

## **Kim's Game**

There are a number of language teaching games that can be adapted to practise all kinds of structures and words at different degrees of difficulty and yet never lose their character and appeal. *Kim's Game* is one of them. The basic procedure is as follows. Before the lesson the teacher arranges 20 to 30 objects – the names of which the students know – on a table and covers them with a cloth. At the beginning of the game

the cloth is taken away and everyone looks at the display for two minutes. Then the objects are covered up again and every student makes a list of all the things he remembers. These lists are compared and points may be awarded accordingly. Played like this the game revises vocabulary (e.g. names of objects, shapes, colours or numbers).

*Variations:*

The language content of the game and its suitability for certain age groups can be altered by using different objects (1.) as well as by modifying the rules (2. and 3.).

1. If a poster, a transparency for the overhead projector (e.g. a street scene) or a series of photographs are used instead of the objects students will also practise verb forms in describing the pictures. In addition they may need to use phrases like "in the foreground/background, on the right/left hand side" etc.

2. Students work together in pairs or groups in order to help each other make as complete a list as possible. For this they will have to be able to express how certain they are of the items on their list ("I think the matchbox car is green. I'm quite sure about the plastic bag"), to utter agreement and disagreement ("I don't think that's right. I'm sure there weren't any green pencils, only red ones."), to ask for confirmation ("Wasn't there something round next to the book?") and to direct the conversation ("Is that all? Can you remember anything else? How many things have we got altogether?").

If the working in pairs is organised in such a way that each student compiles his own list first before he compares it with his neighbour's, then even beginners and students not used to pair work can play. All they need are a few phrases which the teacher should introduce beforehand: "I've got that, too. I think that's wrong, it's ... What about ...? I haven't got that. Are you sure about ...?" Unless the students are very confident in their use of the foreign language it is a good idea to write a number of useful utterances on the board or prepare a handout.

3. More advanced students can be asked to work out one list they all agree on, and organise the compilation of this list themselves in a given time (e.g. five minutes). This procedure leads to a lot of interaction in the foreign language and gives the shy students a chance to contribute as well. The teacher can observe his students' social and language behaviour. In very large classes the writing up of three final lists (in three groups) may be better.

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