

This section presents three stand-alone language learning activities related to the theme of bowling. Each activity is designed for students at the proficiency level indicated.

Sentence Bowling

Level: Upper Beginner/Intermediate

Time required: 30–45 minutes

Goals: To improve students' ability to create sentences and use correct sentence structure; to review vocabulary

Materials: 30 small pieces of paper; a small object that can be thrown easily, such as a coin, a beanbag, or a crumpled piece of paper; 10 bowls or similar containers; 10 envelopes (optional)

Preparation:

1. Take the 30 small pieces of paper and prepare them as follows:

- Prepare 10 cards with a different noun written on each.
- Prepare 10 cards with a different verb written on each.
- Prepare 10 cards with a different word of your choice written on each. (These could be 10 more nouns or verbs, 10 adjectives, or 10 adverbs, or a combination of these, depending on students' level and on the material that the class has been studying.)

The words on the cards can be mixed (vocabulary the students are currently studying and vocabulary they have previously studied), or the words can be related to a theme (such as animals, modes of transportation, etc.).

You might want to have students help with the preparation of the cards.

2. Once the word cards are prepared, you will need to group them. Take one noun card, one verb card, and one “your choice” card, and put

them in an envelope. Each envelope then will contain three cards—one of each type.

3. In an open space in the classroom, arrange the 10 bowls so that they form a triangle with one of the points of the triangle facing the students, with one bowl in the front row, two bowls in the second row, three bowls in the third row, and four bowls in the back row. This is the triangle arrangement of bowling pins at a bowling alley.

4. Under each bowl, place one of the envelopes containing the word cards.

Procedures:

1. Divide the class into groups. Each group chooses a representative, and each representative comes forward to throw the small object (the coin or beanbag or crumpled piece of paper), trying to land the object in a bowl.

2. Students take as many turns as necessary to get the object in a bowl. Once they do, take away the bowl and give the envelope underneath the bowl to that representative. Representatives should not open their envelopes until every representative has played and obtained an envelope. The tenth representative will have only one bowl left, but in the next round, you can change the order in which groups select.

3. Once all the envelopes have been distributed, representatives open their envelopes and share the three words inside with the members of their group.

4. Working together, group members use the three words that they have received to form a sentence. For example, if the group receives the three words *kitchen*, *jump*, and *tiger*, they might form the

sentence “A tiger is jumping in the kitchen” or “Early this morning, a tiger jumped through the kitchen window.”

5. Give students a point for correct usage of vocabulary words and a point for correct sentence structure.
6. After each group has presented its sentence, the words can be mixed up (be careful to have one noun, one verb, and one “your choice” word in each envelope) and placed under the bowls for another round of play. Groups can choose new representatives to throw the object into a bowl to select an envelope. Continue for three rounds, or as time allows. You can recognize the winning group at the end of the game.

Variations

1. The game can be played without bowls; simply distribute the sets of cards to the groups. Having students get their cards by throwing an object into the bowl adds a level of excitement to the game, though, especially for younger learners.
2. The game can also be played with individual students, rather than groups, forming sentences. One way to do this is to prepare multiple sets of word cards, give a complete set to each group, and have each student form a sentence using the cards in his or her envelope. The other students in each group must determine whether that student has used the words correctly and whether the grammar of the sentence is correct. If the other students think the sentence is incorrect, they must explain why and correct it.
3. You can vary the structure that students must use in their sentences (have them form questions, negatives, sentences that use the past tense, etc.), depending on what the class is currently studying. These variations can keep students interested and make the game more challenging for advanced players.
4. You can have more than three words in the envelope (for example, you could add prepositions or pronouns), according to the content your class is studying. Or you can have fewer: lower-level students might have only two words in the envelope, for example.

5. You can have each group act out its sentence. Other groups watch and try to guess what the sentence is. For example, for the sentence “A tiger is jumping in the kitchen,” a group could have one member pretending to be preparing food, while another (the tiger) growls and jumps about. This step can make the activity more enjoyable for the students. Because the class might not be able to guess the exact wording of the sentence, you can limit the time to about one minute per group.

Step by Step

Level: Intermediate

Time required: 1 hour

Goals: To practice giving and following instructions; to practice the use of imperatives; to become familiar with the basic steps of bowling

Materials: paper; pens or pencils

Preparation:

1. The 12 steps for “How to Bowl” are provided in correct order; scramble the steps so that they are out of order. Write the scrambled steps on the chalkboard, or have students write the scrambled steps on the board for you. You could also photocopy the steps, cut them in strips, and distribute sets of the strips to students.

2. Activate students’ interest by asking what they already know about bowling: “Have you ever gone bowling? What is the goal of the game?” You might want to draw a bowling-pin triangle on the chalkboard to show students the arrangement of pins that bowlers try to knock down. (Use circles to represent pins and draw one pin in front, two pins in the second row, three pins in the third row, and four pins in the back row.) This drawing can supplement the description of bowling in Step 3.

