

CAMBRIDGE HANDBOOKS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHERS

General Editor: Michael Swan

This is a series of practical guides for teachers of English and other languages. Illustrative examples are usually drawn from the field of English as a foreign or second language, but the ideas and techniques described can equally well be used in the teaching of any language.

In this series:

Keep Talking—communicative fluency activities for language teaching by Friederike Klippel

Drama Techniques in Language Learning – a resource book of communication activities for language teachers (New Edition) by Alan Maley and Alan Duff

Once Upon a Time – using stories in the language classroom by John Morgan and Mario Rinvoluceri

Discussions that Work – task-centred fluency practice by Penny Ur

Teaching Listening Comprehension by Penny Ur

Games for Language Learning (New Edition) by Andrew Wright, David Betteridge and Michael Buckby

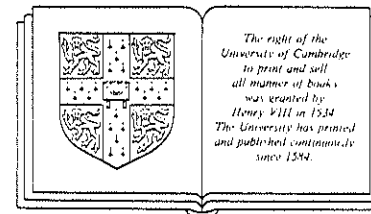
Keep Talking

Communicative fluency activities
for language teaching

Friederike Klippel

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occasionally be difficult. You could ask the students to hand round an object (e.g. a knotted scarf or a paper weight) and agree on the rule that whoever is holding the object has to contribute something to the discussion. It is not to be expected that each student will be able to think of something new to say, but in order to be able to say things like 'I agree with . . .' or 'I don't agree with . . . because', he has to listen carefully throughout the discussion. Other ways of organising discussions are mentioned in the general introduction (see pp. 9–10).

As regards their language learning aims, the discussion games in this section differ quite substantially from one another. However, a common feature is that students have to give reasons for their views. Some discussion games can only be played by advanced learners who have a good command of the foreign language (e.g. No. 60 *Secret topic*).

You can also use discussion games to improve the atmosphere in your class and help students cooperate better with each other. Sometimes certain people subconsciously adopt particular roles in discussion. If you feel that is the case, ask a few students to observe some of the others during the next discussion and to note down who takes which role. Possible roles are:

- initiator (starts the discussion, makes suggestions and tries to move the discussion along by asking questions)
- summariser (sums up in between; explains the points where there is agreement or disagreement in the group)
- grumbler (criticises both content and procedure of the discussion)
- rambler (rambles on about trivial side-issues; can hardly be stopped)
- silent member (does not talk at all except possibly to his neighbour; sometimes these people show quite clearly by their facial expressions what they think about the contributions of others)
- clown (makes fun of everything; tells jokes)
- mediator (tries to find compromises between different factions; stresses the common ground)
- hesitator (cannot find a clear view of his own; hesitates when talking)

You can probably think of more types yourself. When the observers have noted some of the typical roles present in discussions in your class the next step is to make the students

realise that they are adopting certain roles. This can be done either by making use of a tape or a video tape recording of the next discussion or by keeping detailed minutes. Then a role play can be acted out where each participant in the discussion has to play a role which the others do not know about. After the role play these roles are guessed.

Many of the discussion games may lead to oral or written follow-up activities: after doing No. 65 *Futures*, an essay on one's hopes or fears for the future could be set; in connection with No. 58 *What is being advertised?*, the students could make up their own advertisements; No. 73 *Awards* could be followed by a panel discussion.

Quite a number of the problem-solving activities, ranking exercises and values clarification techniques serve as stimuli for discussion as long as they generate controversial opinions amongst the students. For example, activity No. 38 *Getting it together* presents the participants with an experience (i.e. an attempt at working without communication) which is worth discussing afterwards. Further suggestions are to be found in *Learning for Change* 1977 and Stanford and Stanford 1969.

58 What is being advertised?

<i>Aims</i>	<i>Skills</i> – speaking, writing <i>Language</i> – making conjectures, expressing probability, giving reasons <i>Other</i> – making notes, discovering some advertising techniques
<i>Level</i>	Intermediate
<i>Organisation</i>	Pairs
<i>Preparation</i>	A number of different advertisements (cut out from magazines) from which all names and pictures of the products advertised have been removed, half as many advertisements as there are students. (Don't throw away the bits that have been cut out.)
<i>Time</i>	15–20 minutes
<i>Procedure</i>	<i>Step 1:</i> Each pair of students receives one advertisement. The partners discuss what product the advertisement could be for and why they think so. One of each pair makes some notes. After about five minutes the advertisements are exchanged

and each pair of students discusses another advertisement in the same way.

Step 2: Taking turns, each pair of students show their second advertisement to the rest of the class and report their ideas on the product being advertised. The two students who discussed this particular advertisement in the first round say where they agree or disagree and give reasons. When all the advertisements have been discussed the teacher gives the solutions (by presenting the cut-out parts of each advertisement).

Remarks When the students are making suggestions about the type of product being advertised by, for example, idyllic scenes in the country, their attention can be drawn to the associations which certain pictures give us (e.g. waterfall – clean air, health – cigarettes).

