

In search of word treasures – vocabulary games

Workshop DiE Days 2023 -- Stefanie Giebert

This is just a rough structure how you could tie some vocab activities together. Flesh it out as it works for you. You can of course use the activities (which are based on classic games or DiE conventions as described e.g. by Neelands and Goode¹) also as stand-alone activities.

Premise

We're going on a treasure hunt (what are we looking for? Might be an idea to let the class define the object you are looking for).

We are packing our kit.

"I'm packing my suitcase and I'm taking..." / "I'm packing my treasure hunter's kit and I'm taking..." combined with mime

Each student gets a word or picture card. They think of a way how to mime the object on the card.

In a circle or seated in rows, players play the game, stating "I'm packing...and I'm taking..." showing the object in mime. The person who guesses comes next. Repeat all the objects every time and add the next object.

The repetition works well for drilling new words.

Variations: I'm going to the supermarket and I'm buying, I'm entering a chemistry lab and I see..., I'm packing my engineer's toolbox and I'm taking...

Storytelling with mime/sounds (we didn't do this)

You have gone to a remote village because you have contact to a person who can tell you about the object you are looking for.

Groups of students create a story about your journey to the village. They choose some words in the story that they will mime/sound out every time they are mentioned.

So I took my car (car sound), and drove down the M1, I turned off to a country lane. I came to this forest (mime trees, sounds) where... etc.

Crime scene

You learn that your contact has vanished the day before you arrived at the village. The objects above have been found at the scene of the crime (informant's house). (Give students list of words) Come up

¹ I'm also building on ideas from Karl Eigenbauer's collection of Drama in language teaching techniques (in German):

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5b337d4a8ab722c6a3a257cb/t/636366097f89c3017444e310/1667458571130/Dramatechniken+II+Letztfassung.pdf>

with a scenario what happened to your contact that uses all the objects on the crime scene and explain why they are there and what may have happened to your informant.

Phone conversation

Still your informant hasn't turned up. However, police trusts you now and tells you they have recovered an audio file with a phone conversation your informant was having with his/her (spouse, colleague, brother...you define the person) the day before they vanished. The following words were audible. (give students a list). Your task is to reconstruct the conversation between the informant (give him/her a name) and the other person. Write a short dialogue with all the words from the list in it (about 5-10 sentences) and be ready to perform it. Some words can be verbs or nouns, you decide.

Treasure hunter's ABC

You want to share your experience as a treasure hunter with young adventurous people. Create a treasure hunter's ABC to teach them about important things and characteristics a treasure hunter needs. (Like: a - adventurous, b - bags, c - coordination...)