### TEN HELPFUL GAMES AND ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHING ENGLISH TO YOUNG LEARNERS

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Abstrak: Pengajaran bahasa inggris untuk anak-anak sangatlah berbeda dengan pengajaran bahasa inggris untuk anak remaja dan orang dewasa. Ini dikarenakan anak-anak mempunyai karakteristik yang unik yang wajib direspon dengan teknik, metode dan pendekatan khusus. Pengajaran bahasa inggris untuk anak-anak membutuhkan kreativitas dalam hal pengelolaan kelas, lingkungan belajar dan juga gaya mengajar. Permainan pembelajaran vang menyenangkan dan sangat direkomendasikan dalam pengajaran bahasa inggris untuk anak-anak. Artikel ini mencoba mengusulkan sepuluh ragam permainan dan aktivitas pembelajaran yang dapat membantu dalam pengajaran bahasa inggris untuk anak-anak. Tujuan utama permainan untuk membantu guru bahasa inggris dalam mengembangkan kemampuan bahasa inggris siswa melalui permainan. Usulan permainan dan aktivitas pembelajaran adalah: (1) kata tersembunyi, (2) kalimat rusak, (3) melempar bola, (4) mencari kata sifat, (5) ledakan, (6) di kebun binatang, (7) dialog mini, (8) kelompok kata: kata benda, (9) menyandingkan kata kerja + kata benda, (10) kata dan kalimat acak. Ragam permainan dan aktivitas pembelajaran tersebut dipertimbangkan sebagai media yang sangat membantu guru dalam pengajaran bahasa inggris untuk anak-anak khususnya anak sekolah dasar. Dalam artikel ini, permainan dan aktivitas dilengkapi dengan deskripsi, tujuan, usia, bahan, dan langkahlangkah permainan. Artikel ini diharapkan dapat memberikan manfaat bagi guru khususnya guru anakanak sebagai referensi tambahan dalam pengajaran bahasa inggris untuk anak-anak di sekolah dasar.

Abstracts: Teaching English to young learner is very different from teaching English to adolescent or adult. It is young learner different because has unique characteristics that should be responded through special teaching approaches, methods, or techniques. Teaching English to young learner needs creativities in terms of class management, atmosphere, teaching styles as well. Game and joy full teaching and learning activities are very recommended in teaching English to young learner. This article tries to propose ten helpful games and activities for teaching English to young learners. The single purpose of the games are to help English teachers in developing students' English skill trough games. The proposal of games and activities are: (1) hidden words, (2) broken sentence, (3) throwing a ball, (4) adjective hunt, (5) outburst, (6) at the zoo, (7) mini dialogue, (8) words group: noun, (9) verb + noun collocation, (10) mixed word and sentence. The games and activities are considered as helpful media for teachers in teaching English to young learners especially in the primary school level. In this article, the games and activities are completed with description, aims, age, materials, and procedures. This article hopefully can give beneficial advantages for readers especially English teachers of young learners as supplementary references or handbooks in teaching English to young learners in the primary school level.

Keywords : Helpful;, Games; Activities; Young Learners

## INTRODUCTION

Teaching and learning which is conducted by teachers surely based on specific and systematic design to make teaching and learning activities run effectively and meet the goals. There are many problems occur in teaching and learning process because of un ability of teachers in designing and doing teaching and learning well. Nunan argued that the problems in teaching and learning can be caused by several factors, and the first factor is teachers' competences and professionalism.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, a teacher should have good pedagogical and professional competence in conducting teaching and learning activities.

Teaching and learning English to young learners force a teacher to be creative and innovative in managing the classroom with fun and joyful activities. It is important because young learners have special and unique characteristics which is different from adolescent or adult in teaching and learning process. One of young learner's characteristic is short pain attention. Young learners are usually quickly bored with teaching and learning within or after 5-10 minutes.<sup>2</sup> It means that in teaching and learning of English, the teacher should use variation of methods and techniques to respond the short pain attention of children. Teachers of young learners must be rich of methods and activities which can attract students' interest and motivation in learning English language in the classroom.

