This is my family. My grandmother's name is Penny. She likes cooking and we love her cakes. My grandfather's name is Aron and he likes gardening. My mother's name is Susan. She likes reading, she loves books. My father's name is Richard. He likes Geography. I've got a sister and a brother. Jenny is twelve. She has got short blond hair. Dave is fifteen. He is tall and thin.

1. Who is Jenny?
2. Who is Penny?
3. Who is Aron?
4. Who is Susan?
5. Who is Dave?
6. Who is Richard?

She's Steve's sister.

She's Steve's

He's



Revision

Year 5

1. Read and complete the letter. Write your reply on the back.

Dear _____,

My name is Tommy. I'm British. I live in Manchester in a small

with two



_____, one



and one



_____.

I'm



_____ years old. I've got green



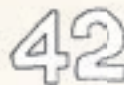
and brown



My



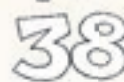
_____ 's name is George. He's



My



_____ 's name is Elizabeth. She's



I've got a little



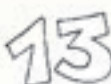
_____, Sarah. She's



I've got a



_____, too. He's



I've got a small white



_____ called Bunny.

I like playing



_____, my sister likes



and my brother likes



_____.

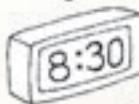
My favourite food is



_____. My sister likes



I go to school at



_____ and I go back home at



_____. I go to



_____ at



_____.

Write soon,

Tommy

Communicative Exercises

When is a two-line dialogue a drill and when is it a communicative act?

di Tim Priesack

In the context of the Primary school, a second language is primarily taught as an instrument of communication. Italian, the children's first language, is not only taught for its communicative benefits, but also for other reasons such as study skills for other curricular subjects as History and Geography.

The English language teacher or, more correctly, the teacher who teaches the English language (the position of English language specialist teacher is disappearing very quickly with the recent reforms of the Primary school), should be including in the lessons language exercises where the children have the opportunity to communicate with each other.

Some questions need to be considered;

- Exactly what is a communicative language exercise in the Primary classroom?
- When the children have completed a communicative exercise, how can the teacher be sure that communication has taken place?

For this discussion we will presume that the children have been divided into pairs (student A and student B) and that the communication skills are oral/aural (speaking and listening).

A very important element in a communicative exercise is that there is a gap of information.

“ One child must have information that the other student does not know. ”

The closing of the information gap, the exchange of information, is the first step in a communicative exercise. A language exercise with no information gap cannot be considered a communicative exercise, but a language drill when the children are familiarising themselves with the sequence of words in a sentence. For example, in the following two-line dialogue it is presumed that A already knows the answer to the question and therefore there is no information gap. This is a language drill.

Student A: What's the weather like today?

Student B: It's sunny.

Student A: What's your favourite sport?

Student B: My favourite sport is badminton.

In this second dialogue we can presume that A does not know the answer to the question being asked, and this

satisfies the first requirement for a communicative exercise. However, if we decide that this is a communicative exercise, we are being very presumptuous.

We are presuming that A understands the answer to the question and knows what *badminton* is.

In the classroom reality, when children are working in groups asking and answering questions, it is often the case that children concentrate so intensely on what they have to say that not only do they not understand the answer to questions, but they don't even listen to them. As soon as they have asked a question, they are concentrating on the next question they have to ask!

The teacher, therefore, needs to check that communication has taken place, but with 24 children working in 12 pairs it is an almost impossible task to check each pair.

One solution is to give the children a task to do with the information they receive. The successful completion of this task will tell the teacher that communication has taken place.

The steps of a communicative exercise therefore are:

Student A asks a question.

Student B answers.

Student A must use the answer for another activity to prove comprehension.

Returning to the previous two-line dialogue, we can presume that this is part of an exercise when the children have to find out *favourite* things. The chart that follows could be enlarged and used by both A and B and given to the teacher upon completion. The children are asked to collate the information and draw small illustrations.

Depending on the level of the class the pupils could also be asked to produce written sentences such as: *Franco's favourite sport is badminton.*

	FAVOURITE	PICTURE
colour		
sport		
school subject		
singer		
cartoon		
food		
drink		

Children Learning English as a Foreign Language

Gaming and Learning – Face the Connection

di Jorge Teixeira

A lot has recently been said about what is referred to as “game theory literature”.