59 Mad discussion

Aims *Skills* – speaking
Language – giving reasons, describing advantages and disadvantages, contradicting
Other – imagination, fun

Level Intermediate

Organisation Teams

Preparation Pieces of paper with one word written on them (see below)

Time 20–30 minutes

Procedure *Step 1:* The class is divided into teams. One student from each team comes forward. Each chooses a piece of paper with a topic on it. He then has three minutes to argue with the student from the other team about which is more important for mankind, e.g. alsatians or pizzas. Possible topics: flowers, New York, operas, ships, plastic spoons, birthday cards, passports, watches, modern art, detective novels, schools, bakers, socks, zips, paper, the wheel, etc.

Step 2: (optional) A jury decides who has put the best arguments and awards points for each team. Then the next two students continue with new topics.

Remarks In this game it is important not only to put forward good arguments for one's own case but to try and contradict the opponent's point of view.

60 Secret topic

Aims *Skills* – speaking
Language – all elements
Other – talking without coming to the point, fun, imagination

Level Advanced

Organisation Pairs, class

Preparation None

Time 10–20 minutes

Procedure *Step 1:* Two students agree on a topic they want to talk about without telling the others what it is.

Step 2: The two students start discussing their topic without mentioning it. The others listen. Anyone in the rest of the group who thinks he knows what they are talking about, joins in their conversation. When about a third or half of the class have joined in, the game is stopped.

Variations 1: Students who think they know the secret topic have to write it on a piece of paper and show it to the two students before they are accepted.

2: The game can be played in teams and points awarded according to the number of people who find out the secret topic.

61 Word wizard

Aims *Skills* – speaking, writing
Language – individual words
Other – imagination, feeling for words, communicating with very few words

Level Intermediate

Organisation Individuals, pairs

Preparation None

Time 10–15 minutes

Procedure *Step 1:* The teacher asks the class to imagine the following situation: 'A wizard has taken away all the words from the world. Everybody can keep just four words. Choose four words which you would like to keep and write them down.'

Step 2: Each student finds a partner and tries to communicate using only his four words. The pairs share their words with each other so that now both have eight words they can use. Each student shares his eight words with

another student, so that both have 16, then twice more. In the end everybody has 64 words.

Step 3: Either alone or with a partner the students write a story or poem using only their words. These stories/poems are read out or stuck up on the wall.

Remarks (Idea adapted from Brandes and Phillips 1979.)

62 Uses and abuses

Aims *Skills* – speaking
Language – declarative sentences, -ing form
Other – imagination

Level Intermediate

Organisation Teams

Preparation None

Time 10–15 minutes

Procedure *Step 1:* The teacher and the class prepare two lists (of about 20 items), which are written up by secretaries from the two teams. List A contains people and animals, list B, objects.

Example:

A	B
teacher	book
mother	walking stick
shop-assistant	plaster
baby	50p coin
elephant	pen
crocodile	loaf of bread
soldier	car
dustman	cactus
farmer	apple pie
old woman	glass of beer
nurse	safety pin

Step 2: The two teams sit facing each other. The secretary from team 1 starts by inserting one word from list A and one from list B into one of the two sentence patterns:

What can a/an A do with a/an B?

Why does a/an A need a/an B?

The students in team 2 must find three answers quickly. Then their secretary makes up a new question for team 1. The

secretary crosses out the words that have been used. The game is finished when all the words have been used up.

Variations 1: The sentence patterns can be extended by adding a place, e.g.

Why does a/an A need a/an B in C?

2: A system of scoring can be introduced.

3: Students can pass each other a knotted scarf and play the game according to the rules of volleyball or another sport. (In volleyball, each of the two teams may only touch the ball three times before it *has to* be played to the opposite team.) Each team can have up to three answers before throwing the 'ball' to the other team.

Remarks Having a fixed sentence pattern may sometimes result in slightly odd sentences.

63 Shrinking story

Aims *Skills* – speaking, listening comprehension

Language – all elements

Other – memory, insight into the process of communication

Level Intermediate

Organisation Class

Preparation Story (see Part 2) or picture

Time 20–30 minutes

Procedure *Step 1:* Five students are asked to leave the room. The rest of the class is read the story (or played a recording). They listen to the story twice and after the second reading agree on a few important points which a summary of the story should contain. These are written down by everyone.

Step 2: The first student is asked to come in and listens to the story (once). The second student is called in and hears the story from the first student while the class notes down which of the important points have been mentioned. Student 2 then tells the story to student 3, student 3 to student 4, and student 4 to the last one. Student 5 tells the story to the class.

Step 3: Using their notes, the students who were listening and observing report on the changes in the story. Then the original is read (played) once again.

Variations 1: Instead of telling a story, a picture could be described and drawn by the last student.

2: If a cassette recorder is available all the versions of the story can be recorded and compared.

64 Which job?

- Aims* Skills – speaking
 Language – conditional, discussing, giving reasons, names of jobs
 Other – getting to know each other, learning something about oneself
- Level* Intermediate
- Organisation* Groups of six students
- Preparation* None
- Time* 15–20 minutes
- Procedure* *Step 1:* The students work together in groups. Each group member writes down the ideal job for himself and for everybody else in the group.
Step 2: The job lists are read out and discussed in the groups. Students explain why they feel the ‘ideal jobs’ suggested for them would/would not be ideal.