Ur in her book entitled *A Course in English Language Teaching: Practice and Theory* stated that there are three important things which can attract students' interest and motivation in the classroom especially in teaching and learning of English to young learners: pictures, stories and games<sup>3</sup>. Teaching and learning English by using pictures, stories and games are very effective strategy to attract students' interest and motivation in learning English. The three important things as stated by Ur should become basic foundation for English teachers as class manager and curriculum developer in the classroom in conducting English language teaching to young learners.

The above opinion is also strengthen by Broughton in his book entitled *Teaching English as a Foreign Language*. He argued

that young learners prefer joyful and fun learning. Teaching and learning of English to young learners should be presented with activities which can support students' interest and motivation such as teaching by using songs (action songs) and games (action games). Wright in his book entitled *Games for Language Learning* is also stated reasons why games become important things in teaching English to young learners. He stated that game is teaching and learning media which can keep and support students' interest and motivation in English language teaching.<sup>4</sup>

From discussion of several theories above, it can be concluded that English teachers of young learners must be rich of activities and variation of games in teaching English to young learners. Mastery of media and methods of English teaching and learning to young learners are very urgently needed. By using good and creative media and methods in teaching English to young learners, the English language teaching will run effectively and efficiently.

Based on the several theories stated that games are very important in English language teaching to young learners. Therefore, teachers' mastery to variations of games and activities for teaching English to young learners are very urgently needed. The following are ten games and activities which is considered able to help teachers in teaching English to young learners inside or outside the classroom. The writer intentionally summarizes the best ten of games and activities to be practiced in the teaching and learning process. The objective of the game is to developed students' English mastery through fun and joyful activities.

## HIDDEN WORD<sup>5</sup>

This game is called hidden words. This game can be practiced for children of 8-12 years old. This game is specially designed to challenge and test the ability of children in searching and finding hidden words in an English sentence. This game aims at developing the ability to read, pronounce, and revise the English vocabulary of children from searching, finding and reading in this game. Before practicing this game, students are given several English sentences written on a board or displayed by using a power point presentation.

This game is organized by using pair work or group work. The materials of the games are ballpoints and board. The procedures to implement or practice the game are as follows:

- 1. The first stage, give children time to name animals in English, then ask them to write the vocabulary on the board. This stage as a warming up activity of vocabulary material to be played in this game.
- 2. Then, write a sentence on the whiteboard 'Close the door at once!'. Instruct students to read the sentence in a loud voice. After that, instruct students to search for and find hidden words about name of animal in the sentence. If students cannot find the name of animal, tell them that the answer is 'rat'. Ask students to search again and underline the name of animal hidden in the phrase 'close the door at once!'.
- 3. Afterwards, inform the children that they will be given a new English sentence to read and search for the name of animal in the sentence. In pairs, they must find and recite the name of animal contained in the sentence. Here are an example of sentences that contain the name of animal and hidden in it:
  - a. He arrive in America today. (cat)
  - b. Eri<u>c ow</u>es me 10 cents. (cow)
  - c. That will <u>be a r</u>eal help. (bear)
  - d. She came late every day. (camel)
  - e. We made errors in each exercise. (deer)
  - f. I<u>f I sh</u>out, he'll hear me. (fish)
  - g. She dresse<u>s nake</u>d dolls. (snake)
  - h. At last, I, Gerald, had won. (tiger)
  - i. He called Nik<u>ko a la</u>zy boy. (koala)
  - j. In Apri<u>l I on</u>ly called once. (lion)

The team or group that can finish earlier is the winner of this game. Teachers are suggested to give rewards for the winners of the games.