3. Read to your students the following information about bowling:

In bowling, players score by rolling a ball down a lane and trying to knock down bowling pins, which are shaped like large bottles.

How to Bowl

Pick up the ball carefully with two hands; it is heavy.

Put the thumb, middle finger, and ring finger of one hand in the three holes in the ball.

Use your free hand to support the ball as you hold it in front of yourself, with your thumb up and your other two fingers down.

Aim carefully at the pins at the end of the lane (or the arrows in the lane).

Take a step forward toward the lane.

As you take the next two steps, swing the ball slowly behind you.

As you take another step, swing the ball forward.

Crouch down and roll the ball toward the pins.

As you roll the ball, follow through with your arm to give the ball more speed.

Watch the ball roll down the lane and knock down the pins.

Count the number of pins you have knocked down.

Cheer if you are happy with your score!

There are ten pins altogether. If a player does not knock down all the pins, he or she rolls the ball one more time to try to knock down the pins that are still standing. Each player gets ten turns, called frames, in a game. The game is over when everyone has played 10 frames.

Each player must have bowling shoes and a bowling ball. The place where people bowl is called a bowling alley, and most bowling alleys rent special shoes to bowlers. You can find a ball at the bowling alley, too. Balls come in different colors and weights, usually from 6 pounds (about 2.7 kg) to 16 pounds (about 7.3 kg). Bowling balls have three finger holes—one for your thumb, and the other two for your ring finger and middle finger. The holes should not be too big or too small for your fingers. You should select a ball that is the perfect fit for your hand.

Procedures:

1. Go over vocabulary in the “How to Bowl” steps that might be unfamiliar to your students.
2. Have students work in groups of three or four to put the steps in proper order. As they work, let them feel free to stand up and act out steps if they want to; acting out the steps can help students decide which step might come before or after another.
3. As a class, go over the proper order. (If the scrambled steps are written on the board, you can number the steps there.) If groups disagree, they can act out or explain why they believe the order they selected is the best one.
4. Once you have established the correct order, have one student in each group read the instructions aloud as another student follows the instructions, going through the motions of bowling. Other students in the group, the “audience,” can correct or advise the student who is following the instructions, if necessary. Take turns until everyone has had a chance to read and a chance to “bowl.”
5. Have a student, or a group of volunteers, come to the front of the class to demonstrate while another student reads the steps in order. The rest

of the students (who now have bowling “experience”) check to make sure the steps are being followed correctly.

Extension

1. In groups, have students write step-by-step instructions on an activity they know how to do well. (If you feel it is necessary, you might want to have the entire class brainstorm activities first; write the responses on the chalkboard. Then divide students into groups and have each group write instructions for one of the activities. Don't worry if two groups choose the same activity; they can have fun comparing similarities and differences in the steps they describe.)
2. When the groups have finished writing their instructions, have one group (Group A) read its instructions aloud while another group (Group B) follows the instructions, acting out the steps that Group A reads. (Students in Group A can take turns reading the steps.) If any steps are unclear, Group B can ask for more explanation. The rest of the class can make sure Group B follows instructions accurately.
3. Continue until all groups have had the opportunity to present their own instructions and to follow another group's instructions.

Variations

1. When each group reads its instructions, have the entire class act out the steps. You can join in, too!
2. With advanced students, have each group begin reading its instructions *without* telling what activity they are describing. That is, the students who are listening and acting out the instructions have to try to guess what they are doing. See how many steps it takes for them to guess what activity is being described. (After they guess correctly, they should continue acting out the instructions until the activity is complete.)
3. Instead of having students act out the steps, ask each group to write its steps on strips of paper, scramble the order of the strips, and exchange sets of strips with another group. Then have each group put the other group's steps in correct order.

Bowling Alley Menu

Level: Intermediate

Time required: 30–45 minutes

Goals: To enhance students' knowledge of aspects of the American lifestyle related to bowling; to learn and practice using food-related vocabulary; to improve listening comprehension

Materials: paper; pens or pencils; if you are using the activity for reading practice, copies of the text

Procedures:

1. This listening activity brings together two main topics: bowling and American food. Prepare students to listen to the text by finding out what they know about each of these topics and, if necessary, providing background information.

a) Ask students what they know about bowling. You can ask questions such as the following:

- Have you ever gone bowling?
- What kind of equipment is used?
- What is the goal of the game?

If students are familiar with bowling, let them explain what they know in as much detail as they can. If they are not familiar with bowling, give a short explanation of bowling to students: Bowling is a game in which bowlers (the players) roll large, heavy balls down long lanes. There are 10 pins (heavy objects shaped like bottles) at the end of the lane. The goal of the game is to knock down as many pins as possible. (If you want to give students more information about bowling, read the description in Step 2 of the Preparation section of the previous activity, “Step by Step.”)

b) Ask students what they know about American food. You can ask questions such as the following:

- What are some examples of typical American food?