65 Futures

- Aims* Skills – writing, speaking
 Language – future tense, making comparisons
 Other – thinking about the world around us and how we are affected by what happens there
- Level* Intermediate
- Organisation* Individuals, groups
- Preparation* Two charts for each student (see Part 2)
- Time* 20–30 minutes
- Procedure* *Step 1:* Each student receives two copies of the chart. He is asked to fill in one with *Good Things*, the other with *Bad Things* by writing examples in each square.
Step 2: When students have finished, they form groups to share and discuss their hopes and fears for the future. Each group can focus on one time period and report the good and bad feelings of their group.
- Variations* Instead of writing, the students can draw sketches.
- Remarks* It is important to see the connections between the various squares. What happens in the world now may well affect our children in twenty years’ time.
 (Idea adapted from *Learning for Change* 1977.)

66 Comments

- Aims* Skills – writing, speaking
 Language – all elements, expressing emotions
 Other – getting to know each other
- Level* Intermediate
- Organisation* Class
- Preparation* None
- Time* 15–20 minutes
- Procedure* *Step 1:* Every student writes his name at the top of a piece of paper. All the papers are collected, shuffled and redistributed.
Step 2: Now every student writes a comment (a compliment, a question, a statement) under the name of the person. The papers are again collected and redistributed, so that everyone can write a second comment. The teacher (or a student) now collects all the papers.
Step 3: The papers are read out one after the other and a discussion follows. How did the people concerned feel? Were the comments fair/superficial/critical/supportive?
- Variations* Instead of having the discussion after all the comments have been read out, a short conversation can follow each comment.
- Remarks* For this exercise there should be a supportive atmosphere within the class.

67 Magic shop

- Aims* Skills – speaking
 Language – if-clauses, arguing, praising something
 Other – learning something about one’s own values
- Level* Intermediate/advanced
- Organisation* Individuals
- Preparation* Slips of paper with positive human qualities written on them (see below), three times as many slips as there are students (qualities may occur more than once)
- Time* 15–20 minutes
- Procedure* *Step 1:* Each student receives three slips of paper, each with a positive human quality on it, e.g. honesty, intelligence, fairness, humour, health, beauty, stubbornness, curiosity, cheerfulness, gentleness, humility, optimism, perseverance, politeness, hospitality, helpfulness, thoughtfulness, wisdom, justice, friendliness, adaptability, charity.

Procedure *Step 1:* Each team or group receives a copy of the handout. The students now have to discuss what evidence each of them would accept as regards the truth of each statement. They should not discuss whether they believe that a statement is true but what evidence would convince them. If the students cannot agree on acceptable proof they should note down their differences of opinion.

Step 2: When all the statements have been discussed, the groups report back to the whole class.

Remarks (Idea adapted from Krupar 1973.)

71 Optimists and pessimists

Aims *Skills* – speaking
Language – expressing different points of view
Other – imagination, fun

Level Intermediate

Organisation Two teams

Preparation None

Time 5–15 minutes

Procedure *Step 1:* One student from team 1 (optimists) begins by giving a statement, e.g. 'It is good for your health if you do some sport.' Then one student from the other team (pessimists) gives the other point of view, e.g. 'But sports like boxing or car racing are dangerous.' The pessimists continue with a new – pessimistic – statement, which the optimists have to react to.

Step 2: After a few minutes of exchanging statements, the students are asked if they found it difficult to adopt one point of view throughout. They could also mention those statements which went against their personal viewpoint.

Variations A good follow-up activity is I/You/He statements like:
I don't dance very well.

You haven't got much feeling for rhythm.

He tramples on his partner's feet.

Or:

I enjoy eating.

You are a bit overweight.

He is fat.

72 People

Aims *Skills* – writing
Language – past tense, present tense, describing someone
Other – imagination

Level Intermediate

Organisation Groups of three to four students

Preparation Photos of different people (cut out from magazines or your own snapshots), one photo per group

Time 15–25 minutes

Procedure *Step 1:* Each group receives a photo and is asked to write a curriculum vitae for the person in the picture. The students should mainly imagine the person's present interests and lifestyle. When they have finished with the first picture, photos are exchanged between groups. Each group works with three pictures.

Step 2: The results of the group work are read out and discussed. Which lives were seen in a similar way by the three groups? Which pictures were interpreted differently?

Remarks If the teacher uses photographs of people she knows, she could tell the students how far off the mark they are.

73 Awards

Aims *Skills* – speaking
Language – describing someone, reporting someone's activities, giving reasons, contradicting, stating preferences, agreeing and disagreeing
Other – thinking of praiseworthy qualities in ordinary people

Level Intermediate

Organisation Class, groups of four to six students

Preparation None

Time 25–45 minutes

Procedure *Step 1:* The students talk about the awards they can think of (awards for looks, such as 'Miss World, for bravery, etc.).

Step 2: Using brainstorming techniques (see No. 87 *Brainstorming*) the class try to think of many more possible awards (e.g. Smile Award, Help Award, Listening Award). All awards (they should be for positive qualities) are listed on the blackboard.

Step 3: Groups are formed and each group decides on two categories of award they would like to find candidates for.

Step 4: Now each group member describes one candidate for each award. (These should be people he knows personally.) Another group member takes down some notes. When everybody has finished, the qualities of all the people suggested for awards are discussed. The group members have to agree on who to give the awards to.

Step 5: Each group reports its results to the class. A short discussion of the reasons for choosing these people follows.

