

Activity Type

Reading, writing, listening and speaking activity, pair work

Focus

Listening, grammar and spelling

Aim

To listen and complete a text while many people are talking.

Preparation

Create a text and divide it into equal parts.

You can split the text in half or multiple parts. However you divide the text, number each part according to its correct sequence.

Make one copy of the text for each pair of students.

Level

Any

Time

20 minutes

Introduction

This ESL dictation helps students practice their communication and listening skills.

Procedure

Divide the students into pairs (Student A and B).

Arrange the chairs so there are two rows of seats facing each other. Make the space between the two rows quite big if possible. The pairs sit opposite each other.

Example:

A <-----> B

A <-----> B

A <-----> B

A <-----> B

Hand out a different part of the text to each row. For example, row A might have the first half of the text and row B the second half.

Student A starts by reading the first part of their text to Student B who listens and writes down what they hear.

When Student A has finished reading, the two students swap roles and Student B reads their part of the text to Student A.

This continues until the text is complete.

Students have to listen very carefully to understand their partner as everyone will be talking at once and working at different paces.

The activity can get quite noisy, but it's a lot of fun for students.

When everyone has finished, have the pairs sit together and go through their texts to check for spelling mistakes and misunderstood words.