

# Today's Tabbloid

Personalized for you

03 November 2008  
Tabbloid.com

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## Expand Your Urban Vocabulary

2008-11-02 09:12

Daily English Activities

This activity is only suitable for students over 16 years old

The vocabulary of the English language is constantly changing and being developed. New words are being added, some become 'mainstream' (used by everyone) others stay around for a short while and then just stop being used.

Now there is an online dictionary called the Urban dictionary, for slang words that people make up. In today's activity you are going to learn some of these words. Remember though that these words are very new and that many native speakers don't yet use them.

This dictionary is also not suitable for children or younger learners as some of the words may have sexual connotations (or worse!).

### Task:

Here are links to some new words. Read the definition and example sentence and decide if it is a word that you will find useful. These words and the things that they describe also have a lot of cultural information and can tell you a lot about our modern way of life, so think about how many of these things are also popular aspects of your own culture.

- Silent Rave
- Bus Surfing
- Deface
- Joe The Plumber

- The Spousal We
- Spin doctor
- Tag hag
- Gigabucks
- Guitarthritis
- Thumb lashing

I hope you enjoyed finding out a bit more about the English language and culture. Come back tomorrow for more EFL ESL activities.

### Related links for teachers:

- Animating vocabulary
- Video Dictionary 2.0
- 12 Second Video Clips for EFL ESL
- Using Word Clouds in EFL ESL
- Picture phrases
- Personalised flashcards

Best

Nik Peachey

## Listen to a Movie Script

2008-10-31 16:50

Daily English Activities

Watching Movies is a great way of developing your English, but sometimes what you are seeing can distract you from what you are hearing. So in this activity you can just listen to a movie and follow the script.

This activity uses two websites. The first is Listen to a Movie which has the audio tracks from around 1500 movies. You can search through and listen to as many as you like for free.

The second site we need is called Drew's Script-O-Rama. This site has a huge collection of film and TV scripts, again they are all free.

I've chosen a movie and script for you to listen to, but if you prefer to listen to a different one then just find the film you want and then search on Drew's Script-O-Rama for the script.

The movie I've chosen is called About a Boy and it stars Hugh Grant. Here is a clip to show you what the film is like before you listen. **(You should be 14 or over to watch this film)**

### Task:

- Go to the About a Boy script. If you want, you can print it up, or you could copy it into a word processing document so that you can add and make notes to it.
- Now go to the audio page for the film on Listen to Movies. You can find it by clicking this link: About a Boy audio. Once the page opens, click on the small blue arrow where it says 'LAUNCH AUDIO PLAYER'.
- The audio player will pop up and you can then control it a little like a CD player.
- Listen to the movie and follow along on the script. If you have the script on a word processor, you can make notes and check new word etc.

Well I hope you enjoy listening to this film and that using the script helps you to develop your vocabulary and listening skills.

Come back soon for another EFL ESL activity.

### Related links for teachers:

- Ready Made Authentic Video materials For ESL EFL
- News Videos for EFL ESL Materials Design
- Subtitling your video clips
- Transcribed Videos for EFL ESL
- Using Product Reviews
- Iconic teen video

Best

Nik Peachey

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## Is it True?

2008-10-29 15:59

Daily English Activities

This is a quick reading activity especially for Halloween. It's a simple task based around an image.

### Task:

Look at the image below and read the text (You can click on the image to enlarge it) and decide whether you think the story is true or false!

Once you have read and decided, you can go here to check your answer.

- Check your answer

I hope you enjoy this quick reading activity and come back tomorrow for more EFL ESL activities.

### Related links for teacher:

- A Picture's worth
- Personalised flashcards
- Make Your EFL ESL Yearbook

Best

Nik Peachey

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## Translate a Music Video

2008-10-28 22:19

Daily English Activities

In this activity I'd like you to try to do some translation. You should also be able to practice your listening and watch some videos too.

The activity uses a website called Dot Sub which has collections of videos which you can add subtitles to. These can either be transcriptions (the script in the same language) or translations. There is already quite a number of transcribed and translated videos, including a selection of music videos, so do look at some of those.

