



VOLUNTEERING WITH ESL LEARNERS

Activities and games to practice the simple past

Toss the ball

Choose an irregular verb and say the base form out loud. Toss the ball to a student. The student must catch the ball and say the past form. That student then chooses another verb and tosses the ball at another student. Continue until all the students have had a turn or two.

The Matching game

Give learners mixed cards. The learners put down the cards one at a time. The learner that gets a match (of the base verb and the past form of the verb) keeps the cards.

Simple Past tense Bingo

Learners write the simple past form of the given verbs on their bingo sheets. They cover each box with bingo chips as the verbs are called out. The first one to cover five verbs in a row shouts bingo.

Relay

Write the base verbs on the board. Divide learners into two teams and ask them to write the simple past of the verb next to the base verb. The team with the most correct verbs in the past tense wins.

Walk around

Post sentences with missing verbs around the room. Give verbs to learners and ask them to fill in the gaps by posting the correct verbs.

Charade Series

Give out verbs to learners and ask them to act. Other students guess the verb in the past tense.

Diary entry

Learners write about events that happened. They can also write about past events in their life or about life in their country.



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Picture sentences/ picture stories

Learners guess what's happening in the picture/s. They can orally describe what's happening or write about it.

Facts about the Famous

Use facts about a famous person from the past to practice yes/ no questions. Extension: Learners read about a famous person and then use facts to write about that person's life.

Find Someone Who

Learners ask questions in the past tense. They only write the name of the people who answer 'yes'.

Error correction

Create a worksheet with errors in the use of the simple past tense. Ask learners to decide if there is an error. If they spot an error then they need to fix these.

Writing about past events

This is similar to the diary entry

What's the opposite of...?

Write the opposite of the verbs. Use irregular verbs.

remembered-? floated-? opened-?/ buy-? lose (a game)-?

Board Games

Use a simple board game template. Number the spaces/ boxed on the board. Learners take turns and land on a number. They then look at the clues given on a separate sheet with numbers and verbs. They use the verb (next to the number they have landed on) to make a sentence in the simple past tense.

Scramble- Unscramble

Give learners a list of verbs with scrambled spelling. Learners unscramble to spell the correct base form verb. Then, they provide the simple past form of the verb. E.g. *emco- come-came*.