



VOLUNTEERING WITH ESL LEARNERS

Using a Word Ring for LEA Part Practice



The list on the following pages represents vocabulary often taught in introductory low level ESL and ESL Literacy classes. These are presented in 16-word sets. Each set can each be entered into a two column template on a coloured card-stock page, then read, cut and hole-punched by learners. Introducing them in 16 word sets allows for manipulation of the set in a variety of rows and columns for a variety of practical tasks and games. Corresponding picture cards can also be created for low level readers. Here are a few examples of activities that can be done with word ring cards:

- 4 x 4 word student-made bingo games
- learner-created board games
- realia labelling
- categorization games
- creating form layouts
- phrase/sentence practice
- spelling reference for writing activities
- word attack skills
(e.g. finding words beginning with same sound; finding word families)
- labelling home environment
- alphabetizing

As a term progresses, the word ring grows. Learners begin to get an innate sense of parts of speech and word order through the colour-coding. Word rings can be used in class as a manipulative “dictionary” of sight words. Learners can take their word rings home and replicate class activities independently or with friends, family members and volunteers.

Blue: "What?" Words

(concrete nouns)

My family	Classroom	Food	My Body	Clothing	My House
mother	backpack	apple	arm	shirt	bathroom
father	binder	banana	back	pants	bedroom
daughter	book	beef	ear	shorts	dining room
son	chair	bread	eye	jeans	kitchen
brother	clock	broccoli	face	t-shirt	living room
sister	eraser	butter	finger	blouse	armchair
uncle	flag	cake	foot	sweater	bathtub
aunt	map	carrot	hair	dress	bed
cousin	paper	cheese	hand	skirt	blinds
nephew	pen	chicken	head	suit	chair
neice	pencil	cream	leg	belt	coffee table
grandmother	scissors	fish	mouth	socks	curtains
grandfather	sharpener	flour	neck	shoes	dresser
husband	student	grapes	nose	sandals	end table
wife	table	juice	teeth	pajamas	fireplace
inlaw	teacher	lamb	toe	underwear	flowers
		lemon		tie	fridge
		lettuce		scarf	lamp
		milk		hat	loveseat
		onion		cap	night table
		orange		toque	oven
		pork		glasses	photo
		potato		earrings	picture
		rice		ring	pillow
		spinach		necklace	rug
		tomato		bracelet	shower
		water		watch	sink
		yogurt		gloves	sofa
		dairy		mittens	stove
		fruit		jacket	table
		grain		vest	television
		meat		coat	toilet
		vegetables		boots	window

Pink: "Doing" Words

(action verbs – daily routine actions and classroom instruction actions)

clean
cook
do
eat
feed
go
make
play
read
sleep
sweep
take
wake
wash
watch
write
check
circle
copy
cross out
cut
draw
erase
fill out
fold
make an X
make a box
match
put
sign
take out
underline

Green: "Where?" Words

(prepositions and adverbs of place)

over
under
above
below
in
on
next to
beside
between
around
behind
in front of
before
after
across from
up/down

Yellow: "Look Like" Words

(descriptive adjectives for self, household, clothing)

black
blond
blue
brown
colourful
gold
green
grey
orange
pink
purple
red
silver
tan
white
yellow
big
small
medium
little
large
tall
short
fat
thin
ugly
pretty
long
dark
light
fancy
plain

Grey: "Form" Words

(words that appear often on forms, calendars)

date	Monday
first name	Tuesday
last name	Wednesday
address	Thursday
city	Friday
province	Saturday
postal code	Sunday
phone number	day
date of birth	week
sex	month
male	year
marital status	calendar
single	today
married	yesterday
divorced	last
separated	next
January	
February	
March	
April	
May	
June	
July	
August	
September	
October	
November	
December	
winter	
spring	
summer	
fall	

Tan: "Small" Words

(function words – articles, conjunctions, particles, etc)

<i>a</i>
<i>about</i>
<i>am</i>
<i>an</i>
<i>and</i>
<i>at</i>
<i>be</i>
<i>by</i>
<i>can</i>
<i>can't</i>
<i>do</i>
<i>don't</i>
<i>for</i>
<i>from</i>
<i>get</i>
<i>had</i>
<i>has</i>
<i>have</i>
<i>in</i>
<i>is</i>
<i>it</i>
<i>not</i>
<i>of</i>
<i>on</i>
<i>so</i>
<i>some</i>
<i>than</i>
<i>the</i>
<i>to</i>
<i>was</i>
<i>were</i>
<i>will</i>