### Task:

- You are going to translate a simple song into your own language. To do this you will have to register on the site at: <http://dotsub.com/signup.html>
- Once you have done that go to this link to Tom's Diner and click on 'Transcribe video'.
- You should then play the clip, listen and pause it after each sentence to either write in the words in English or translate them to your own language.
- Make sure that you also add the timing when the line from the audio began.
- Try to either transcribe or translate the whole video. If you enjoy doing this you could translate some more of the videos and even upload some of your own videos and add subtitles to them.

I hope you find this activity useful and come back tomorrow for more EFL ESL activities to help you improve your English.

### Related links for teachers:

- Subtitling your video clips
- Microblogging for EFL with Plurk
- Great Video Commenting Tool
- 12 Second Video Clips for EFL ESL
- Video conferencing for EFL
- Send Free Video Messages

Best

Nik Peachey

## Learn Film Scripts

2008-10-27 16:42

Daily English Activities

Today's activity combines three different websites to help you improve both your listening and the speed of your reading (and speaking if you want to try that too).

The activity uses a small text playing program called Zap Reader. You simply paste or type in a text and it will play the text for you word by word as you read. You can adjust the speed to make it go faster or slower.

The second site we are going to use is Colin's Movie Monologue page. This site has a huge collection of speeches from the scripts of popular films.

Lastly, to get some examples for you off what the speeches should sound like, we are going to use YouTube.

### Task:

- **Go to:** Colin's Movie Monologues and choose a monologue from a film that you know or like.
- I've chosen one called '**10 Things I Hate about You**' I chose it because it was the first one on the page. You can find the text here: <http://tinyurl.com/6lxvkv> or choose your own text. Copy the text.
- Next go to <http://www.zapreader.com/reader/> and paste your text into the field. Then click on '**ZAP it**'.
- The text reader will appear. Change the text speed from 300 to 100 and then click play. Each word from the text will appear. Try to read through the text (you could also read out loud) as the words appear.
- If you want to hear what the text should sound like then go to YouTube and search for the video of the monologue.

Here is the video of the text '10 Things I Hate About You'.

- Listen to the text and then try to read it again. Gradually increase the speed each time and try to get up to 200 (words per minute)

If you enjoy this activity find some more monologues

from your favourite films and try to Zap read them.

Come back tomorrow for more EFL ESL activities.

#### Related links for teachers:

- Prompting reading speeds
- Interactive multiple choice activities
- Picture phrases
- Learning through karaoke!

Best

Nik Peachey

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## Halloween Horror Quiz

2008-10-25 13:03

Daily English Activities

Today's activity is an Halloween Extra. For those of you who like horror movies and quizzes, this activity is ideal for practicing your reading skills, developing your horror related vocabulary and testing your knowledge of films. I'm even going to help you cheat a bit.

#### Task:

**Go to:** The Horror Movie Quiz and click on start.

You'll have to answer 50 multiple choice questions. If you're not sure about the answer to each questions you can check information and try to find the answers by searching for the names of the films at the Internet Movie database at: <http://www.imdb.com/> just enter the name of the film or character and press on **'Go'**.

Good luck. If you can get more than 25 right you are doing much better than me.

#### Related links for teachers:

- Making quizzes for i-pod
- Interactive multiple choice activities
- Exploiting two computer-based RPGs
- 3B Village 3D browser
- Create your own game

- Looking at There.com

Best

Nik Peachey

## Create a Nation

2008-10-24 17:05

Daily English Activities

Playing simulation games is a great way of getting involved in a community, and really using and developing your English. Cyber Nations is a role playing simulation which you use to create and manage your own nation. You then have to develop your nation and form military and trade alliances with other nations to ensure your nation survives. Playing this game will help you to develop your vocabulary, reading and writing skills and you'll have the opportunity to communicate with other people who are playing the game.

#### Task:

**Go to:** <http://www.cybernations.net/register.asp> and register to play the game.

- Once you have registered and activated your account from the email they send you, you can start to create your imaginary nation and add information about it.
- Decide on the type of government, the religion even the geographical location of the country.
- Decide how much tax you want to charge the citizens and how you will spend the tax money.
- Decide on the policies of your government and the degree of tolerance it has with its people.

The best part is that you play the game either in competition or collaboration with other players. You'll need to check your inbox regularly and keep up with the messages, but this is a great way to get regular daily practice using your English skills.

I hope you enjoy playing this game and that your nation lives in peace. Come back for more EFL ESL activities tomorrow.

