

ETpedia™

Young learners

500 ideas
for English
teachers of
young learners

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Series editor: John Hughes

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ENGLISH
TEACHING
professional

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10 reasons for using this resource

1. Everything in one place

English language teachers of young learners can find supplementary resources, teaching ideas, activities and tips in a multitude of places. The shelves of the staffroom may be full of published resource books and they may have access to folders of materials created by colleagues. Internet search engines provide links to thousands of websites offering instant lesson plans and ideas. The sheer amount of available material can be overwhelming, and finding a tip can be time-consuming. The aim of this book is to bring a collection of resources together in one place for faster reference.

2. Clearly organised

This resource contains 50 units covering everything from things you should know about young learners to activities for teaching a particular topic, suggestions for using songs, chants, rhymes, stories, drama and arts and crafts activities. Each unit lists 10 points. Why 10? Well, having a choice of 10 activities for the topic of animals and pets, for example, should provide most teachers with a broad enough range of options to enable them to prepare a lesson on the topic. Similarly, walking into your first ever young learner class having read about 10 activities for your first lesson could make all the difference to the way the children see you. Finally, having 10 ways of managing behaviour in the young learner classroom up your sleeve should improve your chances of avoiding problems and keeping your students motivated.

3. New teachers

If you are just starting out in your career teaching young learners, this resource will provide you with a range of practical activities to support you on your way. In particular, the section on things to avoid in the young learner classroom will help you start on the right foot.

4. Experienced teachers

If you have been teaching for a while, this resource may remind you of techniques and activities that you haven't used for a while, and give you fresh ideas for increasing your repertoire.

5. Supplementing your coursebook

If you are using a coursebook or a set of materials prescribed by your institution, this resource will help provide support by offering ways to lead into, expand or adapt them to suit your learners' needs and prepare them for the Cambridge Young Learners 'Starters', 'Movers' or 'Flyers' exams, which are aimed to help children in primary or lower secondary education improve their English.

6. Studying for an ELT qualification

Perhaps you are planning to take the Teaching Knowledge Test (TKT), or studying for another qualification, such as CELTA, a Cert TESOL course or the IH certificate in Teaching Young Learners. This book covers many of the topics and areas you will look at in the input sessions of your course, as well as giving you ideas for your teaching practice. Candidates taking a higher-level qualification such as DELTA, or a Diploma in TESOL, will find the lists of 10 especially useful as an aide-mémoire when preparing for the written examinations as well as a source of activities for lessons.

7. Teacher trainers

If you are a teacher trainer, senior teacher or director of studies who delivers staff training on a range of topics, use the checklists of ideas that this resource offers as a way to prepare your sessions.

8. Materials writers

The resource includes examples of activities for teaching specific topics frequently found in young learner programmes, so anyone developing their own materials for the classroom and keen to ensure a variety of activities for a specific topic will find it a useful reference.

9. Additional materials

There are photocopiable worksheets in the Appendix. These worksheets relate to certain units in the book and provide teachers with instant classroom activities. Many of them are also available in full colour, and these can be found at <https://www.myetpedia.com/appendix-materials/>. A series of video clips by the author are also available, demonstrating how to make some the craft materials that are included in the book. These are available at <https://www.myetpedia.com/etpedia-videos/>, and you will be guided to these as appropriate.

10. More time

No matter where they teach or what classes they are currently teaching, teachers more often than not feel that they need more time to plan, more time to search for resources, more time to reflect and develop and more time to focus on classroom teaching and the students. This resource will help teachers rise to this challenge by offering a collection of accessible, easy-to-use tips, suggestions, activities and ideas all in one place, allowing teachers to save their energy for the place where they are needed most – the classroom.

*'These are the secrets I wish
I'd known when I first started
teaching young learners.'*

**Vanessa Reis Esteves, author of ETpedia
Young Learners**

10 ways to use this resource

This resource has been written for people who teach English as a second or foreign language to young learners. It can be read and used in different ways according to your level of experience, needs or interests.

1. Cover to cover

You could start at the beginning and read to the end. If you are finding out about teaching English to young learners for the first time, then the resource will work as an introductory text to the subject.

2. Read a section

The contents page will direct you to the different sections. In each section, you will find units containing 10 ideas, tips, activities or thoughts on a particular aspect of teaching young learners. Some of these sections might not be immediately relevant to your context, while others will help you with immediate interests, concerns or questions.

3. Teacher's block

Just as writers sometimes have days when they can't write (a condition commonly referred to as 'writer's block'), there are days when teachers of young learners search in vain for ideas for a lesson. This resource aims to help with any episodes of 'teacher's block'. Open the book at any page and see if the ideas there give you inspiration.