## **BROKEN SENTENCE<sup>6</sup>**

This activity is called broken sentence. This activity is available for children of 10-12 years old. The activity presents broken pieces of sentences and students are asked to find a follow-up sentence by asking to their friends in the class. This activity aims at developing students' vocabulary by arranging sentences correctly. The material of this activity is a sentence that is cut into two parts (broken sentence). This activity is organized in the whole class. In this activity you have to prepare a cut sentence to give to students. The example sentences can be as follows:

I'm going to the zoo	to see the wild animals
Let's go to the travel agent	to book our summer holiday
I need some soap	to wash my hand
You'll need a saucepan	to boil those potatoes
You'd better take a torch	to see in the dark
I need a ruler	to draw straight lines
I must go to the optician's	to get a new pair of glasses
You need a passport	to travel abroad
Let's take the lift	to get to the top floor
You can use a dictionary	to find out what the word
	means

These activities can be practiced in young learners' classroom with the following procedure or steps:

- 1. Make sentence as in the table above as much as number of students in the class. The table above contains 20 sentences to be randomized.
- 2. Cut out the above sentences and give them to the class.
- 3. Allow time by using timer to find the next sentence that is held by asking the friends.
- 4. Students who have found the pair of sentences directly facing their English teacher to be corrected and recorded. Students who find that pairing sentences correctly faster are the winner of this activity.

5. All students are required to find pair of sentence clips that are held.

Teachers rank and write students who have completed this activity. The ranking results are then submitted to the students in the classroom.

## THROWING A BALL<sup>7</sup>

The name of this game is called throwing a ball. This game is suitable to be practiced for children in all ages. In this game, children are in turn obliged to mention the vocabulary set by throwing a ball to each other. This game is used to practice some set of English vocabulary. This game aims at developing and improving students' English vocabulary. The material of this game is a ball made of soft material. The organization of this game is large group or whole class.

The procedures to implement this game in children's activity are as follows:

- 1. Divide the class into groups consist of 10 students. This game is played by several groups at the same time. Instruct children in each group to create a circle.
- 2. Inform the children about vocabulary area that will be played in the game such as: *months of the year, colors, animals, numbers, cloths, fruits,* and others. Then throw the ball to a student in the circle. The child receiving the ball throw is obligated to mention the vocabulary that corresponds to predefined vocabulary area. Then the ball is thrown back to the child in the circle. The child receiving the ball must also mention the new vocabulary and so on.
- 3. Children who cannot mention the vocabulary when receiving a throw or mention the vocabulary that has been said by their friend then considered defeated and obliged to get out from the circle.
- 4. The winner of this game is a child who can last up to one child in a circle.

This game can be developed by English teacher of children. Other alternatives that can be implemented in this game are as follows:

- The ball is held by the teacher and the teacher says 'Hello, I'm Maryam'. Then the teacher throws the ball to children in the circle. The child who gets the ball should mention the sentence exactly as the teacher said, example: 'Hello, I'm Andrew'.
- 2. After all the children in the circle get the ball, then the ball is returned to the teacher and the teacher says '*I am from Surabaya*'. Then the children mentioned the same sentence as the teacher had said. Then thrown again to the student and so on.
- The sentences used in this game can be as follows: Hello, I'm ....... (name) I am from ....... (city or village) My birthday is in ...... (month) I like ...... (hobbies/favorite food, etc) I can ....... (abilities/talents)

## **ADJECTIVE HUNT<sup>8</sup>**

This activity is called adjective hunt. This activity is suitable to be applied to children of 9-12 years old. The activity presents a variety of English vocabulary to search for adjectives that exist in vocabulary collections. The activity aims at developing students' vocabulary and knows the word class based on parts of speech. The material of this activity is a set of vocabulary. This activity can be done with a group or whole class. The preparation to implement this activity providing as much vocabulary as possible and mix it with another word. Examples of such vocabulary are as follows:

1.	Study	11. Expensive	21. Sky
2.	Handsome	12. Computer	22. Beauty
3.	Pretty	13. Because	23. Smart
4.	Black	14. Tomorrow	24. Deligent
5.	Between	15. Beside	25. Beautiful

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6. Door	16. Sorry	26. Clever
7. Table	17. Undestand	27. Nice
8. Interesting	18. Mouth	28. Hungry
9. Money	19. Ear	29. Full
10. Cheap	20. Car	30. Cry
Score:point		

The procedures to apply this activity in teaching and learning English for children are as follows:

- 1. Form students into groups then give students the worksheet containing vocabulary like the example above.
- 2. Inform students that they should search for and circle the adjectives in the 30 vocabulary contained in the worksheet within 2 minutes.
- 3. After the time limit expires, the whole group must submit the worksheet and stop circling the vocabulary.
- 4. The teacher corrects the vocabulary and assigns points for the work of each group.