#### Related links for teachers:

- Creating a Nation
- Educational Games That Really Are Fun

- Online Water Conservation Game
- Wonderland Virtual World and MMORPG
- Google's Lively Competitor with Second Life?
- 3B Village 3D browser
- Eco City Game

Best

Nik Peachey

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## Watch Film Reviews

2008-10-22 18:21

Daily English Activities

Watching films is a great way to learn English, but listening to people talk about films can also be very useful.

Today's task uses the Guardian.co.uk Films page, where you can find lots of very short but interesting videos, film reviews and trailers.

### Task:

- You are going to watch a film clip of someone talking about High School Musical 3
- **Go to:** High School Musical 3: 'You be Ryan, I'll be Sharpay'

Watch the interview and decide:

- What is the relationship of the person being interviewed to the film?
- Did the film critic like the film?
- Would you like the film?

If you would rather watch a different film review then look on the right of the movie player and you'll see some other short reviews to choose from.

If you enjoy watching and talking about film, then you can find more information at:  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/film>

Well I hope you enjoyed learning about films in English. Come back tomorrow for more EFL ESL activities.

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### Related links for teachers:

- Edit Online videos
- Videos for Global Issues Lessons
- Ready Made Authentic Video materials For ESL EFL
- Subtitling your video clips
- Tutorial: Using Videos from YouTube
- Using 'How to' videos

Best

Nik Peachey

## Vocabulary Sequences

2008-10-21 15:41

Daily English Activities

Remembering new vocabulary is always very challenging, so the more graphic you can make it, the easier the new words will be to remember. Today's activity looks at a way of using images from Flickr to help you create your own visual vocabulary records which you can either print or add to a blog.

To do this, you are going to use a tool called Bubblr. To help you use this tool I've created a short video that shows you how it works. Once you have watched the video you can go on and do the task.

Here's an example that I made which demonstrates Negative Emotions

Which of these words do you think each image represents?

- anger
- boredom
- confusion
- contempt
- despair
- fear
- frustration
- rage

- sadness

You can see the answers at the very end of this posting.

**Task:**

- Find ten new words that you have learned recently (or you could use the opposites of the words that I have used above. Here's a link to a thesaurus if you want to find some opposites of the negative emotions: <http://words.bighugelabs.com/>)
- Go to: <http://www.pimpampum.net/bubblr/> type in your words and search for images which you feel represents that word.
- Add a text label to each image.
- When you have finished click on publish. You can either print your images and use them to help you remember, or you could embed the sequence in your blog if you have one.
- Or you could post the link to your vocabulary sequence in the comments below and share it with other visitors to this site.

Bubblr is a really useful tool to help you learn and remember new vocabulary. You could also try to use it a dictionary to help you learn new words.

I hope you find it useful. Come back for more EFL ESL activities tomorrow.

**Related links for teachers:**

- Exploiting Image Sequences
- Make Your EFL ESL Yearbook
- Picture phrases
- Personalised flashcards
- Animating vocabulary

Best

Nik Peachey

**Answers:**

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**Two Minute Soap Opera**

2008-10-20 21:14

Daily English Activities

A great way to develop your English is by watching TV and especially 'soap opera' as these kinds of programs often have the most 'everyday English' in them. So today's activity is simply to start watching a short soap opera.

The soap opera that I have chosen for you is called Lonely Girl 15. This was one of the first internet / YouTube based soap operas and is based around very short, usually about two minute, episodes. This makes it ideal for language learning as you don't have to watch very much each time.

**Task:**

- Watch the first episode of Lonely Girl 15. See below.
- Once you have watched it find out more about the main character Bree by looking at the Lonely Girl blog: Bree Avery

There are now 3 seasons of Lonely Gorl 15. Try to watch another one each day. You can start from the first season here at Lonely Girl 15.

I hope you enjoy these short episodes. Come back tomorrow for more EFL ESL activities.

**Related links for teachers:**

- Iconic teen video
- Tutorial: Using Videos from YouTube
- 12 Second Video Clips for EFL ESL

- Video conferencing for EFL

Best

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## Send an English Singing Telegram

2008-10-17 12:08

Daily English Activities

This activity is something for you to have some fun with. It is also good for helping you to improve your spelling punctuation and your ability to write short concise text.