4. Plan a lesson

Perhaps you are preparing a detailed lesson plan for a training course, or you feel that you want to hone your planning skills. If so, start by looking at Unit 9: 10 tips for planning a young learner lesson.

5. Write in the book

Maybe you've tried one of the activities in the resource or found an idea you liked. Make notes about why it worked or how you adapted it, so you can refer to it again later.

6. Help colleagues

If you work with other teachers, you've probably experienced a situation where a colleague is desperately looking for something to improve their lesson. Perhaps you can help them out by suggesting they manage a class of excited young learners using some of the ideas in Units 12 or 16. Or, if they'd like to tell a story in a lesson, share some of the storytelling suggestions in Unit 28.

7. Last-minute lessons

Most teachers have experienced a day when a colleague is off sick and they've been asked to teach their class at short notice. If this has happened to you, have a look at the section entitled 'Activities for topics' (page 97), which contains an abundance of topic-related activities to help you teach a complete and motivating lesson.

8. More practice

Many students require extra practice on specific areas of English. For example, they might need to practise English sounds, or perhaps you've noticed that a class needs to be made more aware of intercultural activities. Use this resource to help you enhance your lessons and engage your students.

9. Develop yourself

If you're at the stage of your teaching career where you feel you are ready for more of a challenge, you'll find some other titles and resources in Further Reading (page 131).

10. Write your own 10

Teaching is always evolving, developing and changing, so why not create your own 10 tips or pointers and share them with your colleagues? There is space to add your own tips at the end of the book (page 249).

'Teaching young learners gives you the opportunity to see the world through children's eyes and gives you a whole new perspective about learning and life in general.'

Norma Marcial, Mexico

10 facts about the author

Vanessa Reis Esteves ...

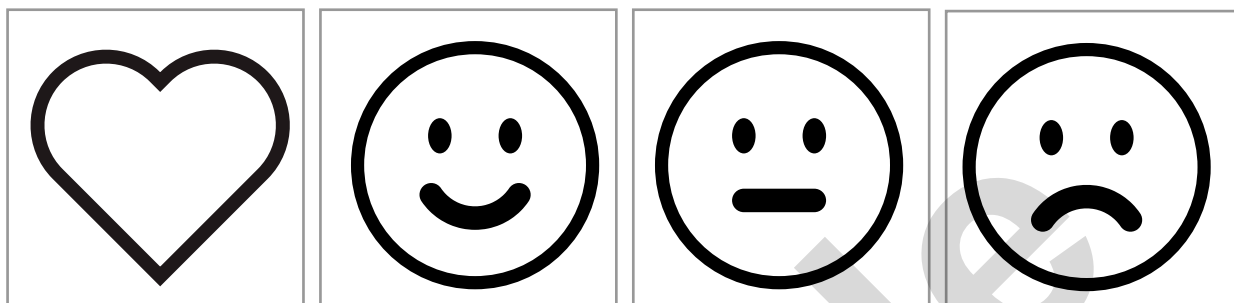
- ▶ has been working in English language teaching since 1996
- ▶ is currently a teacher, teacher trainer and author
- ▶ is a well-known presenter at international teacher conferences and associations
- ▶ runs workshops and delivers teacher training on behalf of schools, universities, publishers and the Portuguese Ministry of Education
- ▶ has co-authored coursebooks for young learners and teenagers in Portugal
- ▶ has written articles for magazines such as *English Teaching Professional*
- ▶ is a part-time teacher at *Escola Superior de Educação* in Porto, Portugal
- ▶ delivers training online via webinars and virtual learning environments
- ▶ teaches overseas teachers at the Oxford Teacher's Academy in Oxford every summer
- ▶ is currently working on her PhD in 21st Century Skills and Learning.

Thanks and acknowledgements

The 500 tips, ideas, ways and resources in this publication are based on the secrets that I have learned in my 20 years as a teacher, teacher trainer and author of classroom materials. The whole collection is a combination of new and original ideas with classic ideas and activities that get passed down from one generation of English language teachers to another. My deepest thanks, therefore, go to all the students, teachers, trainers and colleagues who have crossed my path and directly or indirectly helped in the creation of *ETpedia Young Learners*. In particular, thanks to John Hughes and Robert McLarty, who believed in me from the start, Cristina Bento, who was my guardian angel, and everyone at Pavilion Publishing and Media, especially my editor, Penny Hands, whose advice and suggestions were a godsend. Thank you to you all for making this dream come true.

10 ways to determine students' likes

To be able to cater for your students' needs, it's important for you to discover how they like to learn English as soon as possible. You can do this by speaking to children informally or by conducting quick class interviews. Another option is to give them a questionnaire (see Appendix p138), which they can fill in by colouring smiley faces according to their feelings and preferences. Here are some topic areas that you could use as a starting point.



