

Dear LCNV Teachers:

We asked one of our star Lead Teachers to write up a description of some games and activities she used recently when she needed to combine the levels at her site. We hope the ideas below are helpful for those times when “emergency” lesson activities are needed (e.g., when a teacher or sub at a site is unavailable and levels must be combined).

Sincerely,  
LCNV Staff

### **Ideas for a mixed-level class**

-‘**Telephone**’ is a good game for a mixed class, because pronunciation is the focus, and listening skills, and all students need more of that.

1. Arrange students in rows, or grouped around tables (since I used it as a warm-up for a group of people who had never met, I didn’t worry about mixing or separating levels at that point in the class; but either way would work.)
2. Whisper a very simple sentence, such as “I like English” to the first person in each row. That person must whisper the sentence to the next person, who passes it on, and so on until the entire row has heard it. (I found that some intercession was necessary, as I found that a few very early learners just couldn’t understand what they were hearing).
3. Ask the last person to say the sentence aloud. Compare all groups’ final answers to your own original sentence.

-After this warm-up, I separated the class into mixed-level groups by counting each student, giving each one a number from 1-5. Then, all the 1’s got together, and the 2’s, and so on. This is a good way of making sure clusters get separated and levels get mixed.

-**Game Night:** I arranged various games and activities at five different tables, then placed each group at one table and allowed them 20-minute sessions at each one.

1. **Scrabble:** I turned all of the tiles up, so students could simply see and select whichever letters they wanted to make whatever words they could think of. They made it a cooperative effort, taking turns, with upper-level people helping out their lower-level partners. I did require them to connect the words like a crossword puzzle, as in the original game, thereby creating a slight challenge; but allowing them to choose any tile made it easier and more relaxed. One could easily challenge an upper-level group by introducing scoring (I nixed it for the day), or by turning the tiles face-down. Students practice spelling and vocabulary improvement while engaging in discussion with each other.
2. **Guess Who?** This is a Milton Bradley game in which opponents must ask yes/no questions to figure out which face, from a sea of little cardboard faces in front of them, their opponent has selected. It’s very simple, but an excellent practice in yes/no (versus wh-) questions, as well as adjective use and identification words (Is it a man? Does he have brown hair? etc.) Since groups

had about four people, it was perfect- pairs had to work together to come up with questions. This game was a little hard, in reality, so one of us teachers sat at the table to help out. With a little help, they did catch on, and did an excellent job.

3. **Diego 1-2-3.** I admit it- I have a 4-year-old. This was one of his games, again by Milton Bradley. There are four large cards with pictures of 10 different animals on them (the Swimmers card, for example, lists 1 Whale, 2 Dolphins, 3 Harbor Seals, etc., all the way up to 10 Seahorses). Students simply reach into a bag and pull out pictures of animals; if the animal belongs on their card, they put it there. If it wasn't theirs they put it back. In either case, I asked them to identify the number and kind of animal aloud. This way, students practiced pronunciation of numbers, and learned names of different animals; and I also asked them to focus specifically on pronouncing the plural 's' at the end of the animal name, when there was one. Caveat: the animal names were a bit complicated for them, said the aide who sat at the table. Perhaps an easier game, using more commonplace animals, could be created.

4. **Karuta** is a sweet, high-energy vocabulary builder played by school kids in Japan (and probably other countries as well- it's a simple concept). Write vocabulary words (I combined some words from my Level 2/3 class with words the Level 1 teacher had given me) on cut-up notecards, or just cut up pieces of paper. Spread them all out in front of the students, then say one of the words. The first one to grab that paper gets to keep it, and whoever has the most cards at the end wins! Adaptation: have a Level 3 student 'emcee' the games by either saying the words, or even saying the words embedded in sentences s/he must come up with spontaneously- extra challenge! Other adaptation (the students themselves came up with this one): once a student has grabbed a card, s/he must say a sentence with that word. They are practicing vocabulary, as well as sentence-building, and negotiation of meaning, as the upper-level students try to explain to the lower-level folks what some of the more complex words mean.

5. At the fifth station, I simply placed a collection of **worksheets**, based on relevant material for all levels. I simply asked students to choose whatever they felt comfortable working with. It is a form of review of what they have been learning, and it also seemed as if the upper-level students even enjoyed the simpler worksheets as well as the complex ones. Going back to basics sometimes can be refreshing.

-After this, I had planned out a game of **Jeopardy**, but the students enjoyed the stations so much, we ended up just doing them! Here is the Jeopardy I came up with. Teachers will want to adapt their own games with relevant questions to their classes. Just make sure the Level 1 people have a chance to speak up, with help from others if needed, on the categories which are relevant to their class!

On the board:

Slang	Money	Clothing	Personal information	In the classroom
100	100	100	100	100
200	200	200	200	200

300	300	300	300	300
400	400	400	400	400

Questions to read:

Slang

- 100: Rob seems a little upset. What's wrong with him? (What's up with him?)  
 200: Julie is a bad teacher? I don't believe it! (No way!)  
 300: His is so handsome, with big muscles! He's... (a hunk)  
 400: That's not true. You're kidding. (You're putting me on)

Money

- 100: Automatic Teller Machine (ATM)  
 200: A worker in the bank (bank teller)  
 300: toothpaste, shaving cream... (toiletries)  
 400: Sign a check (endorse)

Clothing

- 100: you wear it on your head (hat)  
 200: They keep your hands warm in the winter. (gloves)  
 300: It keeps your pants up (belt)  
 400: They have two legs and are often blue (jeans)

Personal information

- 100: Where do you live? What's your \_\_\_\_\_ (address)?  
 200 I live in Centreville. Centreville is my \_\_\_\_\_ (city).  
 300: 20121 is my \_\_\_\_\_ (zip code).  
 400: I was born in Elkhart. Elkhart is my \_\_\_\_\_ (birthplace).

In the classroom

- 100: You write with it. (pen, pencil)  
 200: It has a lot of information inside. (book)  
 300: Most rooms have one; you can look outside. (window)  
 400: There are usually four of them in a room. (wall)