The activity uses a site called KakoMessenger which enables you to create singing telegram messages that looks like the one below. **Click the image to hear the message.**

### Task:

- **Go to:** <http://www.kakomessenger.com/> There you will see a choice of two different singers. Select the one that you would like to sing your text for you.
- Then type your text. Make sure that you are careful with spelling and punctuation (Your singer can only sing words in English if they are spelled correctly)

### Here are some possible things to write about:

- Write some tips for learning English
- Send a message to an English speaking friend
- Send a message to your English teacher
- Create a message about this site and then post it to the comments
- Once you have written your message, click on 'PLAY' and wait a couple of minutes. Your telegram should then start to play.
- If you like the message you can then send it to someone by email, or you can click on 'MODIFY' to change it or correct the spelling or punctuation.

I hope you enjoy this activity and send lots of singing telegrams to your English speaking friends.

Have a good weekend and come back on Monday for more free English language learning activities.

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### Related links for teachers:

- Sending Bubble Joy to your EFL / ESL Students
- 12 Second Video Clips for EFL ESL
- Great Video Commenting Tool
- Video conferencing for EFL
- Send Free Video Messages
- Create your own game

Best

Nik Peachey

## Word Games

2008-10-16 12:36

Daily English Activities

Today's activity is intended to help with your vocabulary and spelling, but is also a lot of fun and quite challenging.

I'm giving you a choice of three word games to play. They come from a selection of word games which you can find on the East of the Web site. If you enjoy these games you might want to try out some of the other ones too. Some of them are quite difficult though.

### Task:

Choose one of these 3 word games to play. Try to play one of them each day for about 5 mins.

#### Game 1: PopWord

<http://www.eastoftheweb.com/games/Popword.html>

This game is based around the popular 'brick' game format. Letters drop down and you have to click on the first letter then drag across other letters to make words. The letters then disappear and you score points. You can drag onto letter in any direction. It doesn't have to be left to right.

#### Game 2: DefineTime

<http://www.eastoftheweb.com/games/DefineTime1.html>

This game is multiple choice vocabulary test that you play against a time limit. If you get the answer wrong, your choice disappears and you can make another selection.

#### Game 3: Eight Letters

<http://www.eastoftheweb.com/games/Eight1.html>

In this game you have a selection of 8 letters and you have to make as many words with them as you can within a time limit. You score points for each word and if you score enough, you go on to the next level.

Well I hope you enjoy these games. Come back for another Daily English Activity tomorrow.

#### **Related links for teachers:**

- Exploiting two computer-based RPGs
- Games With a Purpose and a Social Network
- Create your own game
- Educational Games That Really Are Fun
- Online Water Conservation Game

Best

Nik Peachey

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## **Learn a New Skill in English**

2008-10-15 14:45

Daily English Activities

One of the reasons that learning English is so important, is that it can help you to do and to learn other things. Using English to learn how to do things can also help to improve your English too.

Today's task is based around a site called Monkey See that has a huge collection of videos of people showing and telling you how to do things. So in today's task I'd like you to use your English listening skills to learn how to do something.

#### **Task:**

- **Go to:** <http://www.monkeysee.com/> Look at the different categories and find something useful that you would like to be able to do. Below are a few suggestions that you might find useful.

Career skills:

- Learn how to speak in public
- Learn how to write a resume / CV
- Learn how to write a college essay

- Learn how to develop a range of career skills

If you would like to learn something less serious you could try some of these:

- Learn a musical instrument
- Learn how to dance salsa
- Learn how to dance hip hop
- Learn how to play guitar hero
- Once you have decided what to learn watch the videos. It's a good idea to pause the videos while they load, that way they won't keep stopping.
- Once you have watched some of the videos and learned how to do something. You could make some notes and next time you go to your English class you could try to use English to teach someone what you have learned.
- You could also try to create your own videos in English to teach people how to do something. You could then upload it to the Monkey See site.

Hope you enjoy this activity and please leave a comment telling us what you learned. Come back for another EFL ESL activity tomorrow.

#### **Related links for teachers:**

- Using 'How to' videos
- Using Product Reviews
- Advertisement Project

Best

Nik Peachey

## **Playing the Stock Market**

2008-10-14 16:32

Daily English Activities

Today's activity is very topical considering all the problems that stock markets around the world are having. The activity is based around a stock market game and will help to improve your business and financial vocabulary as well as give you lots of quick reading practice.

