

Looking for quick, low-prep ideas to boost speaking, listening and vocabulary? These **language class games** are designed to get students moving, laughing and using the target language from the first minute. Each game is instant to set up, adaptable to any level and easy to scale for classes of any size.

1. Speed Draw and Describe

One student draws a simple scene or object while their partner asks questions and describes what they see. Switch roles every 60–90 seconds.

- **Aim:** vocabulary recall, question forms, speaking fluency
- **Materials:** whiteboard or paper and marker
- **Time:** 5–10 minutes
- **Variation:** limit vocabulary to a particular theme (food, travel, school) or forbid using certain words to push circumlocution

2. Chain Story Relay

Students sit or stand in a circle. One student starts a story with one sentence. Each student adds a sentence, but they must include a target vocabulary word or grammar point. If someone hesitates, the group helps with prompts.

- **Aim:** narrative skills, past tense or connectors practice
- **Materials:** none required
- **Time:** 8–12 minutes
- **Variation:** write a list of prompt words on the board for support; award a point when a student uses a complex structure

3. Find Someone Who (Speed Edition)

Give students a short checklist of characteristics or experiences (e.g., has been to another country, likes spicy food). Students circulate and ask questions to find classmates who match. First to complete the sheet wins a small prize.

- **Aim:** question formation, speaking with new partners
- **Materials:** simple checklist per student
- **Time:** 7–10 minutes

- **Variation:** require full sentences for answers for higher-level classes

4. Mystery Bag Description

Place an object in a bag. A student feels it without looking and describes it to the class while classmates guess. This focuses attention on adjectives and precise descriptions.

- **Aim:** descriptive language, listening comprehension
- **Materials:** opaque bag and small objects
- **Time:** 5-8 minutes
- **Variation:** use thematic objects tied to the lesson

5. Two Truths and a Lie (Targeted)

Each student prepares two true statements and one false statement using a specific grammar point or vocabulary set. Partners ask follow-up questions to decide which statement is the lie.

- **Aim:** question forms, controlled production of target language
- **Materials:** none required
- **Time:** 10-15 minutes
- **Variation:** score rounds for accuracy or encourage longer follow-up questions for advanced learners

How to choose the right activity

Pick a game based on your lesson objective. For vocabulary recall, use Speed Draw or Mystery Bag. For fluency and interaction, choose Chain Story or Find Someone Who. For targeted grammar practice, Two Truths and a Lie works especially well.

Quick tips for smooth gameplay

- **Set a clear time limit** to keep energy high.
- **Model one round** so students know expectations.
- **Provide sentence stems** for lower-level learners to increase participation.
- **Rotate partners** frequently to build confidence and community.
- **Keep it low-stakes** to encourage risk taking and experimentation.

These **language class games** require minimal prep and deliver maximum interaction. Use them as warm-ups, quick reviews or exit tickets to build speaking practice into every lesson. Try one tomorrow and notice how much more students talk, think and collaborate.

Here are some of my favorite resources to engage and inspire learners, to include my lifelong language learning journey.

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

Discover over 100 dynamic activities to make world language learning interactive and fun. I wrote this book with some of my favorite activities for educators aiming to build proficiency with high-impact strategies.

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