

Group Making Activities

This package features several strategies for creating groups in the Second Language classroom. These strategies can help organize students into group, while providing opportunities for communication.

Summary of Strategies

- Visual Partner Recognition – Colours
- Visual Partner Recognition – Deck of Cards
- Visual Partner Recognition – Objects
- Visual Partner Recognition – Similarities
- Extended Interaction/Communication – Animals
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Visual Partner Recognition – Colours

1. The teacher:
 - a. cuts up pieces of coloured paper (one colour per group, one piece per student)
 - b. puts those pieces into a hat (or other container)
2. The students:
 - a. each choose a piece of paper from the hat without looking
 - b. finds the other students with the same colour of paper to form their groups

Variations:

- a. The teacher can ask students to form a group that has one of each colour
- b. The teacher can put numbers on the pieces of paper; students can form groups of the same number or different numbers
- c. The teacher can put other objects in the hat of varied colours for students to pull (coloured elastics, etc)

Visual Partner Recognition – Deck of Cards

1. The teacher:
 - a. counts off cards from a deck of cards, enough for one per student
 - b. gives each student a card
 - c. divides students into groups
 - i. for 2 groups, students are divided into red or black cards
 - ii. for 4 groups, students are divided by suits
2. The students use their cards to find their other groupmates

Variations:

- a. The teacher can modify the deck to create different sized groups:
 - i. For groups of 5, there must be 5 cards in the deck the same
- b. The teacher can make cards with different themes on them to help students form groups
 - i. Different verb types – (Spanish/French: AR, ER, IR verbs)
- c. The teacher can put student names on the cards then pull them to create groups
 - i. These cards can also be used to randomly select students to answer questions in class

Visual Partner Recognition – Objects

- The teacher:
- a. collects objects from the classroom (rulers, pens, erasers, etc) enough for one object per student
 - b. asks each student to take an item
 - c. groups the students together based on who has the same item

Variations:

- a. The teacher can ask students to grab an object out of their backpack and divide the students accordingly or have the students divide themselves

Visual Partner Recognition – Similarities

1. The teacher:
 - a. tells students they will be finding their partners in groups based on certain characteristics
 - b. calls out a certain characteristic
 - i. wearing glasses
 - ii. wearing purple
 - iii. brown hair
 - c. continues calling out characteristics until the whole class is split into groups
2. The students who match the characteristic called out form a group

Extended Interaction/Communication – Animals

1. The teacher:
 - a. creates cards with pictures of animals on them (enough for one per student)
 - b. distributes the cards to the students
 - c. asks students to divide into groups:
 - i. by habitat – air/land/water (3 groups)
 - ii. by classification – reptiles/amphibians/mammals/fish (4 groups)
2. The students look at the image on their card and find their group members according to the teachers' instructions

Variations:

- a. The teacher can write the names of animals on popsicle sticks
- b. Students can circulate in the room making the sound of their animal to find their groupmates
- c. The teacher can distribute songs on cards instead of animals; students must circulate humming the song to find their groupmates
- d. The teacher can choose animals that don't have a well-identified sound attached to them to increase the difficulty of the activity

Extended Interaction/Communication – Birthdays

1. The teacher asks students to get into order based on birthdays
2. The students:
 - a. must get into order without speaking
 - b. can use fingers to figure out their order
3. Once the students have gotten into their correct birth order, the teacher can divide up the line into the desired number of groups

Variations:

- a. The students can use the target language to figure out their order

Extended Interaction/Communication – Film Title Matching

1. The teacher:
 - a. chooses a variety of film titles
 - b. prints up the film titles and cuts them up into separate words
 - c. distributes one word per students
2. The students circulate trying to find other students who can complete the film title

Variations:

- a. The teacher can cut up other words that students can match
 - i. Compound words
 - ii. Famous People
 - iii. Object Matching by category (transportation: car, train, bus etc)
 - iv. Country and Products (Israel – grapefruit, New Zealand – kiwi)
 - v. Occupation (Dentist – drill, Gardner – spade)
 - vi. Families (Mr Baker – Mrs Baker – Janet Baker)
 - vii. Countries and Capital cities/Things they are famous for/Political Leaders
 - viii. Countries and their foods
 - ix. Date and event and person (for groups of 3)

Extended Interaction/Communication – Assigning Roles

1. The teacher:
 - a. creates different roles that are appropriate to be used for the task (see sample roles below)
 - b. assigns a colour to each role
 - c. enlarges and laminates sample role cards on their designated colour to go on the board so students can see
 - d. creates distributable coloured role cards
 - e. distributes one card per student
2. The students:
 - a. look at their card
 - b. circulate to find other group members so that there is one of each role per group
 - c. work in groups to complete the activity/task with each person fulfilling their assigned role

Variations:

- a. The teacher can distribute plain coloured cards; once students find their similar coloured group members, they can choose their roles themselves
- b. The students can form their own groups and then distribute the role cards randomly within the group

| | | | |
|---|---|--|---|
| Note Taker/Organizer gathers materials for activity and returns them at end | Time Keeper keeps time of activity so group is able to complete the task | Encourager ensures that everyone in the group is participating | Questioner asks the teacher questions on behalf of the group |
| Leader responsible for ensuring that every member of the group fulfills his/her role | Reporter reports to the whole class | Quiet Keeper ensures the group stays within a reasonable volume level | |

Extended Interaction/Communication – Seasons

1. The teacher:
 - a. creates a sign with a picture on it representing each season
 - b. attaches each sign to different areas around the class
 - c. discuss with the students the word in the target language for each season
2. The students create groups by going to stand by the season they were born in

Variations:


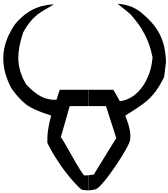
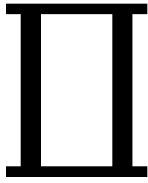

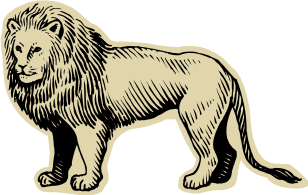






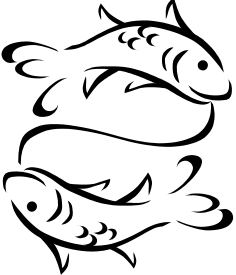
- a. The students can get into groups based on their favourite season

Extended Interaction/Communication – Signs

1. The teacher creates posters for each astrological sign to go around the classroom
2. The students get into groups according to their astrological sign

Variations:

- a. The teacher can use different astrological signs (Chinese, Mayan etc.)

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| <p>Aries</p>  | <p>Taurus</p>  | <p>Gemini</p>  |
| <p>Cancer</p>  | <p>Leo</p>  | <p>Virgo</p>  |
| <p>Libra</p>  | <p>Scorpio</p>  | <p>Sagittarius</p>  |
| <p>Capricorn</p>  | <p>Aquarius</p>  | <p>Pisces</p>  |

Random – Random Appointment

1. The teacher:
 - a. decides how many groups are needed
 - b. counts students off randomly with either letters or numbers
->ie: for 4 groups, teacher can count off 1-2-3-4 or A-B-C-D
 - c. asks all the 1's to be together, all the 2's, etc
2. The students:
 - a. listen to which number or letter they are given
 - b. find their group of the same numbers/letters

Variations:

- a. To increase the randomization, the teacher can create double the number of groups needed then partner up each group
ie: to create 5 groups, the teacher counts off from 1-10 then puts the 1's and 5's together, the 2's and 6's together, etc.

Pick Your Partner – Self- Selection

1. The teacher:
 - a. decides how many students are to be in each group and informs the students
 - b. asks students to choose their own partners/group members
 - c. reminds students to choose someone they weren't with last time
2. The students organize themselves into groups.

Random – Blindfold-Spinning

- The teacher:
- a. chooses group leaders
 - b. asks the students to stand in a circle
 - c. blindfolds each group leader, and has them take turns spinning around and pointing at the students who will now be their group members
 - d. continues to have the group leaders take turns until all the class members are chosen

Random – Shoe Toss

1. The teacher:
 - a. asks each student to take off one shoe and place it in a pile in the front of the room
 - b. divides the shoes into piles around the room; the number of shoes in each pile should correspond to the number of people in each group
2. The students find their shoe and stay with the others whose shoes were in the same pile

Variations:

- a. To create partners, the students can put their shoes in a pile; students can pick another shoe one at a time, the owner of that shoe will be their partner (half the students won't get a chance to pick)

Teacher-Made – Pick a Stick

1. The teacher:
 - a. collects popsicle sticks
 - b. modifies the popsicle sticks so they are different sizes; the different sizes correspond to the student groups
 - c. asks each student to choose a popsicle stick
2. The students:
 - a. choose a popsicle stick
 - b. find their groupmates with the same size of popsicle sticks

Variations:

- a. The teacher can put stickers on the popsicle sticks
- b. The teacher can write the students' names on the sticks; the students pick one at a time to find their partner
- c. The teacher can write numbers on the ends of the popsicle sticks

Teacher-Made – Selective Appointments

1. The teacher:
 - a. splits students into groups based on academic level or other criteria
 - i. lower –higher academic level: the lower-level students will benefit from working with the skills and classroom behaviours of the higher-level students, the higher-level students will benefit from helping out the lower-level students
 - ii. similar academic levels: pairing students with similar academic levels will help eliminate competition and negate anxiety
 - iii. specific skills
 - iv. mark aspirations
 - v. interests
 - b. can help determine the criteria using a questionnaire
2. The students work with the partners assigned to them by the teacher