#### **Task:**



- **Go to:**

[http://www.stocknewsgame.com/play\\_game.php](http://www.stocknewsgame.com/play_game.php) You will see a financial news report and some information about the stock prices of a company.

- You should quickly study the information and then try to decide if the stock prices of the company will go up or down. You have 4 choices ranging from a large drop to a large rise (Surge).
- Click on one and then you can find out how other users guessed and how many points you have earned or lost.
- You only have 3 minutes each time to make your decision, so you'll have to read quickly and not worry too much about understanding every word. There are lots of texts so you can play for as long as you like. If you really like the game you can register, log in and then record your score.

Good luck and I hope you get richer than I did.

#### **Realted links for teachers:**

- Advertisement Project
- Using 'How to' videos
- Create an Online CV in English

Best

Nik Peachey

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## **5 Minutes of Daily Literature**

2008-10-13 19:56

Daily English Activities

Reading the classics of English literature is not only good for your reading skills and vocabulary development, but it can also help you learn about the culture and literature of the English speaking world and it can also be very enjoyable.

Today's task uses DailyLit a site that will supply you with 5 minutes of reading everyday for free. You just select a book and each day you will be emailed a 5 minute installment of the book.

#### **Task:**

- **Go to:** <http://www.dailylit.com/> and click on 'REGISTER' at the top right of the screen.

- You'll need to have an email address but you don't have to add any other information.
- Once you have registered you'll get a confirmation to your email address. Click the link and then you'll be able to select a book. I recommend a book by **Charles Dickens**, select him from the list of popular authors.
- Then select the book '**A Christmas Carol**'.
- Once you have done this you'll be able to decide what time each day you want your reading installment sent to your email address.
- Once you have done that, agree to the terms and then click on 'Submit'. Then go back to your email account and you should have a message with a confirmation link. Click on it and then just wait for your first installment of the book to be delivered.
- Each time you finish your five minutes of reading, you'll be able to either request another five minutes of the book or just wait until the next day.
- Hope you enjoy the book. A Christmas Carol is one of my favourite books by Dickens and one of the best Christmas Ghost stories ever written. It's not too scary either. If you enjoy the book you can also get involved in a book forum and discuss the book with other visitors to the site.

I hope you enjoy it. Come back for more EFL ESL activities tomorrow.

#### **Related links for teachers:**

- Writing Project Community
- Free Web Publishing Community
- Prompting reading speeds
- Interactive multiple choice activities
- Picture phrases

Best

Nik Peachey

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## Try a TOEFL Listening Test

2008-10-10 10:44

Daily English Activities

TOEFL is a very popular American exam to test the level of your English. Today I've chosen a listening task that is similar to the ones in the TOEFL exam. The test comes from the Exam English website.

The text is about a famous writer called Sylvia Plath. In the test you listen to a short excerpt from a lecture and then have to do some tasks to test your listening and comprehension ability.

Sylvia Plath was recently the subject of film, so before you try this task you might like to watch this trailer for the film

### Task:

- **Go to:**  
[http://www.examenglish.com/TOEFL/toefl\\_listening.htm](http://www.examenglish.com/TOEFL/toefl_listening.htm) and click on the 'Play' button.
- Listen to the lecture and take some notes of key facts on a piece of paper. You will then have the opportunity to listen to short extracts and answer questions
- At the end of the test you should get a score and the opportunity to review your answers with the script of the listening text. This is a great way to help develop your listening. Hope you did better at the test than me.

If you enjoyed this activity, try a few more from the site.

### Related links for teachers:

- Text to Speech for EFL ESL Materials
- Karaoke with a Social Network
- UNICEF: Top 10 Cartoons for Children's Rights
- Creating audio-visual monologues

Best

Nik Peachey

## The Samorost Game Challenge

2008-10-09 15:01

Daily English Activities

Today's activity is a mixture of a reading exercise and a game. The game is called Samorost and Samorost is going to take you on an adventure through outer space. You will need to help him save his planet from collision with a meteor.

The game is quite difficult. You'll need to click various things on the screen to help Samorost progress and find out how to change the direction of the meteor. To do this you will have some instructions in English that you will need to read.

