











Days of Laughs: From Mall Adventures to Birthday Parties

Ref: EN_DI_3






Introduction

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 Description	<p>In this English lesson, students enhance their listening comprehension, grammatical awareness, and collaborative skills through two engaging stories about fun activities. Using the dictogloss technique, learners actively listen to short narratives about leisure and social experiences, take notes with the support of visual aids, and reconstruct the stories from memory. The lesson focuses on the past perfective and imperfective aspect in main clauses, helping students understand how these forms express sequence, duration, and background actions in the past. Through group or pair work, learners practice accuracy, recall, and teamwork while developing strategies for active listening and language retention. By comparing their reconstructed versions with the original texts, students strengthen their self-monitoring and editing skills, deepen their understanding of narrative structure, and build confidence in using English to describe past experiences and events in a coherent and meaningful way.</p>		
 Age	13 - 15 years old	 Language Area	Past perfective and imperfective aspect in main clauses
 Proficiency Level	A1-A2	 Authors	Athina Nachopoulou
 Subject	Language	 Duration	1 teaching hour (45')
 Links with Language Curriculum	Grammar: past perfective and imperfective aspect in main clauses		

Introduction

	Rationale	This educational protocol involves Dictogloss, which is a form of a 'collaborative game'. The rationale of the Dictogloss is that (a) the learners interact with their peers in a fun way provoking language production and (b) they notice the past perfective and imperfective aspect in main clauses.
	Aims	<p>It is expected that students:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Will interact and help each other.2. Will all have opportunities to contribute to their group.3. Will increase their interest in the learning process by means of a fun activity.4. Will improve listening, reading, writing, and, possibly, speaking (through interaction with each other) skills.5. Will observe potential errors they make and will pay attention to the target grammatical forms through negotiation.6. Will be able to practice a grammatical phenomenon (with which they may have already been acquainted), i.e., the past perfective and imperfective aspect in main clauses in this protocol and, thus, become able to: a) develop connections between the form of the perfective and imperfective aspect and their meaning in past time reference and b) notice the adverbials that can signal the use of the grammatical aspect in the past.
	Equipment and Material Needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pictures regarding the topic of the stories.• One pre-recorded audio file of the text (alternatively the teacher could read the text)• A worksheet (A4 paper size) as a reconstruction form that will include either the text with the gaps that must be filled in (if words and/or phrases need to be reconstructed rather than the entire text)

Instructions Step by step development of the activity (preparation, implementation, summing up, reflection)



01 | Introduction

The teacher tells the students that they will listen to two stories about fun activities. (S)he asks them what fun activities they like to do in their free time. (3 minutes)



02 | Listening stage

The teacher splits the students into groups. The students first listen to the teacher reading the text aloud (see text in the Appendix), and they are asked to listen for comprehension, without taking any notes. (2 minutes/per text)



03 | Listening Stage with Visual Support

The teacher distributes to the students the pictures representing the story and reads the text aloud two more times. During the second and third readings, the students are asked to take notes below the pictures which represent the events of the story. Then, they are asked to reconstruct the text based on the reconstruction form. (4 minutes/per text)



04 | Reconstruction Stage

After the final reading, the students recall the content of the text, assisted by their notes and the visual support (images), and try to produce a text that resembles the original as much as possible. This text-reconstruction stage is often implemented as pair work (optionally though), so the students can pool their resources. Students are given the original text with gaps and are asked to fill them in. (8–10 minutes/per text)



05 | After Reconstruction

The last step is for the students to compare their version with the transcript of the original text and make amendments, using a different color (again, either group-wise or individually). The text of the group (or the student) that has more similarities than differences with the original text wins. The same procedure is repeated for the second text. (5 minutes/per text)

Useful Tips

01

Depending on learners' proficiency level, they can be asked either to fill in the missing gaps, as in the example provided in the Appendix, or alternatively to reconstruct the entire text.

02

Dictogloss activities can be implemented either in groups or individually.

01 | Texts

Introduction

What fun activities do you like to do in your free time? Do you prefer outdoor activities or indoor activities? Why? What do you like to do on weekends to relax and have fun?
(3 minutes)

Listen to the 1st story.

Text 1 - Complete audio file

Yesterday, I (1) went to the mall with my friends. We (2) were walking around the mall when we (3) saw a big sale. While we (4) were looking at the clothes, my friend (5) found a jacket she liked. We (6) decided to buy some snacks before we (7) continued shopping. I (8) was eating my sandwich when my phone (9) rang. After lunch, we (10) went to the cinema to watch a movie.

Now listen to the story again and take notes under the pictures.

Accompanying illustrations with notes:



01 | Texts

Now fill in the gaps. Your notes and the pictures will help you.

Text 1 – With gaps

Yesterday, I (1) to the mall with my friends. We (2) around the mall when we (3) a big sale. While we (4) at the clothes, my friend (5) a jacket she liked. We (6) to buy some snacks before we (7) shopping. I (8) my sandwich when my phone (9) rang. After lunch, we (10) to the cinema to watch a movie.

Listen to the 2nd story.

Text 2 - Complete audio file

Last Sunday, I (1) celebrated my birthday with my friends. We (2) had a small party at home and (3) decorated the living room with balloons. While we (4) were playing games, my parents (5) were preparing food in the kitchen. I (6) received many nice gifts, including a new bike. While I (7) was opening my presents, everyone (8) was singing "Happy Birthday." After we (9) ate cake, we (10) went outside to play some sports.

Now listen to the story again and take notes under the pictures.

Accompanying illustrations with notes:



01 | Texts

Now fill in the gaps. Your notes and the pictures will help you.

Text 2 – With gaps

Last Sunday, I (1) my birthday with my friends. We (2) a small party at home and (3) the living room with balloons. While we (4) games, my parents (5) food in the kitchen. I (6) many nice gifts, including a new bike. While I (7) my presents, everyone (8) "Happy Birthday." After we (9) cake, we (10) outside to play some sports.



Answers

1st Text

(1) went, (2) were walking, (3) saw, (4) were looking, (5) found, (6) decided, (7) continued, (8) was eating, (9) rang, (10) went

2nd Text

(1) celebrated, (2) had, (3) decorated (4) were playing, (5) were preparing, (6) received, (7) was opening, (8) was singing, (9) ate (10) went



Notes

[illegible]