

Identifying Kinaesthetic Learners:

1. Kinesthetic learners need to move. They wiggle, tap, swing their legs, bounce, and often just can't seem to sit still. They learn through their bodies and their sense of touch.
2. They have excellent "physical" memory – they learn quickly and permanently what they DO as they are learning.
3. Kinesthetic Learners are often gifted in athletics, dancing, and other physical activities.
4. They are generally very coordinated and have an excellent sense of their body in space and of body timing. They have great hand-eye coordination and quick reactions.

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Kinesthetic learners are learners who need body movement and hands-on work. This is also true for tactile learners and children who have been labeled dyslexic, ADD, and ADHD.

A Few Guiding Principles in Teaching

- *Information they learned via body movement is stored in the brain, so if the learner **repeats that movement**, it will not only help them focus, but will also help them remember what they learned.*
- *Use **skits** for learning concepts, **gestures** for learning sight words, e.g. **body movement** as they learn will hold their focus on the lesson.*
- *They will focus more easily if they have **objects to manipulate** instead of always using pencil and paper.*
- Let them **move!**
- Use **novelty** and **change** where you teach lesson in order to help break up long periods of time when the students would be sitting in their desks.

Teachers will be successful in reaching all their learners at one time if they will develop a teaching style that is a synthesis of methods that target the whole brain.

[adapted from the Child1st Publications LLC website, article by Sarah K Major]

Activities:

The Mill Test

1. Cut up your long boring grammar exercise into strips
2. Give each learner a strip and a few seconds to work it out. If you're using this activity once, let them write the answer on the **back** of the strip of paper.
3. Instruct them to test other students by showing them the paper and asking them 'what's the answer?' (that way, even if they don't know the answer to their own question, it's not embarrassing), then **after** the other student works it out, compare your ideas and discuss why.
4. During the activity the teacher mingles, helps and corrects.

Checking answers – Option 1: Get everyone sat down, give them the whole activity and let them write the answers as you check them. Option 2: list the answers randomly on the board and get them to mill in groups and try to work out which answer fits which person's paper.

Adaption: if the exercise is in the book and you can't photocopy it, just assign learners a specific number and tell them to work only on that one.

Controlled 'Rose' Rotation

The idea works the same as above but is much more controlled in who works with whom for how long.

1. After giving out the strips of paper, split the class in half.
2. The first half forms a circle and faces outward (backs to the hub, faces to the rim). The second half then stands opposite them.
3. Give them a set period of time to discuss the possible answers / questions they have
4. At the end of that period, the teacher calls time and the outer circle move one place left (or right, your choice) and the process starts again.
5. After the next period of time, the inner circle steps in the opposite direction.

This activity has the advantage of leaving no student standing alone without a partner as sometimes happens in the Mill Test activity. With odd numbers, though, two students have to work as one for the activity.

Treasure Hunt

1. Cut up questions / tasks onto pieces of paper and place them in visible but not obvious places around the classroom / school (don't get too far!).
2. Instruct the students to work in pairs and 'visit' the papers without moving them or touching them. They read the question / task and discuss or complete it verbally only. Then they move on to another.
3. If there are a lot of learners, instruct them to visit papers that are free and not to crowd one piece of paper.
4. The teacher tours and mills with the students to answer questions and guide the students to the papers when they are lost.

It's important to remember that you don't want learners be wandering around unable to find anything, so giving them hints and pointing them to papers is helpful.

Using Balls

Soft balls in the classroom are great for kinaesthetic learners, giving them something tactile to relate to the language in use. Use soft or light (ball pool) balls to ensure that nothing gets damaged. Balls that are too bouncy (tennis balls), too heavy or larger than hand-sized (basketballs / footballs) don't work in the classroom.

Ball Categories

This is a great game for a fast warmer that introduces or reviews collocations or vocabulary categories.

1. Divide the board into two or more categories with a clear horizontal line (s). (e.g. Make / Do)
2. Label each category in nice big letters.
3. Line up the teams (3 teams is best, but two or four is okay as well) behind a throwing line (this can be imaginary or marked by the edge of a desk / chair / picture).
4. Explain that you will read out words that match the categories and they need to identify those categories by throwing a ball into the right place. The first ball to hit the right part of the board scores a point for their team.
5. Explain the procedure: 1) you say the word 2) they throw the ball 3) you call the colour or team name of the first one to hit 4) the person behind them retrieves the ball and gets ready to throw behind the throwing line. 5) you say another word.
6. Set the rules: 1) you do not touch, interfere with or block another team's ball. 2) If no-one gets the right category, they keep throwing until they do. 3) Players change with every new word – everyone rotates in then goes to the back of the queue. 3) Team members can shout out help to the person with the ball. 4) Non-throwing team members can help retrieve their own team's ball.

7. Start reading words, giving three or four seconds between each one for the teams to change throwers and recover the balls.

Volleyball Word Forms

This works well for getting students think quickly. The option to 'pass' also allows the weaker students to participate without being picked on or losing their team points. Before the activity, make sure you have pre-taught some word form options.