The group that gets a lot of points is the winner in this activity.

## **OUTBURST**<sup>9</sup>

This activity is called Outburst. This activity is suitable to be practiced for children of 7 years old. In this activity, children are challenged to guess the words of different categories that have been made by their English teacher. This activity aims at activating students' vocabulary and learning a new vocabulary. The organization of this activity overall class. The preparation to be done before implementing this activity is creating a set of vocabulary that contains 8 words on a sheet of paper. Such as: *fruits, vegetables, clothing, furniture, colors, domestics, animals, and wild animals, things in the classroom,* and others like the following example:

#### Wild animals

Clothing

Things in the

## Ten Helpful Games

		classroom
Tiger	Shirt	Desk
Snake	Jeans	Chair
Crocodile	Dress	Board
Monkey	Shoes	Teacher
Giraffe	Cardigan	Book
Zebra	Coat	Pencil
Kangaroo	Skirt	Rubbish ben
Bear	Socks	Clock

This activity can be easily performed by following the following procedures:

- 1. Give students 1 sheet of paper. Explain the students that they guess the vocabulary on the list of teacher's vocabulary as much as possible and write it on the given paper. Students are given 3 minutes to write vocabulary in their worksheets.
- 2. Give students the categories of vocabularies they will guess and write, example animal. So students have 2 minutes to write the name of the animal on their paper.
- 3. After finishing, then students are told to read the results of vocabulary that has been written on their paper one by one. If vocabulary they read is the same as the vocabulary on the teacher's vocabulary list then they get points. Students are given special points if the writing and pronunciation of vocabulary is true and perfect.

To start this activity again, give students new vocabulary categories such as clothing and things in the classroom.

## MINI DIALOGUE<sup>10</sup>

The name of this activity is mini dialogue. This game is available for children of 8-12 years old. This activity presents two small dialogues and students are tasked to match with appropriate answers or responses. This activity aims to examine students' carefulness and skills in compiling and seeking appropriate responses from a dialogue. Materials needed are answer sheet and timer. This activity is carried out by using a group. Before this activity is practiced, the teacher must make a dialogue and answer first. Examples of mini-dialogs to be prepared are as follows:

Mini dialogu	es (A Cards)
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Jerro and Antonio antonio antonio antonio antonio antonio antonio antonio anto	
How are you?	Thanks for the lovely party
Do you mind if I smoke?	I'm sorry I'm late
I hope England wins the World Cup	I've just got the married
Help yourself to a drink	Have a nice weekend
Would you help me with this, please?	Have you got a light, please?
Did you have a good trip?	Hello. May I join you?
I can't come tonight, I'm afraid	Could you give me a lift home
	tonight?
Today's the 4th, isn't it?	Thank you very much
Another drink, Paul?	Is it far to the station?
Shall I help you with that?	It's a lovely day today, isn't it?

#### Mini dialogues (B cards)

Very well, thank you.	It's a pleasure. I'm glad you like it.
No, of course not	<i>Oh, that's all right</i>
So do I	Congratulation
Thank you	Thanks. The same to you
Yes, certainty	Sorry, I don't smoke
Yes, not to bad, thanks	Yes, please do
<i>Oh, what a pity!</i>	Yes, I'd be glad to
Yes, that's right	You're welcome
No, not just now, thanks	It's a pleasure. I'm glad you like it.
No, there's no need, thanks	Oh, that's all right

This activity can be applied in class of children with the following procedures or steps:

- 1. Make students in the class into groups of 3 or 4 students per group.
- 2. Cut or cut the above dialogue according to the box. Give students a group of mini-card dialogs A and B like the example above. Instruct the students to compose the 20

dialogs by matching the dialogs on Card A and Answers on Card B.