Theorists, scientists, and even video game designers have been assigned a mission: How to place what is behind the context of games into an educative framework or, rather, how to tackle education within the context of games? This article aims to pinpoint a few features of effective gamers that can be optimized when applied to the appropriate learning environment.

It is not possible to talk about this subject without establishing a direct relationship between the application of a certain strategy, observation, adjustment and therefore better performance of that strategy. However, how do we identify a good gamer in class and then consider him/her a good/effective learner?



The backbone of this relationship lies in mastering strategy learning: Players gradually figure out what strategy produces the highest payoffs in a specific game (Weber and Rick, 2008). For instance, if you have played auction – a classic game where groups decide whether or not a sentence deserves to be purchased – the teacher soon realizes that the tokens used as money can become more valuable than simply trying to work out the sentences. And the group will start developing strategies to finish the game with some “money” left. In that case, more importantly will be to pay more attention to *meaningful* learning. In this case, the role of the teacher should be to transfer concepts once learned in new contexts (Stahl 2000,a,b; Rankin et al., 2000).

Having said that, let us now identify the five characteristics effective gamers have in common that can be observed in the classroom, so the teacher can apply them to meaningful learning.

1. A BLEND OF MIXED FEELINGS

Effective gamers are used to dealing with a sense of urgency, fear, and optimism because they have a deep sense of focus. If the teacher is able to put together a task in which these feelings are likely to occur, she/he should expect these mixed feelings to appear, showing that students are deeply engaged.

2. COLLABORATIVE ENVIRONMENTS

The video game industry soon realized that gamers would be more involved if more and more players became engaged in epic assignments. There is nothing more convenient than simply inviting people to join you in these missions. These invitations saw no geographical borders, and now larger and larger online communities get together either to accomplish or to dispute a certain accomplishment. The positive side effect of this is that it takes a lot of trust to play with someone. We develop rapport with people with whom we play, even if we are on opposite sides. So, games that are strongly based on group work are very welcome. Indeed, it is important to assign members different tasks, especially if noticed which particular contributions can be provided by the students' specific “gift”.

3. OPTIMISTIC DRIVE

One characteristic that is inherent in effective gamers is that they are extremely optimistic! "Failure is not an option!" is their motto. With this natural drive, effective gamers decide to act as soon as possible in order to overcome obstacles with an ultimate belief of success. The challenge for the educator is to provide a learning environment in which the rewards are truly meaningful and motivating, while the learning acquisition elements outnumber those rewards.

4. THE RIGHT LEVEL OF CHALLENGE

It is been largely preached that three factors are vital in a learning environment: the feeling of growth, an element of fun, and the right level of challenge. Out of these three, the last one is the first piece in the game designer's drawing board. Targeted gamers are never given a challenge they cannot achieve. If the challenge is below their abilities, they will lose interest; if the challenge is above their talents, it becomes overwhelming and therefore demotivating.

5. GAMERS BECOME SUPER HEROES

Games are environments in which self esteem is key. Effective gamers become highly empowered individuals moved by a cause. The problem is that video games became popular as a way to evade the real world. The educator's role is to bring the real world into gaming. Effective gamers are extremely productive because they are willing to work hard

if given the right work. As parents or as educators, we are often surprised by gamers level of accomplishments.

So, why not involve them in a super project equivalent to an "epic battle" meaningful for their context, society or the planet? In the words of Jane McGonigal, "games are powerful platforms for change".



Holding a degree in Letras, a Specialization Course in Materials Design by the University of Chichester-UK, Jorge Teixeira has more than 20 years of experience in ELT, as an English teacher, coordinator, and teacher trainer. Throughout his career, he has gathered valuable insight mostly from teenagers and adults. He has also held significant positions in the Braz-Tesol-Goiania Regional Chapter. He is currently an ELT consultant for Pearson.



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What's new out there on the web?

di Giulia Abbiati

Today's students, and Primary school kids are students too, besides being very young, are digital natives. We all know that we, the adults, will never catch up with them as far as new technologies are concerned. Our kids will probably know better than us how to find anything on the web and they will always be faster than us in searching and, most important, finding anything they are looking for on the Internet. Does that mean that we should give up trying to be digital people? Of course not! This is the reason why Pearson has a brand new website for digital materials, which all teachers should check out: www.digilibro.pearson.it

Extra worksheets

There are many extra worksheets for each of our most recent and famous courses, which can be downloaded and photocopied. There is one worksheet for each unit in each level of *Come Along Stars* and *English On The Road* plus some extra materials for *Junior is Here*. The worksheets are specifically linked to each year's syllabus, so they could also be adapted and used with other coursebooks.