### Task:

- **Go to:** <http://amanita-design.net/samorost-1/> and click on the screen to get started.
- Then go to:  
<http://gamesuy.blogspot.com/2007/09/samorost-walkthrough.html>
- The website has all the instructions you need to help Samorost save his planet. Read through the instructions and work through the game.
- I hope you are able to save Samorost. Good luck.

Come back tomorrow for another EFL ESL activity to improve your English.

### Related links for teachers:

- Adventure Narratives for EFL ESL Students
- Exploiting two computer-based RPGs
- Games With a Purpose and a Social Network
- 3B Village 3D browser

Best

Nik Peachey

## Learn Some Cliches

2008-10-08 11:54

Daily English Activities

The English language is very rich in idiomatic sayings. Many of these come from literature and have become cliches, but it is still good to know a few of these and enjoy learning to use and understand them.

The Cliche Finder site can help you to find new cliché or idioms based around a keyword, or you can just select 10 idioms at random.

### Task:

- **Go to:** <http://www.westegg.com/cliche/>
- Either type in a keyword such as 'Love' or 'Hand'
- OR
- Click to select 10 random cliches by clicking on 'See Ten Random Cliches'
- Once you have 10 cliches that you like, go to the Cambridge English Online Dictionary and check the meaning of the expressions:  
<http://dictionary.cambridge.org/>
- You do this by typing in the idiom and then clicking on 'Look it up' You then select your idiom and click.
- Make a note of ten new idioms / cliches and what they mean.
- If you want to try to remember these you could create a video record of each one by using one of the activities from last month: Creating a Video Vocabulary Record

I hope you enjoy this activity and it makes you **'as happy as a clam'**!

Come back for more tomorrow EFL ESL activities.

### Related links for teachers:

- Prompting reading speeds
- Animating vocabulary
- Interactive multiple choice activities
- Picture phrases

- Video Dictionary 2.0

Best

Nik Peachey

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## How to be Happy in English

2008-10-07 15:37

Daily English Activities

In today's activity we are going to have a look at things that make us happy (in English). This activity uses the Things to be Happy About website. This is a good site so check out some of the other features.

For this task you will use part of the site to think about things that make you happy and how to describe them in English.

### Task:

- **Go to:**  
<http://www.thingstobehappyabout.com/create/> and register with the site. This is very easy, but you will need to give your email address.
- Once you have registered (it takes about 2 minutes) click on create a new list.
- You should then be able to give your list a title, call it **'My English Happy List'** and start writing in the things that make you happy.
- Try to add at least 10 things to your list. If you aren't sure how to express your ideas, click on **'Take a Peak'** and then enter a key word like **'love'** and you'll see what other people have written about that word.
- When you have finished you can either email your list to a friend or copy the URL of the list and post it in the comments on this page.
- You could also write a new list called **'10 Things About Learning English that Make me Happy'** and post it here or send it to your teacher.

Hope you enjoy this small task. If you want new reasons every day to be happy, you could check this small calendar each day and see some new reasons: Cloud Calendar

Come back for another EFL ESL activity tomorrow.

**Related links for teachers:**

- Multi Player Vocabulary Revision
- Animating vocabulary
- Multimedia wordsearch
- Making quizzes for i-pod
- Interactive multiple choice activities

Best

Nik Peachey

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**Extending a Sentence**

2008-10-06 17:17

Daily English Activities

An important part of developing good written English is your ability to construct longer and more detailed sentences. Learners of English as a second or foreign language often use very short sentences and struggle to make longer more detailed ones.

Here is a task that shows you how you can develop a simple sentence like '**I made tea.**' into a detailed text.

**Task:**

- Go to the website: <http://www.telescopictext.com/>. You will see the sentence with shaded words.
- Click on a shaded and see that part of the sentence expand. Read the new sentence and then choose another part to click on.
- Keep clicking and reading the sentence until there are no more shaded words.
- You see now how a simple sentence can be made more detailed.
- Now create your own detailed sentences from one of these:
  - - I went to the beach.
  - - I saw a film.
  - - I went to school
- Once you have finished your sentence you can post it

in the comments below and I'll publish the best ones here on the blog in a couple of weeks.

Hope you enjoyed this activity. Come back tomorrow for some more EFL ESL activities.

**Related links for teachers:**

- Prompting reading speeds
- A Picture's worth
- Microblogging for EFL with Plurk
- Becoming a citizen journalist

Best

Nik Peachey