1. Direct questions

If the children have studied English before, you can start by asking them direct questions such as 'Do you like learning English?' and 'Which words or sentences can you remember?'

2. Favourite skills

Learning English implies working on the four skills, which are covered by coursebooks. Include questions relating to which skills they like to practise while learning English by asking questions like 'Do you like reading stories in English?' or 'Do you like listening to songs in English?'

3. Favourite activity types

Children will have favourite activities depending on how they prefer to learn. So ask them questions or give them 'like' statements about which activities they like doing in the classroom, for example, 'Do you like playing games?' or 'I like playing games.'

4. Phonics and literacy skills

Some children like to learn English by finding out more about the sounds and letters of the language. A phonics approach will allow them to do so by helping them associate English sounds with letters, thereby developing their literacy skills. If your coursebook does not include a phonics section, there are plenty of resources online which will help you find out more about introducing a phonics approach to learning in the classroom.

5. Autonomous work

Some children like to learn by having quiet thinking time in which they can work on their own to assimilate new knowledge and information. Remember to find out which children learn better in this way by asking questions like 'Do you like to work on your own?' or by giving them a 'like' statement such as 'I like working and doing tasks on my own'.

6. Pairwork and groupwork

Children who like working with others will be keen on pairwork and groupwork activities. Include a question or two to find out whether your students still work best in pairs or whether they are ready to take the next step and start working in small groups.

7. Sharing personal information

'Show and tell' is a traditional primary-level activity that allows children to speak about themselves and share personal information in a simple and non-threatening way. You can include a question relating to this popular activity in your questionnaire to find out whether your students are comfortable with sharing something about themselves and speaking in English in front of their peers.

8. Using resources

There is a huge variety of resources available to children learning English: coursebooks, workbooks, picture dictionaries, student grammars, apps, online practice exercises and Learner Management Systems (known as LMSs). Include a question or two to find out which resources your students like are used to, and feel comfortable using.

9. Finding out about the real world

Over the past decade, many schools have begun to invest in 'CLIL' (Content and Language Integrated Learning). This approach allows children to learn English while they find out more about the world around them through subjects like maths, geography, the arts and science. Find out what your students' favourite subjects are and whether they are used to learning in this manner.

10. Doing research

The internet has given children access to a wealth of information, allowing them to research and share information about topics of interest to them with others all over the world. Include a question or two about independent research work and student participation in online communities such as blogs and protected social media sites.

'If you produce a lesson that is exciting enough to get the kids fully engaged, you have an amazing time. They embrace any language games, and watching the shy children taking part feels great.'

William Reynolds, teaching in China

Unit 8, Introduction: Class questionnaire

Name : _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

I  learning English



I like:			
learning English			
writing in the student's book or workbook			
watching videos			
listening to stories			
reading stories			
roleplaying stories			
playing with puppets			
playing games			
singing songs			
making things			
learning about the world			
speaking to my classmates in English			
doing tasks in pairs			
doing tasks in groups			
working on my own			
using a dictionary to learn English words			
using a grammar book to practise English			

10 activities for the topic of ANIMALS AND PETS

Animals and pets is a common topic on most young learner English language courses. Children are naturally drawn to this topic as many have pets of their own and love animals. Here are 10 suggestions to help you make the most of the attraction that children have for this topic in your classroom.

1. Animal paper-plate masks



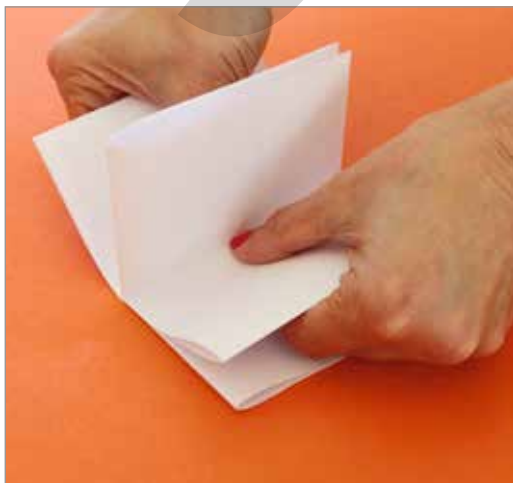
Get the children to make an animal puppet that they can then use to roleplay short animal dialogues or to present their favourite animal in a show-and-tell activity. Masks will help you encourage shy students to participate in these speaking activities. All you need is a white paper plate, some elastic, cardboard and crayons or markers to decorate the paper plate.

