



TeachingEnglish

Classroom Language
Asking questions and eliciting

Trainer Notes



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1 Asking questions and eliciting – Trainer Notes

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session participants will be able to:


- Use questioning and elicitation techniques effectively in English
- Build stories and contexts using a range of questioning techniques
- Involve learners more proactively through effective elicitation

Key Learning Points

- Elicitation techniques enable teachers to involve learners more proactively.
- Questioning helps to engage learners in meaningful language practice.

Key Learning & Phrases

- Accurate use of a range of open and closed questions.
- Appropriate intonation on questions

Plan Summary		
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2 Lead in	Discussion of how teachers currently start and finish lessons	15
3 Eliciting	An elicitation game	15
4 Asking questions	Practice in asking questions	30
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9 Phrasebook	Selecting useful words and expressions from the workshop	10
10 Reflection & action plan	Reflect on what they learned from the workshop. Decide on action points to try out in class.	

Notes

- There is useful extra practice for stage 3. 'Using questions' (especially to demonstrate how to set up a listening activity) in Slattery, Mary and Willis, Jane (2004) English for Primary Teachers Oxford University Press pp 46-49 – section 4.3
- Alternatively you could record the dialogues in worksheet 5 'Using Questions' with a colleague to demonstrate intonation and stress, and provide listening practice for the participants.
- You may want to use your own pictures for stage 8.

Procedure

1 Outcomes



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- Explain learning outcomes of session to participants

2 Lead-in : discussion questions



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- This game encourages the development of the useful speaking sub-skill of paraphrasing and of communication repair strategies.
- Tell Participants that they are going to play a game called “Backs to the board”.
- Divide participants into two teams.
- Appoint or get volunteer leaders for the two teams
- The volunteers sit or stand in front of the board facing their team – they mustn’t look at the board
- Write a word on the board – the teams explain / elicit the word from the team leader using explanation, definition, gesture, mime, Pictionary etc – they mustn’t say the word
- Listen carefully and award a point to the team that says the word
- Then write up another word and so on.
- Use words / phrases related to the topic of session (question, question mark, falling intonation, elicit etc) or review language from a previous session or use a lexical set

3 Eliciting

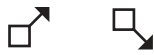




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- Ask participants for definitions of eliciting (in fact this is what you are doing).
Suggestion: “..asking students for their ideas and suggestions, getting them to contribute what they know already, and encouraging them to guess new words”
Doff, Adrian (1988) Teach English. Cambridge University Press p.159.
- Divide participants into groups and distribute the ‘Eliciting’ worksheet. Ask them to discuss the questions.
- Feedback : Compare responses and ask how they use the technique in their own classrooms.



4 Asking questions

- Explain that asking questions is one of the most common ways of eliciting information from learners and that this stage will provide practice in questioning techniques.
- Distribute the 'Asking Questions' worksheet. Explain that this is divided into 3 parts.
- Participants work in pairs and complete part 1
- Feedback – check answers:
 - Extract one
 - a) Checking understanding of the word whale;
 - b) Alternatives (closed OR questions).
 - Extract two
 - a) Eliciting ideas from the learners;
 - b) Wh- questions (open questions).
 - Extract three
 - a) Practicing short answers;
 - b) Yes / No questions (closed yes/no questions).
- Move on to part 2 – check that participants understand stress and intonation before beginning task.
- **Feedback – check answers:**
 - (2) Is it a fish or a mammal? 
 - (3) What are they doing? 
 - (4) Does he like cupcakes? 
- During feedback, model how to make stress and intonation clear to help learners perceive this. When you have modelled pronunciation, ask participants to practise the dialogues in closed pairs (if you feel it useful to do so – begin with whole group drilling and then move to closed pairs). Make sure that they make stress and intonation clear, as they would need to do in the classroom.
- Continue to part 3. Explain that asking questions is good way to make learners recognise words. Ask them to work in pairs to write as many questions as they can think of for each word. Monitor this activity, encouraging participants to say the questions with clear stress and intonation.
- Feedback – elicit suggestions and compare. Some possibilities -
 - 2 *When do you feel happy?*
 - 3 *Can you swim?*
 - 4 *Can you ride a bicycle?*
 - 5 *Do you like oranges?*
 - 6 *Is your shirt green?*
 - 7 *Where is your book?*
 - 8 *When do you go to sleep?*