3. Provide time limits in preparing the dialogue in accordance with the agreed time between students and teachers. When the time limit is set, all students are required to submit an answer sheet even though it is still not finished.

Teachers check student answer sheets by telling groups to read loudly on mini-dialog pairs. If the answer is correct then the students get 1 point and do not get points if the answer is wrong. And proceed to the next group until the last group. The group that gets a lot of points is the winner in this game.

## AT THE ZOO<sup>11</sup>

This game is called at the zoo. This game is suitable for a class of children of 5-10 years old. This game presents images of animals from the zoo posted on the board and numbered 1-6. Students take turns rolling dice on the image in front. Students must write the name of animal and sentence a simple description according to the number or image of the beast that is thrown. This activity aims to practice and develop students' vocabulary on the animal's name and describe it simply. In this game you need an animal image to paste on the board. Make sure that the animal image is very big and can be seen by all students in the class. Images can be clipart or you draw your own on the board. Materials to be prepared are images of animals and dice. Organizing this class is a whole class.

To implement and practice this game can follow the following procedures:

- 1. Before starting the game, give students adjective materials used to describe animals and numbers materials.
- 2. Paste the prepared animal image on the board and number each animal image from 1-6.
- 3. Ask the volunteers to throw the dice. When the dice is touching the number or image of the animal on the board, the student must write the name of the animal according to the numbers and pictures like: '*It is a Lion*'.

- 4. The next volunteer continues the throw. If the throws are touching the same number and image of the animal, then the student should write the description of the animal simply: '*It is Lion'*. '*It is big'*. '*It likes sleeping and eating'*.
- 5. The game continues until all the numbers are written by the name of the animal and there are descriptions. Number of written descriptive sentences adjusted to the level or ability of students.
- 6. Once provided a special text on the board so that students simply read and fill the dots (gaps) with words and descriptions such as: It is a ......
  It is ......
  It is ......
  It is ......
  It is ......
  It likes .......

## WORD GROUP: NOUN<sup>12</sup>

The name of this activity is word group: noun. This game is for students of 9-12 years old. This game or activity challenges students to compose a vocabulary based on their group. The game aims to develop students' vocabulary by composing words based on their group. Materials needed 1 Set of word groups in the form of a noun. This game is implemented by using groups. Before the game is implemented, the teacher must make a word based on a specific group as below:

1. IN THE KITCHEN	2. IN THE BATHROOM
Cooker	Shampoo
Fridge	Shower
Frying pan	Soap
Kettle	Toothbrush
Plates	Towel

3. IN THE BEDROOM	4. IN THE LIVING ROOM
Bed	Armchair

Blanket	Bookcase
Dressing table	Coffee table
Pillow	Sofa
Wardrobe	CD player

This activity or game can be applied to the class of children by following the following procedures:

- 1. Group students into groups of 3 or 5 people.
- 2. Cut or cut the boxes above randomly then give to the students in each group. Make sure all groups get everything based on the group of words to play.
- 3. Instruct the students to arrange or put 5 words based on each heading accordingly.
- 4. Give time limit in preparing or putting the word. When the time limit is set, all students are required to submit an answer sheet even though it is still not finished.
- 5. The teacher corrects and assesses the student's work and announces the winner.