Teacher's Books

All the Teacher's Books ever published are online and easily downloadable.

Audio CDs

All the audio CDs of our courses have been converted into Mp3s and are now ready to be downloaded.

Answer Keys

Answer Keys for all the extra worksheets and for all the Summer Books and Prime Readers are online.

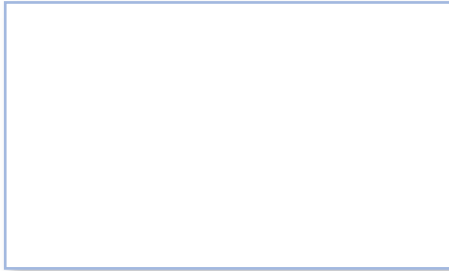




WORKSHEET

Autumn

1. As every autumn, this is the season of falling leaves. Choose your favourite leaf and use it to invent and draw the flag of your own country. Describe it.



2. Look and match each plant with the right country and with its flag. Colour.



MAPLE



CLOVER



THISTLE

Ireland

Scotland

Canada



3. Collect some dry fallen leaves and glue them onto a piece of cardboard. Cover the leaves with paint (you can also use different colours mixing them with a paint brush). Once the leaves are completely covered, lay a sheet of paper over the painted leaves and rub it to get a good print. Lift the paper and let dry. You can then use it to write cards to your friends, to wrap a book or just as a decoration.



The pair work task

di Tim Priesack

Up until the early 1980s the teaching of English as a foreign language was primarily concerned with the structure of the language as opposed to its functional uses for communication.

Then a revolution took place. A new generation of text books appeared indicating an innovative objective to English language teaching. Language was no longer considered to be a series of grammar rules but an instrument of communication and this was reflected not only in the syllabus design of the text books, but also in the framework of the exercises used in the classroom to practise the English language. The most evident differences were in the type of activities used to practise the speaking skills.

If the students were being asked to learn English as an instrument of communication, speaking activities in the classroom could no longer be confined to dialogue between the teacher and the students. There were too many students in a class to give each person enough practice in the communicative speaking tasks during a lesson.

Working with a partner

In order to give students the maximum opportunity to use the language as a means of communication, the students were asked to work with a partner and complete oral language tasks, under the continual guidance of the teacher. The question forms of language were introduced earlier than previously as without the ability to ask questions a communicative act is difficult to simulate.

People do not normally produce language spontaneously but use language to react to a stimulus, very often a question, although this stimulus can also be something a person has seen or read.



There are many different types of pair work activities such as:

- Question/answer using models supplied by the teacher. Very often the number of options are increased by visual stimulus so that, while this exercise has similarities to the second type of exercise described above, by increasing the number of possible similar questions and answers and asking the children themselves to form and respond to utterances, the learners have far more opportunity to communicate with another, practising and consolidating usage of the English language. This type of exercise is very popular in the early years of second language learning.
- Task-based pair work gives the learners the opportunity to communicate to complete a language task. **Successful completion of the language task tells the teacher that communication has taken place.** Imagine a class divided into pairs sitting back to back, working on a *Spot the differences* kind of activity. In each pair of pupils, one is holding picture A and the other picture B. The students ask questions about and describe their pictures making a list of the differences. When the task is completed, providing the teacher has ensured that no Italian has been used by the learners, the teacher can be sure that a communicative act using the English language has taken place within the pair.
- Milling activities are when the learners have to complete a task which involves the whole class or a group of learners and have to speak in pairs with each student. The easiest way to organise these activities is to get all the students to stand up, with pens and paper if needed to record information, and mill or walk around the classroom asking and answering questions. On a simplistic level, this is how the learners would have to work if they were asked to make a list of all their classmates surnames in alphabetical order or collect statistics on the favourite food, drink or hobbies amongst their classmates.



The Primary class and communication

Today, communicative pair work exercises are an essential part of second language learning, especially in the Primary school, where learners have very little or no opportunity to meet the English language outside the school. The contact the children have with the English language is limited exclusively to between the classroom walls and therefore the teacher should give learners the opportunity to use English as a communicative tool during lessons in simulated communicative activities.