74 Discussion wheel

Aims Skills – speaking

Language – discussing

Other – (dependent on the topics)

Level Intermediate

Organisation Groups of six students

Preparation One handout for each group (see Part 2), three dice per group

Time 15–25 minutes

Procedure

Each group receives a copy of the handout and three dice. Each group member is given a number from 1 to 6. The dice are thrown; two dice indicate the students who start the discussion, the third die indicates the topic they have to talk about. After a short while the other group members can join the discussion. Every topic on the wheel should be discussed at least once. If the topic die shows the number 5, the two students choose their own discussion topic.

Variations

1: Instead of writing the discussion topics on the discussion wheel, they can be put on small cards and laid face down on the wheel.

2: More factual or more personal topics can be chosen.

75 Four corners

Aims Skills – speaking

Language – giving reasons, agreeing and disagreeing

Other – getting to know each other

Level Intermediate

Organisation Class, groups

Preparation Masking tape, 20 big pieces of paper with one word on each

(see below). The classroom should be cleared of tables and chairs.

Time 20–30 minutes

Procedure

Step 1: The teacher fixes a piece of paper to the wall in each of the four corners of the room. The words on each piece of paper should belong to the same category, e.g. colours: WHITE, RED, BROWN, PURPLE; or writers: GEORGE ORWELL, ARTHUR HAILEY, WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, LEONARD COHEN. Other possible categories for the signs are: types of music, articles of clothing, tools, cities, countries, drinks, numbers, animals, etc.

Step 2: The students are asked to read all four signs and stand in the corner which suits them best. All the students in one corner interview each other about why they chose this one. When the next four signs are hung up everyone chooses again.

Step 3: At the end a short discussion can follow on which students often chose the same corner, which students never met, etc.

Variations

Instead of single words, statements, quotations, proverbs or drawings can be used.



THEME

General

FUNCTIONS

- Reviewing specific vocabulary items
- Expanding vocabulary
- Improving spelling

MATERIALS

- Bright Idea # 51
- Blackline Master

COMMENTS

This game is suitable for intermediate and advanced students.

VARIATIONS

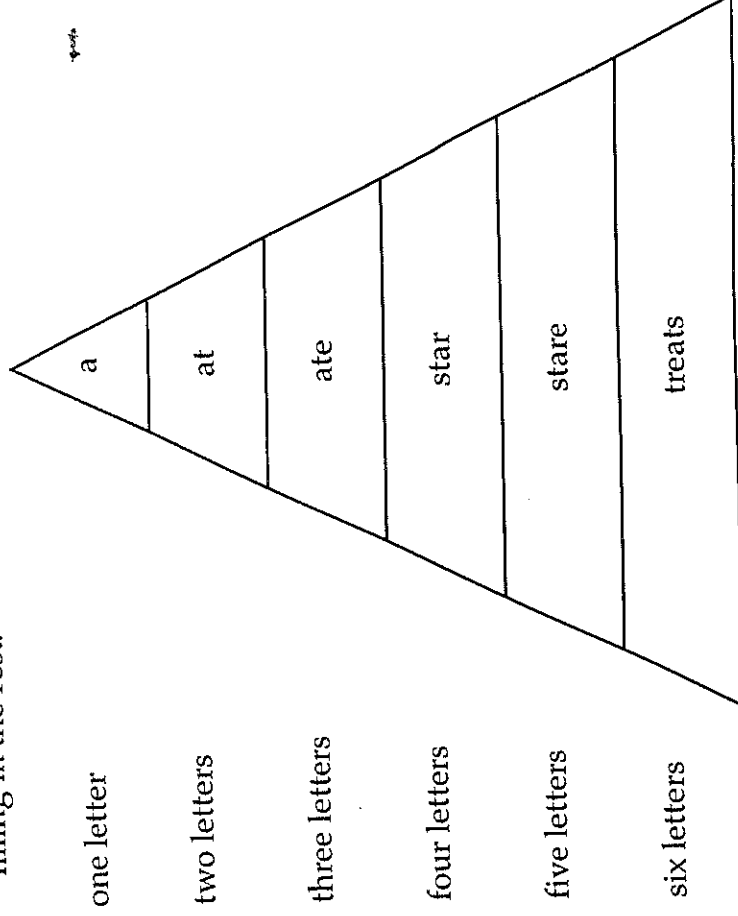
Invite advanced students to suggest their own master word from which all the other shorter words will be formed.

- .
- .
- .
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- .

101 Bright Ideas
 Ford, C.M.
 Add'l by JES

Pyramid

1. Choose the pyramid from Bright Idea # 51 Blackline Master that is most appropriate to the level of your students. (The first one requires only one word per line; the second allows for several.)
2. Make enough copies so that each student, pair, or group of students can have one. (You may want to make extra copies for additional rounds of the game.)
3. Demonstrate the activity. Start by drawing a pyramid like the one at the top of Bright Idea # 51 Blackline Master on the board and writing the letters S T A E T R above it.
4. Fill in the first line or two as shown in the sample below and invite volunteers to take turns coming to the board and filling in the rest.



5. Give each student, pair, or team a copy of a pyramid. Write the letters T R A I L E R S on the board and ask students to fill in all sections of the pyramid.