- Have you ever eaten American food, or food at an American restaurant? Did you like the food there?
- How is American food different from food in our country?

2. On the chalkboard, list difficult or unknown vocabulary and expressions from the text and go over meaning. Here are three items from the text that might be included:

- *bowling alley*: the building where people go to bowl
- *bowler*: a person who bowls
- *snack*: food that people eat between meals

3. Provide students with specific listening goals. You might try one of these options:

a) Write a list of kinds of food on the board before reading the text. Tell students that some of the food items in the list will be mentioned in the text, but some of them will not be. Go over the list. Then ask students to listen carefully to see which food items they hear. Have them check the food when they hear it mentioned.

Here is a list of food items you could use (of course, you can substitute other kinds of food your students are familiar with):

- | | |
|-------------|----------------|
| ___ popcorn | ___ ice cream |
| ___ peanuts | ___ hamburgers |
| ___ salad | ___ candy |
| ___ pizza | ___ apples |

Have students work in pairs to compare the food items they heard. Then, as a class, check to see if everyone agrees and go over the list with students. If there are disagreements, read the text again. (Note that popcorn, pizza, hamburgers, and candy are mentioned; peanuts, salad, ice cream, and apples are not.)

b) Write comprehension questions on the board and have students listen for the answers:

- What kinds of food do people enjoy eating while they are bowling? (For the answer, see the third paragraph of the text.)
- Why do you think these foods are typical in bowling alleys? (The answer is in the second paragraph of the text: they are

easy to eat, and they satisfy the bowlers' hunger.)

c) Ask students to write down all the kinds of food and drink they hear mentioned in the text.

4. Read the text aloud two or three times, as necessary. Depending on the option you chose in Step 3, go over students' responses and invite students to ask questions they might have about the text.

Bowling Alley Food

People who play sports usually do not eat while they are playing. They wait to eat when the game is over. But bowling is different from most sports. When people go bowling, they often have time to eat and drink during a game, and most bowling alleys have a food counter where customers can buy snacks. Bowlers can eat their food in a dining area or take it back to the bowling lanes to enjoy between turns.

Not just any food will do, however. No one wants to eat a bowl of soup at the bowling alley, for example. The snacks served to bowlers must be easy to eat and must satisfy the bowlers' hunger.

So what kinds of food can be found at bowling alleys? Most bowling alleys will, at the very least, serve bags of potato chips and candy. Some have popcorn machines. Nachos, a snack consisting of fried corn chips covered with melted cheese and hot peppers, are also a favorite. If the bowling alley has cooking facilities, it might also offer pizza, hamburgers, hot dogs, french fries, and more. Popular drinks include sodas and juice.

As you can see, going bowling is about more than just knocking down some pins with a ball! It is also about sharing food, drinks, and a good time with friends.

Classroom Activities

Extensions

Option 1: Divide the class into groups of four or five students. Tell the groups that they will create their own “menus” for a particular activity or event. Each group should choose an event—for example, a sports event, a musical event, or another recreational or social event—and then think of five foods/drinks that are appropriate to eat or drink at the event. It can be an activity or event that already has certain foods associated with it, or students can make new and different food associations for the activity or event. If you like, you can also ask students to think of another food or drink that would *not* be appropriate to eat or drink at that event.

Option 2: Extend the theme of bowling and food by asking students the following questions:

- Do you think there are certain types of food that go with certain types of activities?
- What foods are associated with birthdays? What kinds of food go with movies?

As a class, brainstorm other events and activities (e.g., trips to popular nearby places, concerts, sporting activities, other pastimes in your country). Choose one; then ask each group to think of five kinds of food or drink that would be appropriate for people to consume at the event. Tell each group to think of one food or drink that would be inappropriate for the event, too. Have groups compare their ideas and give reasons why they think certain kinds of food are appropriate or inappropriate for the event. Although many of the ideas for appropriate foods may be similar, there

might be variety in the ideas for kinds of food that would be inappropriate and in the reasons groups give for their choices.

If you have time, choose more than one event or activity.

Variation

Use “Bowling Alley Food” as the text for a reading activity rather than a listening activity. You will have to make photocopies or present the text to the entire class by, for example, writing it on the chalkboard or using an overhead projector.

Ask students to underline all the kinds of food in the text; have them circle the vocabulary related to bowling. (Types of food are *soup, potato chips, candy, popcorn, nachos, fried corn chips, cheese, hot peppers, pizza, hamburgers, hot dogs, french fries, sodas, and juice*; students might also underline *snacks* and *drinks* as general categories of food. Vocabulary related to bowling includes *bowling alleys, lanes, bowlers, pins, and ball.*) If you are presenting the text on the chalkboard or by using an overhead projector, you can have students write lists of these items.

If you decide to use the text as a reading activity, you can still do the Extension activities, if you choose to.

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