

Set of email activities

Dialoguing

This is the most basic way to use email. It's simply one more way to increase the frequency of communication between teacher - student and student-student. Belisle (1996) presents some examples of different kinds of dialoguing he has experienced in his class.

Student to teacher

- Journal writing
- Asking and answering questions progress reports and updates
- Home works

Teacher to students

- Announcements
- Assignments
- Homework and feedback on homework
- Grades Report
- Mailing lists

Students to students

- Class mailing lists
- Social events
- Peer work

1. Real time teacher to student dialoguing

Send a basic welcome message followed by a question eliciting a response. When each student opens his or her mail, this message is awaiting him or her. They have to reply immediately by writing complete sentences. Answer their messages as soon as possible by making comments and add a new question. The only condition is that your class must be a small one, maximum 12 students.

2. Research project

In this activity, the level of complexity of the project, the language used, the number of students working, the report produced can be varied. This activity also involves the utilization of the web search engines and the library. However, all the activity from the brainstorming phase up to the final draft must be done electronically.

The teacher can monitor the process and provide feedback. All the communication established between the students has to be sent to the teacher. This activity can be implemented with students of the same class or with pairs in another city, or country.

3. One Perfect Paragraph

This is a simple activity that helps students to practice editing short effective paragraphs looking for grammar, agreement, spelling and cohesion and coherence mistakes. The

teacher prepares one practice paragraph or two with several mistakes and sends it to the group. Instruction: This paragraph has 9 mistakes. Find and correct them. When corrected send it back to the teacher.

4. Electronic Secret Key pal

This is a term-long key-pal activity in which students are assigned to other students from another writing class in the program or from another class abroad. The students use bogus names (for this activity only) and are not allowed to know the identity of their secret pal. The activity concludes with a "Meet Your Secret Pal" party at the end of the term. The teacher receives copy of all correspondence from the students.

5. Chain stories or sentences

This is a simple activity that helps students with basic sentence level grammar reinforcing such grammatical structures as countable/uncountable nouns, prepositional phrases, and so on. Before class, send a partial sentence to the group, such as

It was a dark and stormy night and ...

or

I went to the store and bought some ...

Students then add to the story or sentence some new information and forward it on to an assigned partner in the class. The story is passed around to all members of the class with each adding their part. Have each student add something different each time. In the end there will be x number of stories or sentences where x equals the number of students in the class.

6. A strange meeting

Another more elaborate version of a chain story is what is called my Strange Meeting assignment. Students are asked to create phrase by phrase the skeleton of a short story (8 partial sentences) about the meeting of two individuals (male and female). What's unique about this exercise is that each person in the class is writing a sentence phrase to the story and then forwarding it on to an assigned person who then adds the next sentence phrase who in turn forwards it to another assigned person and so on.

The sentence phrases are passed on to eight different people and then the last person puts the 8 sentence phrases together into a coherent, but often strange, paragraph of eight complete sentences. All the while students are sending copies of all the messages sent to the teacher who is monitoring the process.

7. Story puzzles

Story puzzles are stories in which sentences are randomly mixed and rearranged by the students in a correct sequence and then send back the story to the teacher in the correct sequence.

8. Cloze exercises

Students fill in sentences with *every* word omitted, or *every* noun, or *verb*, and so on. The student then sends the message back to the teacher. The teacher checks and sends back for further revision if necessary. This *activity* can be used to reinforce the use of certain words such as adjectives, articles, nouns, etc.

9. Mailing Lists

Students dialogue with a group on a particular topic. One e-mail address of the group can be created and a message on a certain topic asking for a response. Others send their responses to the group members. Most e-mail software programs *have* the ability to reply to either the original sender or all the recipients of the original message. In this case the preferences would need to be set to the latter.

10. International key pals (Internet access necessary)

With the tremendous growth of the Internet, there are lots of opportunities to interact with students from other countries and cultures thus increasing the global awareness of students. International Key Pals can be easily found on the World Wide Web using such search engines as Google or Yahoo.

Closing Comment

These are the most outstanding ways the Internet and its services can be exploited for language learning processes. We hope to *have* contributed to the enrichment of your teaching practice by providing you with this summary of activities and will be glad to know about your encounters with technology.