Pyramid



Pyramid # 1

one letter

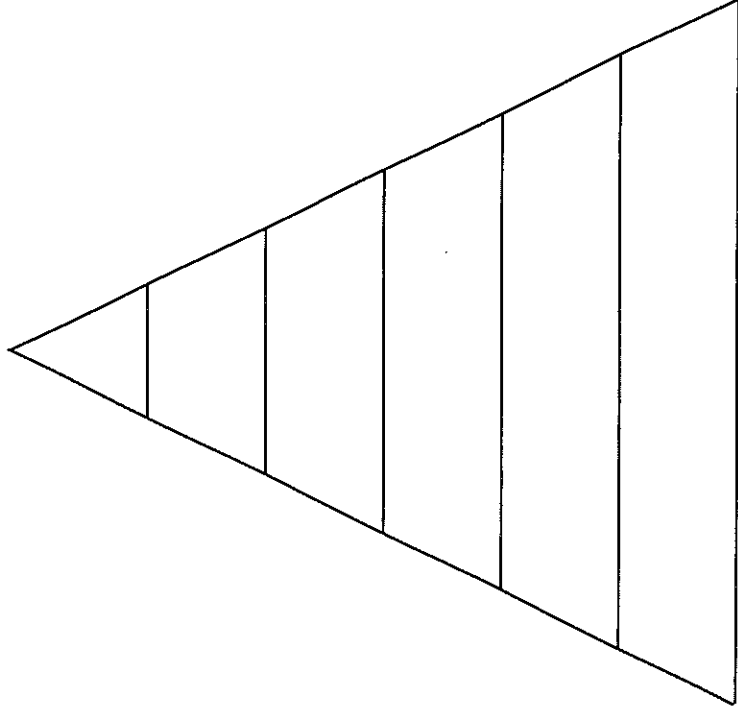
two letters

three letters

four letters

five letters

six letters



Pyramid # 2

one letter

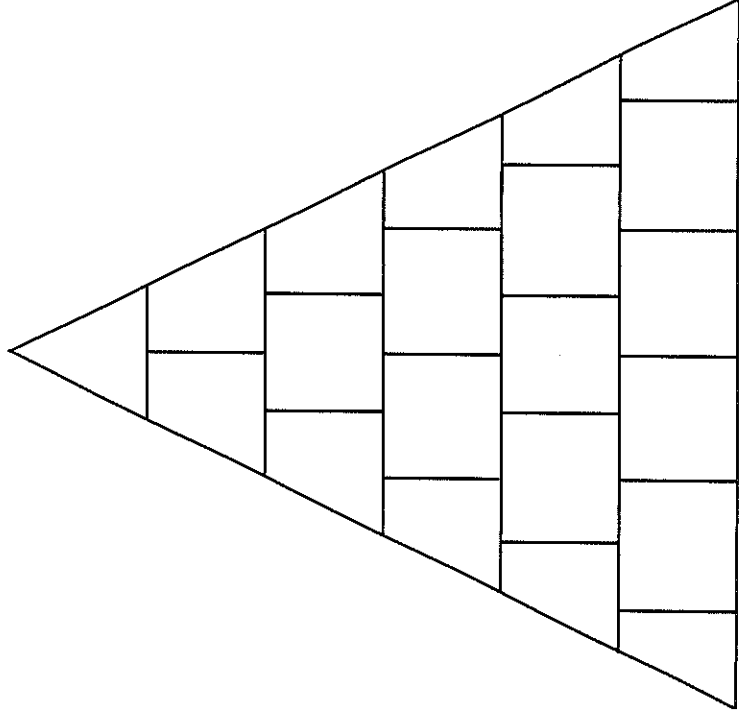
two letters

three letters

four letters

five letters

six letters





Sandwich Stories

THEME

Personal experiences

FUNCTIONS

Describing a series of events

STRUCTURES

Simple past tense
Past perfect tense
Sequence words

COMMENTS

This activity is designed for middle school and high school students. You will probably want to limit either the time or the number of words you ask students to write. You will be amazed at the incredible imagination they bring to this task!

VARIATIONS

Use actual first and last sentences from published short stories. This may serve as motivation for students to read some of the stories from which the examples are taken.

1. Explain that students will be given the first sentence and the last sentence of a story and that their job will be to fill in the middle.
2. Give each student a square of paper and ask them to write on it a sentence that might be used to start a story. For example, *One day I found a stray dog on my way home from school or Last year my Aunt Wilma stayed with us for a week.*
3. Collect these slips of paper and put them, face down, in a pile labeled "Beginnings."
4. Hand out more squares of paper and ask students to write sentences that might be used to end a story. For example, *So he decided to buy a Chevy 4 by 4 or I was so tired I slept for two days.*
5. Collect these slips and put them, face down, in a pile labeled "Endings."
6. Students choose a slip from each pile at random and write a short story that creates a logical connection between the beginning and ending they have chosen.
7. Invite volunteers to read their finished stories to the class.



What A Mouthful!