Setting up a pair work task

From the first time the children are asked to work in pairs, this exercise should be treated as unique. After explaining to the children the importance of speaking to each other to practise English, use the opportunity of the uniqueness of the exercise to move the children from their usual places to sit near others. The teacher can use this moment to move linguistically stronger children together or mix the seating so that weaker children work with those who can help them. Ideally, when the teacher announces a pair work activity, the children should expect instructions as to where they have to sit.

The setting up of a pair work exercise should be organised in steps:

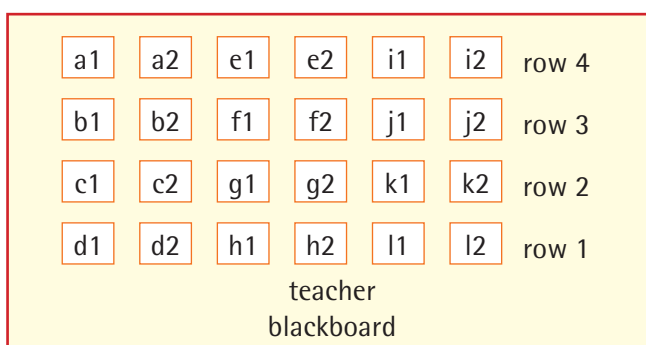
- dividing the children into pairs
- checking that they have everything they are going to need when they begin the task such as books, pens and paper, if they have to record information
- letting them watch two children in front of the classroom completing the exercise as a model, so that when they are asked to begin they know *exactly* what they have to say and what they can expect to hear. Very often pair work tasks are unsuccessful simply because when the children begin they are not absolutely sure of what is expected from them
- if the exercise is collecting information, such as completing a table, it is often useful to give children a time limit for the exercise.

Changing pair partners

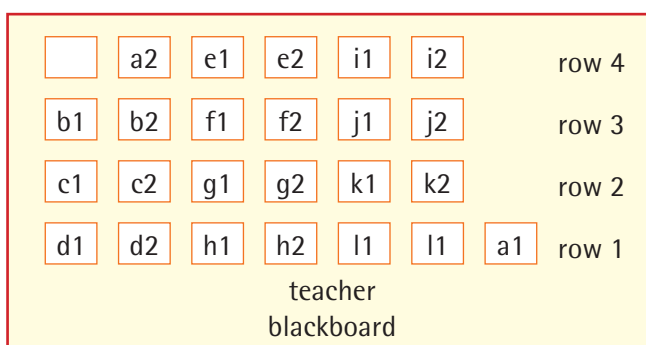
There are a variety of ways of changing pairs of students in the classroom to give them the opportunity to practise the same exercise more than once without boredom setting in. In a typical class of twenty-four, the children sit behind desks in rows with corridors between the rows so that the teacher and the children have access to the front of the room. During pair work activities, ask the children to move their desks so that the corridors are closed. Alternatively, ask children to move only their chairs to close the corridors. A typical classroom layout during pair work is illustrated. Teachers can modify this to reflect their own classroom. Ideally there will be an even number of rows.

PAIRS

1. Students with same letter work together.
2. Students in rows 1 and 3 turn round and work with those sitting behind them.
3. Students in rows 1 and 3 turn round and work with those sitting behind on their right (example: b1 works with a2).



4. Ask student a1 to sit in a chair next to student l2. All the pairs will automatically change.



In conclusion, all English language teachers should be using pair work exercises during lessons to ensure that children have the opportunity to practise the second language they are learning as an instrument of communication which will be of great use to them in later studies.

Kids' Corner is
a special section of
Pearson Primary Times
dedicated to very
young learners.



