

## Activities for first lessons

### 1. All about the bag

Hand out a paper bag to all your students the first day of school and put a little note on it:

Directions:

- Fill this bag with 4 things or objects that tell something about yourself. (only 4 things, no more, no less)
- All your objects have to fit in this bag.
- Decorate the bag if you wish!
- Bring the bag back tomorrow and be ready to share with the class.

### 2. Beach ball game

All you need for this first day of school activity is a beach ball and a marker. Write down several questions on the beach ball in a random order.

Examples of questions:

- What are you most proud of?
- What's the most heroic thing you did?
- What's your favorite animal?
- What color is your toothbrush?
- I am thankful for \_\_\_\_\_
- What's your favorite movie?
- What's your favorite sport?
- How many siblings do you have?
- What's your favorite dessert?
- What do you like to do after school?
- When's your birthday?

Now form a circle and throw the beach ball to a student. Wherever the student's left thumb lands, is the question he has to answer. After answering that question, he can throw the ball to another student.

### 3. Find someone who

Put the title '*Find someone who ...*' on a worksheet. Draw a grid (e.g. 5 squares across and 5 down). In each square put the prompts : ... hates cats, ... likes rap, ... lives near the school. Allow students to circulate and ask each other. The first person to write a name for someone in each of the categories is the winner. Let the students tell you about their findings: e.g. Anna has visited the USA, Johann has never been out of Germany, Thomas has travelled by plane.

### 4. These are a few of my favourite things

Use the Julie Andrews song (Musical "Sound of Music") as an introduction:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IagRZBvLtw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=900UL24AUUM> (version by Kelly Clarkson)

Raindrops on roses  
And whiskers on kittens  
Bright copper kettles and warm woolen mittens  
Brown paper packages tied up with strings  
These are a few of my favorite things  
Cream-colored ponies and crisp apple strudels

Doorbells and sleigh bells  
And schnitzel with noodles  
Wild geese that fly with the moon on their wings  
These are a few of my favorite things  
Girls in white dresses with blue satin sashes  
Snowflakes that stay on my nose and eyelashes  
Silver-white winters that melt into springs  
These are a few of my favorite things

Put prompts on the board under the word 'favourite': food, sport, school subject, number, colour or go for more imaginative prompts or more fluent students smell, sound, taste, day of the year, season, style of clothing. etc. Students with more English can be encouraged to justify their choices: I like the winter best because I'm very keen on skiing. A variation: My Top 5 favourite (places, records, people, weekend activities etc.

## 5. Getting to Know You

Have students ask you questions, but not your ordinary, "Are you married or single?" type of questions. Divide students into groups and give each group a set of index cards with random words in them, like *Superman*, *wizard*, *flying*, etc... Students must come up with questions to ask you, which include at least one of these words: *Are you afraid of flying?*

## 6. In common

Ask students to sit in pairs. Tell them to find five things they have in common and three things they don't have in common. When they are done, set each pair with another to do the same (five things the two pairs have in common, three they don't have in common). Then students present their results.

## 7. Tell me about me

Bring in some things to class that have information about you (your passport, your latest plane or train ticket if you have one, a book that you like, pictures of your dog etc.) Give students different things of yours and tell them to work together to build an idea of what you are like as a person. They must do this orally. Get them to tell you about you after five minutes. Then they do the same activity with each other (e.g. they can use the contents of their wallet or purse).

## 8. Lie to me

The students have to tell 3 facts about their life, something that happened to them. Two of them should be true, and one should be a lie. The other students have to find out which one is the lie.

## 9. Nice mnm'ing you

Everyone loves mnm's. Besides eating them, you could also use them for a fun back to school lesson. Divide the mnm's over a few cups and share them with your students. Students have to pick out a mnm blindfolded and tell a story or answer the question. Every color represents its own story.

Tell us

- Red: something about yesterday
- Orange: something you do well
- Yellow: something about your childhood

- Blue: something you learned last week
- Brown: something you can't live without
- Green: something you watch or listen to

## 10. Snowball fight

Let each student take out a sheet of paper and write down 3 interesting, but not widely known, facts about him or herself. There can't be any names on the papers!

Let students crumple up their papers into balls and have a paper "snowball" fight. After a few minutes, all the paper snowballs will be all over the classroom. Now, students have to find a snowball, and unfold the paper. Each student must try to find the student whose snowball he or she retrieved.

## 11. Self portrait



source: Barden, Cindy. Student Booster: Writing Poetry. Marc Twain Media, 2003.

You present yourself in form of a picture poem to the class. Afterwards, ask your students to arrange words that describe them into shapes of a face. They might need a dictionary.

For further ideas see

<https://www.bookwidgets.com/blog/2017/08/15-creative-lesson-ideas-for-the-first-day-of-school>

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk>

<http://www.onestopenglish.com/skills/speaking/lesson-plans/pdf-content/speaking-skills-lesson-plans-first-day-worksheet/teachers-notes-all-levels/149727.article>