THEME

General

FUNCTIONS

Using idiomatic expressions

MATERIALS

Three-by-five-inch cards

1. Write each of the twenty idiomatic expressions from the list below on a separate three-by-five card. (You can substitute some idioms of your own choosing if you wish.)
2. Write the twenty expressions on the board. Ask volunteers to try using each one in a sentence that clearly demonstrates the meaning of the idiom. For example, the sentence *He blew his stack this morning* is not acceptable. However, the sentence *He blew his stack when he saw his son's report card* clearly illustrates the meaning of the idiom.
3. After reviewing all the idioms, divide the class into two teams. Have team members take turns choosing a card with an idiomatic expression written on it.
4. If the first person on Team 1 makes a correct sentence with the idiom chosen, that team gets a point. If he or she can't make an acceptable sentence, the first person on Team 2 gets a chance to earn the point.

5. Play alternates back and forth until one team makes a correct sentence. Whichever team gets the point chooses the next card. The team with the most points at the end wins.

Sample List of Idiomatic Expressions

1. To blow one's stack
2. To get a load of
3. To pull a fast one
4. To beat around the bush
5. To pull strings
6. To hit the ceiling
7. To be the last straw
8. To get out of hand
9. To fly off the handle
10. To be under the weather
11. To be nuts about
12. To be down in the dumps
13. To shoot the breeze
14. To be a pain in the neck
15. To have something up (your) sleeve
16. To take the bull by the horns
17. To rub it in
18. To pull a fast one
19. To sweat it out
20. To goof off



War of the Words

THEME

General

FUNCTIONS

Developing vocabulary

STRUCTURES

Letters and numbers

MATERIALS

Copies of Bright Idea # 24
Blackline Master

COMMENTS

This game is suitable for all ages and ability levels. You can give the activity a specific content area focus by specifying a theme at the beginning, or by listing a group of target words on the board from which students must choose.

VARIATIONS

You can vary the level of the practice by asking more advanced students to work with more words and longer words. This game can also be played as a team activity.

1. Give each student a copy of Bright Idea # 24 Blackline Master.

2. Write the word-length requirements on the board. For example: *one six-letter word, one five-letter word, two four-letter words, and two three-letter words.*

3. Have students form pairs, sitting so their partners can't see their papers.

4. Ask each student to write the required words somewhere on his or her grid. Draw a sample grid on the board and fill in some words on it as a guide.

5. Demonstrate how each player discovers his or her partner's words by guessing their location. For example, Player A says, *M4*. If Player B has no letter in that square, the response is *Sorry*. If Player B has a letter in the specified square, he or she tells what it is.

6. Each time a player finds a letter, he or she gets another turn. When a player chooses a blank square, the other persons gets a turn.

7. The first person to locate and identify all the other person's words wins.

War of the Words

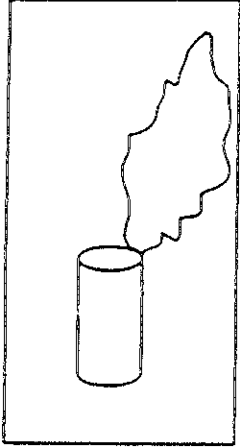


	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
1																										
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10																										