1. Prepare a list of words with multiple forms.
2. Divide the class into two teams
3. Line the two teams up facing each other but a few paces from the other team (three or four paces is enough).
4. Explain that they will try to score points like in Volleyball by keeping words in the air. To do that, each person that is passed the word will need to think of a new word form in order to send it back over the net.
5. Explain that the ball represents the word. It doesn't matter if the ball falls on the ground, only who is holding the ball.
6. Give the ball to the server. Give the server a word. The server will say a new word form and then pass to someone on the other team.
7. The receiving learner can decide to return the ball again with a new word form (same word, new form) or pass it to someone else on their team. The team can only pass once before they must return it (which is different from actually Volleyball, where you can pass it twice).
8. They have to the count of 4 to say the word or the word is considered 'dropped' and the other team scores a point.
9. Continue until you run out of word for that activity (about 8 words is usually enough).

Word Association Volleyball

This is the same as the last activity but where students just say an associated word. It's a lot easier than the Word Form Volleyball.

Board Boggle

This is a great way of eliciting or testing subject-based vocabulary in a fast, fun and competitive way. With no preparation time required whatsoever.

- 1) Line students up in teams based on the width of your board (the narrower the board, the less teams). Get the teams to stand at least a few paces away from the board and make an imaginary starting line.
- 2) Give each team a section of the board to work on (drawing a vertical line helps) and one board pen.

- 3) Explain that the teams will have just 90 seconds (max 2 mins) to write on the board as many words related to the topic of your choice on the board as they can.
- 4) Explain the rules: 1) they must start from the top and list the words from top to bottom 2) the word/collocation must be original, you can't have it someone else wrote it already 3) it must be legible 4) [optional] it must be spelt right. 5) When it's your turn, you must take the pen, if you don't know what to write, ask your team for help – they can shout it to you. 6) teams must stay behind the line at all times unless they hold the pen.
- 5) Start the learners off with a racing start.
- 6) Call time.
- 7) [optional] Give teams a few moments to check what the other teams have written. If they think it's wrong they can underline a max of three words / collocation from the other teams and score by correctly spotting errors / repetition or illegibility.
- 8) Score the lists based on level, legibility and originality. Have some fun with the scoring.

Pen Race

This activity comes with a warning – if there are members of your class who get emotional when competing, don't do this activity (nobody wants a fight in English class).

- 1) Prepare a list of words from previous lessons or that will be today's lesson.
- 2) Divide the board into areas for each team to write in. Put a chair or small table in front of the board with the same number of board pens as teams. Make sure the board pens are different colours.
- 3) Line learners up in teams a few paces from the board and the pens.
- 4) Explain that you will define a word. When they know the word, the team can tell the person at the front of the team and they will run up, pick up the pen and write that word in their team's space on the board. Simple!
- 5) Explain that there is a minor complication: the pens are worth different points. E.g. write the correct answer with the black pen you score 5 points, the blue is worth 3 and the green is worth 1.
- 6) Make clear that when they pick up a pen they must write an answer immediately or lose 10 points.
- 7) Set the rule that they can only start writing before others have finished so they don't copy what another team has written.
- 8) At the end, count the scores.

Definitions Race

This activity is great for a bit of vocabulary review or as a way of reminding students of words before a listening or reading activity.

- 1) Write words on separate slips of a paper to make a set of words (ten is usually a good number)
- 2) Make an equal set of words for each team you plan to have. (e.g. 3 sets for three teams).
- 3) In class, place a chair at the front of an area / aisle the students can move quickly up and down.
- 4) On the chair, place the set of word strips face down.
- 5) Divide the class into teams and put them at the other end of your aisle / running area.
- 6) Explain [and demonstrate by walking it through] how team members will go up to the chair and pick up the top (and only the top) piece of paper, look at it then go back to the group and explain that word using English and only English and without saying the word or any part of the word. When the team knows the word, they put the paper next to them on a nearby desk or chair scoring 3 points for the team. A new person then goes for the next word.
- 7) Warn of possible problems: 1) if a team member picks up a word they do not know they cannot change it, they need to ask the teacher to explain it to them. 2) If the team cannot guess the word, the player can return it and put it face up under the chair. It then counts as minus 2 points. 3) Any translation, showing the paper or other cheating will be a minus 10 points
- 8) Start the race watching carefully to help those who struggle.
- 9) At the end, count the points and declare the winners.

Definition Word Shout

A simple version of the above, with less preparation time: instead of cutting up sets of word strips, just call learners up (one from each team), write a word where only they can see it and send them back to explain it to their teams. The first team to shout it out scores a point.

You can also do this as a picture drawing activity, or a 'charades' style activity.

Principles of Activity Leadership.

1. Attention – never release the ball / paper until all instructions are clear.
2. Gather learners around before you give them instructions. Make them want to hear you. Holding the ball / activity in your hand while you do so keeps their attention on you as the keeper of the ball / activity.
3. Walk through. Demonstrate in slow and simple terms each activity first.
4. Try out. The first one's always a test to see if everyone understands the rules. Repeat and exemplify again if necessary.