Kids' Corner

di Giulia Abbiati

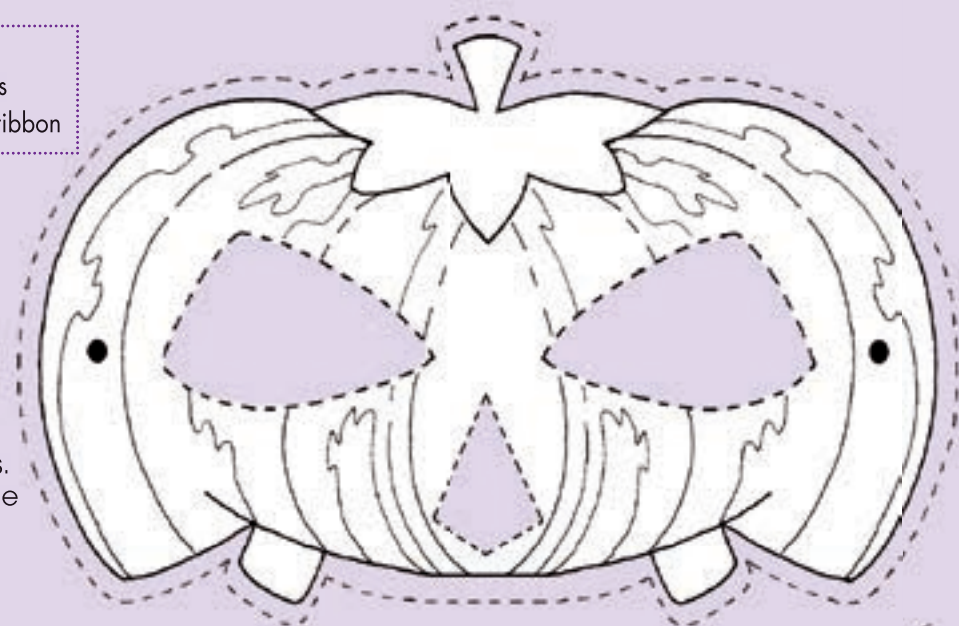
Halloween crafts

Activity 1 Make a Jack-o-lantern mask

- What you need:
- enlarged copy of template
 - scissors
 - felt-tip pens
 - thread or ribbon

What you do

1. Glue the enlarged copy of template onto cardboard.
2. Cut out the eyes and nose of the Jack-o-lantern.
3. Colour the mask.
4. Punch a hole on each side where indicated and pass a thread or ribbon in the holes.
5. Wear the mask and tie it on the back of your head!



Activity 2 Make a Halloween mobile

- What you need:
- enlarged copy of templates
 - scissors
 - five short pieces of ribbon
 - two wooden sticks
 - felt-tip pens
 - one long ribbon

What you do

1. Glue the enlarged copy of templates onto cardboard.
2. Cut out following the dotted lines.
3. Colour the drawings.
4. Punch holes on top of each element of the mobile and thread five short pieces of ribbon through the holes.
5. Tie the two wooden sticks together in order to form a cross, then tie the five elements to the ends and middle of the wooden sticks.



My Town

The Class project in this issue of **Pearson Primary Times** can be completed as a small group work or as a class work. It encourages the children to become aware of the world around them as they are asked to invent an ideal town in which they would like to live and grow up.

The children will be asked to make posters illustrating the town of their dreams with shops, parks, schools, libraries, cinemas and anything their imagination can think of.

Before starting, revise the lexical sets about town, shops, public places. Revise also the prepositions of place as older children could also be asked to describe where the places are.

On the back of the poster, or on a different sheet of paper, have the children describe the town they have drawn. Depending on their level and on the vocabulary they know, have them write complete sentences and/or simple information.

In my town there is one school, there are two parks and there is one big swimming pool.

The swimming pool is next to the pet shop.

This is a picture of my town. You can see...

There are three cinemas and one greengrocer's.

My Town

Describe and illustrate how your ideal town should be. Include descriptions and illustrations of:

- the useful places (school, Post Office...)
- the places where you have fun (park, cinema...)
- the shops (greengrocer's, stationer's...)
- the names of the streets

Once the Project is introduced to the class, dedicate a little time each week to the preparation of the materials.

All the written language must be in English and physically written by the children. Teachers are asked not to correct or re-write the sentences produced by the children. The first 120 children who takes part in this project will receive a small present as a token of our appreciation for the time and effort taken in the preparation of the materials. Send the project materials together **with three copies** of the completed project form to:

Pearson Primary Times, Class Projects - Issue 42

Pearson Italia S.p.A. - Via Archimede, 51 - 20129 Milano

The materials should arrive in our offices by **15th December 2012**. We may publish extracts from some of the projects in future issues of **Pearson Primary Times**. All the materials submitted become property of Pearson Italia S.p.A. and reproduction rights are reserved.



THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED AND INSERTED IN THREE COPIES INTO THE PACK OF THE PROJECT MATERIALS.

42

Name of school _____

Address _____ CAP _____

City _____

E-mail _____ @ _____

Name and surname of teacher _____

Class/es presenting materials _____

Number of children presenting materials _____

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