Word Bingo

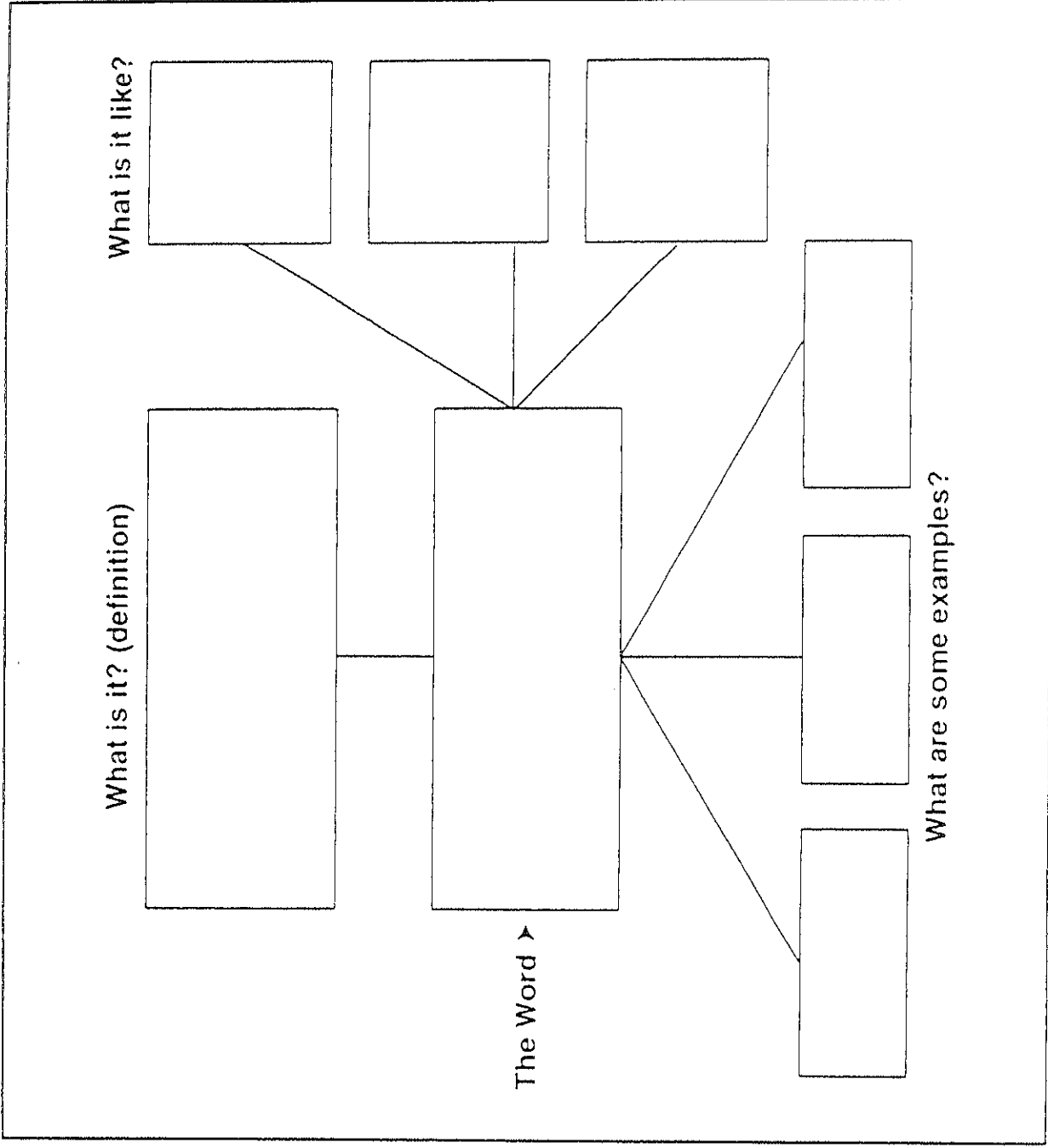


Sample Vocabulary Study Sheet: The PAVE Procedure

A student's completed vocabulary template	
I never divulge a secret that a friend has entrusted to me.	
divulge	
Word	Association or Symbol
speak out, verb	
Predicted Definition	
One Good Sentence:	The group began to divulge their feelings about life.
Verified Definition:	
to reveal, to make public	
Another Good Sentence:	
Even through torture he never divulged the secret of the hideout.	

Source: Blachowicz, C., & Fisher, P. (1996). *Teaching vocabulary in all classrooms*. Merrill/Prentice Hall.

Concept Definition Mapping



Vocabulary Map

Write the sentence here:

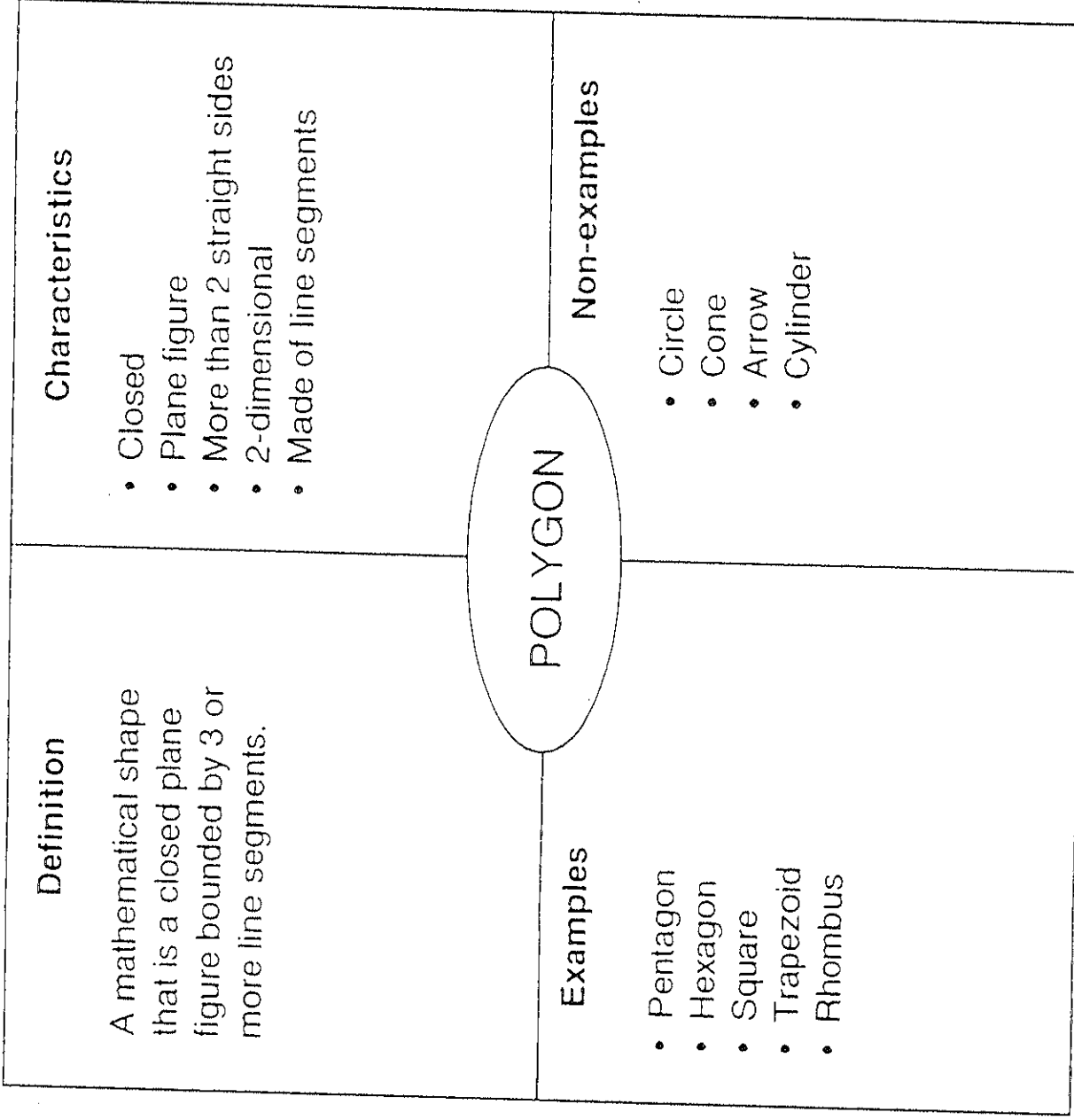
How the Word is Used

Words that Mean the Same

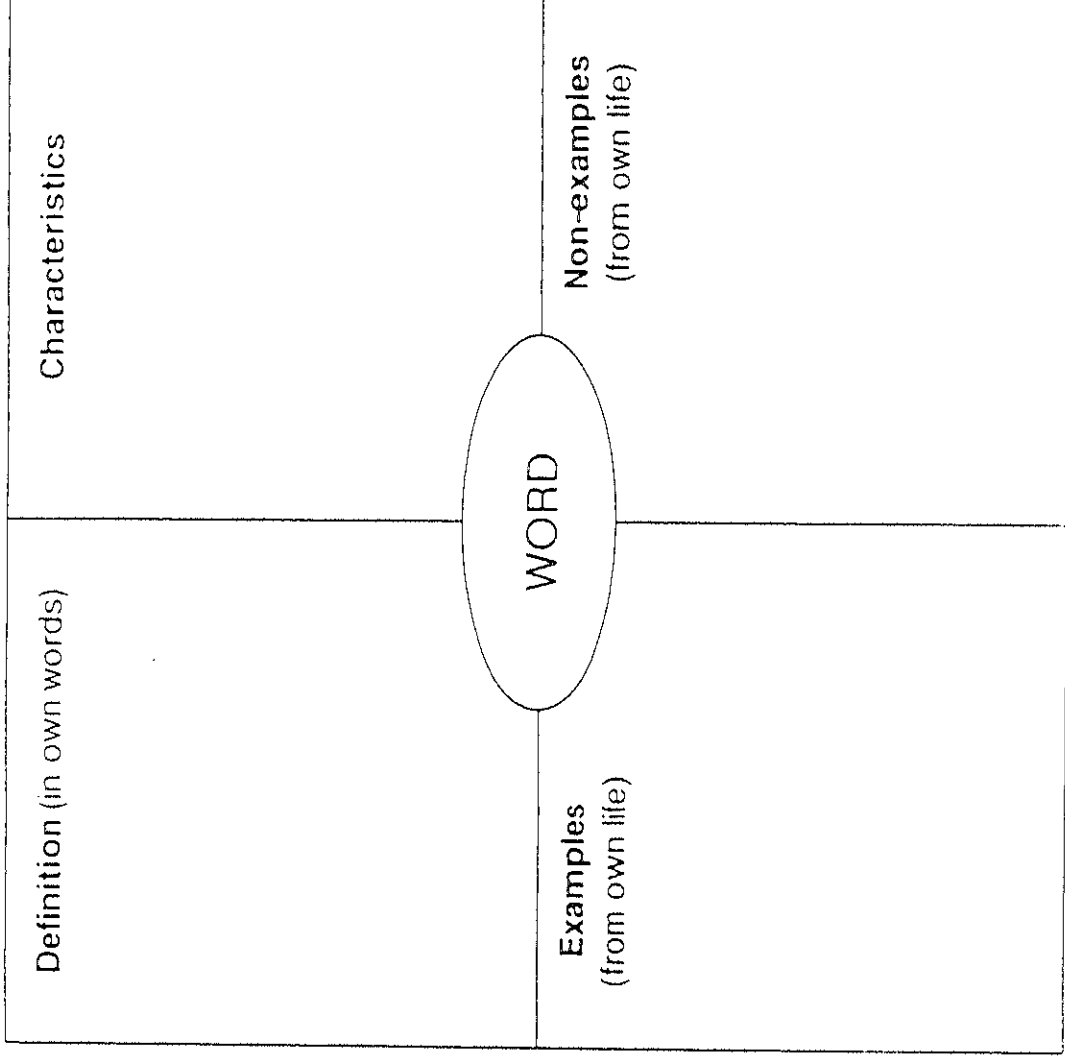
Words that Mean the Opposite

Experiences You Have Had With This Word

Frayer Model




Frayer Model



Vocabulary Study Card: Example

front of card:



protest

(pro-test) (noun)

Related Words:
protester (noun)
protesting (verb)
protest (verb)

Translation:
protesta
protestacion

back of card:

Chapter:	African Americans Struggle for Rights And Equality
Section:	The Civil Rights Movement Advances
1. Synonyms:	boycott demonstration strike riot rally sit-in
2. Book Sentence:	This tactic was the sit-in. It is a protest in which people take a seat and refuse to leave.
3. Definition:	The act of expressing strong or reasoned opposition
4. My Sentence:	There is sure to be an angry protest if the senior class is not allowed to have a prom this year.