

Teaching greetings does not have to be scripted or dull. These **low prep world language activities** are designed to get learners speaking, moving and laughing from the very first minute. They work with a variety of levels, require minimal materials and help students practise core greeting language in memorable, communicative ways.

“It makes it more fun, it brings it to life and it gets everyone talking and communicating.”

How to use these activities

Pick one or combine several. Before starting, model the language you want students to use: formal and informal greetings, short personal facts, adjectives, and emotion vocabulary. Each activity can be scaled: simplify for beginners or add twists for advanced learners. These are perfect as warm ups, review sessions or end-of-year games.

1. Alliteration Introductions

Students introduce themselves using an adjective that starts with the same letter as their name. For example, in Spanish a student named Ana might say **Ana amable**. Start by having the class repeat each introduction, then build on it by adding a greeting or a short line of information.

Variations: require full sentences, add where you are from, or have classmates introduce someone else using the same alliterative pattern. This activity is playful and improves recall of adjectives and name phrases with almost no prep.

2. Situation Switch

Write several situations on the board or pieces of paper: greeting a teacher formally, greeting a celebrity, greeting a politician, greeting a friend happily, greeting a stranger sadly, and so on. Students move through the situations at your signal and must greet using the emotion and register assigned.

This is excellent for practising tone, register and sentence structure. Pre-teach useful phrases for formal versus informal contexts so students know which language to choose.

3. Finger Elimination

Everyone starts with fingers up. Each student prepares questions answerable by yes or no that recycle introductory information: Do you live in this city? Were you born here? Do you have a pet? When a student answers no they put a finger down. The game continues until one person remains.

This keeps the focus on asking and answering while recycling vocabulary. It requires zero prep and generates lively interaction.

4. Ball Toss Introductions

Use any soft ball. The thrower says a greeting and their name, then tosses to another learner who responds and gives theirs. This adds kinaesthetic energy and reduces anxiety because speaking happens in short bursts.

5. The Name Circle

Students sit in a circle. One person stands, looks at someone across the circle and says their greeting and name while moving into that person's seat. The displaced person must immediately make eye contact with someone else and say their greeting and name, then move. The classroom turns into a flowing chain of introductions.

Final notes

These **low prep world language activities** are easy to adapt for any language and any level. Try mixing emotion, register and small personal details to keep the tasks fresh. Use short modelling and controlled practice first, then let the students improvise.

Try one tomorrow and notice how quickly students start using authentic greeting language. Repetition plus movement equals confidence.

Looking for more ideas?

Building Proficiency for World Language Learners: 100+ High-Interest Activities

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