2. Japanese koi fish



Koi fish are a common symbol in both Japanese and Chinese culture. They are also the official symbol for Children's Day (5 May) in Japan. Develop children's intercultural awareness by sharing the koi fish legend with them and inviting them to make a koi fish to present in a show-and-tell activity. Then decorate the school on Children's Day (see Appendix, p195).

3. Non-fiction book



Develop children's writing skills and encourage them to practise the '[Animal (plural)] can + [verb (infinitive)]' structure by inviting the children to make a non-fiction book about their favourite animal. (See <https://www.myetpedia.com/etpedia-videos/> for a demonstration.)

Teach the children how to make the front and back cover. They then write and illustrate a short sentence about what their animal can do on each page. Older learners can make more complex sentences by writing one thing that their animal can and can't do; for example, 'Lions can roar but they can't sing'.

4. Crazy animal strip book

Make a crazy animal strip book with the children to help them visualise and describe what animals would look like if various parts of their body were made up from different creatures. Photocopy 5–10 copies of the template provided in the Appendix (p195) for each child and get them to draw and colour a different animal on each sheet. In the first square they should draw the animal's head. In the second square they draw the animal's arms and body, and in the final square they draw the animal's legs, feet and tail. Then put the children in pairs and get them to create crazy animals by mixing the strips in their books and describing them to each other; for example, 'This is my crazy *elelionebra*. It's got an elephant's head, a lion's body and a zebra's legs and tail. Isn't it crazy?'

5. Pop-up animal poem book



Develop children's poetic skills by getting them to make a pop-up book to illustrate a short poem about an animal. Children can write their poem by filling in a simple poem frame individually or as a class. Here is an example:

I am a [frog].

I eat [flies].

I can [jump up high].

(See <https://www.myetpedia.com/etpedia-videos/> for a 'how to make' demonstration.)

6. Animal graphic organiser

Give each child a blank sheet of paper for them to draw and colour in their favourite animal. Ask them to write a sentence about their animal, for example, 'My cat is a pet/wild animal/farm animal'. Then, create a giant Venn diagram (see Unit 41, Point 4) for the various categories of animals the children have drawn. Finally, get the children to put up their pictures in the correct category.

7. Animal zoo/farm

Create word cards of the target vocabulary that you want to practise, and distribute one to each child. Give each child a blank piece of paper for them to draw the animal on their word card. Analyse the characteristics of the various animals with the children and discuss how they fit into the food chain. Then draw a big farm or zoo on at least two sheets of cardboard and ask the children to organise the animals on the farm or zoo in such a way that they don't eat each other.

8. Animal snap game

Give the children blank copies of the flashcard template (see Unit 33, Point 6). With the children, make a list of ten animals on the board. Ask them to write their name on the back of each blank flashcard, and then to draw one of the 10 animals on the front of each card

and colour it in. They then make the corresponding word cards. Put the children in pairs. Ask them to mix up their cards, turn them over and shuffle them without looking at them. The children then divide the cards equally and play a game of snap. The children take turns turning over a card and identifying it. If both cards show the same animal or word, the first child to say 'SNAP!' and correctly identify the animal wins the pair of cards. The winner is the child with the most cards.

9. Animal peg



Use this simple arts and crafts activity to make a classroom management tool to help you check who is in class every day. Children decorate a wooden peg by drawing their favourite animal on it, colouring it in and writing their name on it. As soon as the children arrive in class every day, they take their peg and attach it to a class attendance board so you can see who is in class. You can also use the pegs to give them permission to go to the toilet.

10. Watch a trailer

Show the children an official Disney trailer like the one for *Zootopia* and get them to count how many animals they see. Then use the trailer as a context for teaching the children the new vocabulary they need to identify the animals in the trailer.

'Click like a dolphin and cluck like a chicken but also use images and movement as animal noises differ greatly around the world.'

Jennie Wright, teacher and author, Germany

Unit 38, point 4: Crazy animal strip book

How to make an animal strip book:

1. Photocopy a 'book pages' template for each page that you'd like the children to have (four pages = four handouts)
2. The children draw a different animal on each page as follows:
Rectangle 1: the animal's head
Rectangle 2: the animal's body
Rectangle 3: The animal's legs
3. Join all the pages together. Then add a front and back cover, which the children decorate in the frames provided.
4. Attach all the pages with brass fasteners or staples.
5. The children cut out the strips along the dotted lines.
6. The children make the front and back covers.
7. The children invent a crazy animal by choosing a different strip for each animal body part.

Book pages:

The image shows a large rectangular template for book pages. It is divided into three horizontal sections by two dotted lines. A large, light gray diagonal watermark reading "Sample" is overlaid across the entire template.