5 How can I elicit?



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- Write these words on the board:

A PEN**BIG****A FILM ST****A CAR**

- Ask participants how to elicit these words from learners.
For example:
 - A PEN – show a real pen and say “What’s this called?”
 - BIG – say “What’s the opposite of SMALL?”
 - A FILM STAR – say “Who’s Denzil Washington? Who’s Tom Cruise?”
 - A CAR – draw a picture of a car on the board, or show a picture from a magazine of a car, and say “What’s this called?”
- These ways of eliciting can be used with many words and phrases, and give a chance for learners to be actively involved in thinking about English.
- Divide participants into pairs and distribute the ‘How can I elicit?’ worksheet. They match the language with an elicitation technique – for some words, more than one technique can be used.
- Feedback – some suggestions, though there are other possibilities.
1D, 2H, 3K, 4F, 5I, 6A, 7J, 8C, 9G, 10E, 11B, 12L.

6 Advice when eliciting



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- Divide participants into groups and distribute ‘Advice when eliciting’ worksheet.
- Participants read through the 8 pieces of advice and identify the two which are not good advice.
- Feedback – 4 and 7 are not good advice. Briefly discuss participants’ reactions to the good advice.

7 Questioning and eliciting using pictures



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- Ask the participants to look at the picture of the boy eating crisps. Ask questions – Where are the people? What is the boy in the middle doing? What is the boy on the left doing? How do the others feel? How does the boy feel? What can the others do? – Answers could be: In the cinema (or theatre); He’s eating crisps (loudly); He is putting his hands over his ears; They are angry/annoyed; He is happy/satisfied; They can complain/tell him to stop. (If the participants do not know a word, present it to them.)



- Afterwards explain that you have been using the picture to practise vocabulary. Summarise the vocabulary on the board.
For example:

 - Nouns: crisps, cinema, theatre
 - Verbs: He is eating; He is putting; They can complain
 - Adjectives: angry, annoyed, happy, satisfied
- Divide the participants into 5 groups and give each a picture. Ask each group to brainstorm vocabulary for each picture – nouns, verbs, adjectives. Monitor the groups and help with any words they don’t know.



- Then ask the groups to prepare questions to elicit this vocabulary. Again monitor the groups, giving support.
- Form 5 new groups, with one member from each of the first groups in each new group. Each member will then show the picture to the others and use their questions to elicit answers. Monitor the groups as they do this, making a note of any problems you hear, for example. Incorrect questions, how to present in English a word the group does not know.
- With the whole group feedback on the activity. Discuss the problems you have noticed.

8 Using pictures to elicit stories



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- Focus on the Going Places picture.



- Ask participants what questions they could ask about the picture.
For example:
 - Who are the people?
 - Where are they going?
 - Why are they happy?
- Ask participants what story the picture shows. What happens next?
Tell the story as a whole group.
- Divide Participants into groups of three
- Give each group three copies of the same picture **OR** your own alternatives.

- Tell Participants that they should use the picture as the background to a story which they can elicit from learners. Explain that they should think of a title and make notes (but not scripts) about their story. Then they prepare questions they might ask to elicit the information needed for the story and any gestures that might be useful. Give a time limit of 15 minutes for the preparation stage.



- Regroup participants so that they are in groups of three with pictures 2, 3 and 4. They now elicit their stories from each other.
- Feedback : Participants give brief feedback to each other on the techniques used. With whole class ask for feedback on how the elicitation went – whether they were able to construct each others' stories and how successful techniques were.

9 Phrasebook



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- Give participants time to write any useful expressions they have learned during the session in the phrasebook worksheet, and any notes they want to make. Encourage them to discuss this in pairs, if they want.

10 Reflection & Action Plan



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- Ask participants for quick reactions to the questions, What was the most useful thing about today's sessions?
- Then make sure that they have the **Reflection and action plan** worksheet. Ask them to discuss this in pairs, if they want, and complete them individually. Go around as participants do this and discuss their plans with them.
- When they have finished, say that you will be looking forward to talking to them at the next session about how their plans.
- Ask if they have any final comments or questions.