בס"ד

**Speaking Game - Fill in Drill**

Here is a speaking drill game for beginners to intermediate levels. This is excellent for drilling grammar and coaxing shy students into speaking in a reassuring context.

Another use for this activity is that it can engrain **word patterns** that students can use when writing compositions.

**Category**: Speaking Drill
**Group size**: Any
**Level**: Beginner to Intermediate and possibly Advanced
**Materials**: None
**Preparation**: Choose a written passage or dialogue from your textbook or write one.

**How to:**

* Prepare a letter, short story or dialogue using grammar and vocabulary you have been teaching recently or would like to review. The text shouldn't be too long – the weaker the group, the shorter the text should be.
* If you have access to a computer/overhead projector, you can prepare the text in PowerPoint or a similar program. If not, before the lesson begins, while the students are getting organized, write the text on the board. Alternatively, ask a student to copy the test on the board while you're taking attendance.
* The students should have the text too (in their book or a worksheet). Let the class read it out and check everyone understands it by asking a couple of questions about the text.

* Next tell the class to read the first sentence carefully.
* Now rub out one word from that sentence and have a student read it out again and fill in the blank with the missing word you just removed from memory.
* Now remove a second word from the sentence and ask another student to read it out again. This should be very easy and serves for a clear demonstration.

* Now you can divide the class into pairs and have them take turns reading out the sentences on the board.
* As time goes on, you gradually rub out more and more words.

As an **alternative to pair work**, you can play this game with the whole class reading out the letter and filling in the blanks together in unison.

**Here is an example of a text using past simple for lower level students:**

"Yesterday I went to the store with my mother. We bought everything we needed for Shabbos. Then we came home and cooked all the food. We cleaned the house and set the table. Finally, my mother lit candles."

**Here is an example of a text using conditionals for higher level students**: "What would you do if you got a lot of money? I would first donate ten percent to *tzedakah* and then I would give some to my family. I'm sure my brother

would buy a car right away. He needs it for his job. Of course, that would depend on how much money I gave him, which would depend on how much I had won in the first place!"

Start by deleting words such as "would" "got" rather than "money". First delete verbs and little words rather than nouns. Start slowly and listen in to see how students are doing. Delete more words when you see that they are coping.

Too little words deleted will be too easy and too many will be too hard, so err on the side of caution. **Too easy is better than too hard** because at least the students are practicing accurate English. To help, you can delete part of a word and leave the first letter as a clue:

 "\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_ if you \_\_\_\_ a lot of m\_\_\_\_\_\_\_?"

This activity is **success oriented** and should help build students' confidence. In addition, it implants subconscious understanding/recognition of **word order** without explanation of the rules.

With permission from Shelley Vernon.

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