## VERB + NOUN COLLOCATION<sup>13</sup>

The name of this activity is *Verb* + *Noun Collocation*. This activity is for students of 10-12 years old. This game presents snippets of verbs and randomized items to be paired with. The game aims to develop students' vocabulary. Materials to be prepared are pieces of paper containing the verb (words) and nouns (B words). This activity is done using group work. Before practicing this game, first the teacher makes a verb and noun that will be paired by the students as below:

ri carus (verbs)	
Answer	Ask
Blow	Brush
Build	Climb
Cook	Catch
Draw	Drink
Drive	Eat
Fasten	Play

#### A cards (verbs)

Read	Ride
Sing	Smoke
Switch on	Write

#### **B** cards (Nouns)

The phone	A question
Your nose	Your teeth
A house	A mountain
A meal	A cold
A picture	A cup of tea
A car	A biscuit
A seatbelt	The guitar
A magazine	A horse
A song	A cigar
The television	A postcard

This activity can be applied in class of children by following the following procedures:

- 1. Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 group students.
- 2. Cut or clip the verbs and nouns above and then give it to each group or group randomly.
- 3. Inform students to pair the verb (card A) with the noun (card B) to 20 pairs.
- 4. Allow time by using timers to restrict students' work. Students must stop and submit their work to the teacher when the time is up even though not yet finished.
- 5. The teacher checks student answer sheets by telling groups to read aloud the verb pairs with nouns. If the answer is correct then the students get 1 point and do not get points if the answer is wrong. And proceed to the next group until the last group. The group that gets a lot of points is the winner in this activity.

#### MIX WORD AND SENTENCE

The game is called *mix word and mix sentence*. This game is designed specifically for children of 9-12 years old. This game presents the letters and words are randomized and then students are challenged to arrange the letters into meaningful words and <sup>1</sup>compose words into meaningful sentences. The game aims to develop students' vocabulary on certain vocabulary themes and compose simple sentences. The material to be provided is a randomized Vocabulary. This game can be done with a group or whole class. Preparation to be done before applying this game is preparing letters and words that are randomized according to the theme of the vocabulary that will be given to the students. Vocabulary types can be fruits, animals, things, and more. Examples of random letters and words are as follows:

IVIIA	witzeu letters		
1.	Kobo	1. Book	
2.	Ephantle	2. Elephant	
3.	Nanaba	3. Banana	
4.	Olin	4. Lion	
5.	Hosue	5. House	
6.	Procemut	6. Computer	
7.	Odocricel	7. Crocodile	
8.	Nardeg	8. Garden	
9.	Rac	9. Car	
10.	Ribd	10. Bird	

## **Mixed letters**

## Mixed sentence

1.	Banana – I – like	1.	I like banana
2.	Is – she – sister – my	2.	She is my sister
3.	My-is-book-it	3.	It is my book
4.	Garden – see – I – bird – a –	4.	I see a bird in a garden
	in	5.	My book is on the table
5.	Book – is – my – table – on	6.	My mother is the
6.	Mother – is – my –		classroom

	classroom – the – in	7.	My father is a doctor
7.	Father – is – my – doctor –		Sugar is sweet
	a	9.	I have one sister
8.	Sweet – is – sugar	10.	My friend is at school
9.	One – have – I – sister		
10	School – at – is – friend –		
	my		

This activity can be applied in class of children by following the following procedures:

- 1. Make students into groups according to the number of students in the classroom.
- 2. Give students a paper containing letters or vocabulary that has been stirred or randomized letters and sentences.
- 3. Give students to each group of answer sheets.
- 4. Instruct the students to compose stirred letters and sentences. Teachers are advised to give time by using a timer.

The correct group of letters and words into words and sentences are true and meaningful is the winner in this activity or game.

## CONCLUSSION

Based on the discussion above, there are many theories which stated the importance of games in English language teaching and learning to young learners. Ur, Broughton, and Wright substantively have same argumentation concerning the importance of games in English language teaching to young learners. They argued that pictures, stories and games are very effective strategy to attract students' interest and motivation in learning English.

a. Therefore, English teachers must be able to differ the way of teaching English to children, adolescent or adult. Teachers must understand the children's characteristics and principles of teaching English to young learners. Children with their special and unique characteristics must be responded by teachers with creative, joy full and fun teaching and learning activities. Creative, joy full and fun activities are done to make children enjoy learning and escape from learning boredom. Ten games and activities are recommended strategies for teachers of young learners in teaching English to young learners.

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#### ENDNOTE

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