

Vocabulary

The emphasis here is on how best to organise words so that storage and retrieval is rapid and confident.

- Visualisation is an important factor
- Eliciting students' personal vocabulary and expressions.

1. Just picture it

Level Any

Time 30 mins.

Materials None

Focus To learn to store vocabulary through visualisation.

State

Pace students' mood then lead them into visual mode by speaking while breathing high in the chest.

Future-pacing

Ask students to think of the word 'window'. Get them to describe what they mean by window. When someone gives a visual description ask for more of that type. Assure students that they are already familiar with the basic ideas of this lesson. Tell that this class will help them store more vocabulary for easy recall.

Presentation

Write the word 'Idiom' on the board and ask about its meaning. Establish that it describes a common saying.

Tell that it is possible to learn and remember sayings easily by visualising them. This is what we'll do today.

Announce that you'll describe a scene that the students have to picture in their heads to help them guess the meaning of the accompanying saying:

- a. Imagine you are at the top of a cliff ... you are moving backwards ... coming slowly towards you is ... the devil himself ... you reach the end of the cliff ... look down ... and see a deep blue sea. (Between the devil and the deep blue sea.)
- b. Picture a dry place ... the sun is hot ... there is someone there who is very frightened ... he is running away as fast as he can ... as he runs he leaves a trail of dust behind ... it's difficult to see where he's gone.(You can't see him for dust.)
- c. You can see a young boy walking along with his father ... look closely at their eyes ... they both have the same colour of eyes ... their hair has the same cut ... they have a similar nose ... they even walk the same ... the sound of their voices is very alike ... (Like father, like son.)
- d. You are in the street ... suddenly you notice something bright on the other side of the road ... it's a golden colour ... small and round ... it certainly looks like a valuable gold coin ... perhaps someone has dropped it ... you go across the road to inspect your find. It's a flat chocolate wrapped in bright yellow paper.(All that glitters is not gold.)
- e. You are in a place with a lot of people ... everyone is doing something different ... suddenly one person attracts your attention ... they are doing something which is incorrect ... you pretend not to see ... (To turn a blind eye.)

Practice

Pair off students and give them the following list of visual sayings. They choose a couple and make up a short visualisation to illustrate it. Announce that some pairs will demonstrate their visualisation with the class.

To see eye to eye with.	Snowed under with questions.
He's off his head.	Put a good face on it.
to be on the watch	to have seen better days
To see through	to see off
to look forward to	to look down you nose at
to look up to	to look like
to look for a needle in a haystack	To make eyes at
Where there's smoke there's a fire	seeing things
To be up to your eyes in	To keep you eyes skinned
My eye!	That's your look-out.

The black sheep of the family. in your true colours.
A drowning man clutches a straw off colour.
Birds of a feather flock together. A sight for sore eyes.
To catch someone red handed. To put in the picture.

Debrief

Help the pairs of students to guess meanings and construct their visualisation texts.

Celebration

Have students perform their texts with the class.

2. Portraits

Level Any

Time 1 hour

Materials None

Focus To elicit students' vocabulary for describing people.

State

Match and pace the mood of the class then gradually lead them into a visualising mode by speaking slowly in a high flat voice.

Future-pacing

Ask one student to step out of the room. Help the others to describe that student. Note the answers on the board. Recall the student and see how far the board descriptions match reality. Congratulate students on any success. Announce to your students that after this class they will have improved powers of observation.

Presentation

Tell students to prepare pencil and paper. You are going to help them describe someone they know well. Instruct them to write down their descriptions **in their native language**. Write this instruction on the board. Assure them that there will be time later to retrieve the vocabulary in English. Write on the board: Description of Someone I know.

Put them into a visual state using the instructions above and commence the visualisation:

Think of someone you like ... paint a picture of that person in your mind ... look closely now ... look at their face ... colour of the eyes ... hair - colour? shape? ... what about the nose ... ? The person speaks ... describe the sound of the voice ... are they very talkative? ... What do they talk about? ... Look at their clothes ... their ornaments ... what are they wearing on their feet? ... Do you like how they dress? ... Are they wearing perfume?..How does it smell? Now say what you feel about this person ... their character ... how they treat you ... Is there anything you dislike about them?

Practice

Students now use bilingual dictionaries to translate the vocabulary they have accumulated. They can then make a crossword with the vocabulary to test other students.

Debrief

Ask students for examples of the new vocabulary they learned and make it available for all on the board.

Celebration.

Repeat the initial test of observation by asking a different student to step out of the room and getting the rest to describe him or her. Celebrate the improved success they have this time.

Follow-up

You can make the new vocabulary list useful by having students write down their description. Do this by repeating the visualisation at a later date.

3. Photographic memory

Time Keep it short.

Level Any.

Materials A list of vocabulary. An OHP would be useful.

Focus Storing words through anchoring.

State

You need students in a visual mode. Keep still, breathe high in the chest and you'll speak in a suitably high flat voice.

Future-pacing

Think of an object you use a lot and which has something written on it ... your trainers, the credits of a TV programme, a schoolbook, a building. Has everyone got an object? Look carefully at the object. Now zoom into your picture and see if you can read the words on it. Tell me your object and what's written on it. (Observe students who go into stress when quizzed about this activity because they may have serious difficulties with visualising words.) Congratulate students congruently on their ability to see words. That's what we're going to do more of today. At the end of the session you'll have learned how to store words - a useful exercise for exam revision.

Presentation

- Put the first word of your vocabulary list on the OHP or chalkboard.
- Instruct students to look at the word then look at another place in the classroom, see the word again and read it. They nod their heads to indicate that they have a sense of the word and have read it.
- Repeat the operation with each item on your list. Instruct the students each time to look at the same place to recall words.

Debrief

Ask how easy students found the exercise. Explain that good recall depends on practice which must be done at frequent intervals. Transfer the skill to other contents areas by describing its use there.

Completion

Do a recall test asking students to look at their space and write the words down.

4. Sensing it

Level Any

Time 30 mins.

Materials None

Focus To revise a set of words through dictation and fix them in the memory.

State

Match, pace and lead students into a relaxed mode where each will respond in his or her natural learning style. Avoid giving preference to one style: use unspecified predicates (understand, sense, know, consider, nice).

Future-pacing

Write the words: see/hear/feel/taste/smell on the board. Then write “dog”. Ask one student for a description. Categorise the description as one of five senses. Ask if anyone had a different experience and accept all experiences. Try a few more words: fish; trumpet; sand; water; rose ... Congratulate students on the variety of their experiences. Explain that during today's lesson students will learn their favourite sensory system and a way to enhance their strategies for storing words in English.

Presentation

Your students will need pencil and paper for this activity. At the top of the sheet instruct them to copy the following headings while writing them on the board. Demonstrate their meanings.

I see I hear I feel I taste I smell

Say and demonstrate to students that you will dictate a word and they have to write it under the column they consider appropriate. Illustrate with the example of 'paper' which can be seen(white), heard(a rustle), felt(smooth) or smelled(odour). Here is a sample list inspired by Davis and Rinovoluceri's book on dictation:

Practice

computer	rabbit	rain
rain	church	school
chimpanzee	cat	page
English	ink	John
sport	music	hobby
radio	disco	friend

Debrief

Find out in which category was predominant in individual students' lists. Say that this is very probably their easiest way of learning words. Find out which categories were preferred by the majority of the class. This will give you valuable information on the input styles to use when presenting information. You can follow this exercise up by getting students to memorise the words using their sense categories.

Celebration

Tell students they now know their predominant style and can try out this or the other options when storing future vocabulary.