

### TKT: YL (Young Learners) Part 1: Children as language learners and Developing children's learning strategies – Trainer's notes

#### Description

This activity focuses on children as language learners and how they learn language. Children's needs and different activities which support them are looked at through a matching activity. Participants also consider ways of developing children's learning strategies. There is also a sample task.

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<b>Time required:</b>	<i>50 minutes</i>
<b>Materials required:</b>	<i>Participant's worksheet 1 (one copy for each group of three participants)</i> <i>Participant's worksheet 2 (one copy for each group of three participants, cut into strips)</i> <i>Sample Task (one copy for each participant)</i>
<b>Aims:</b>	<i>to discuss children as language learners and YL classroom activities</i> <i>to consider ways of developing their learning strategies</i> <i>to share classroom knowledge and experience</i> <i>to practise a 1-1 matching task</i>

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#### Procedure

1. Before the session copy **Participant's worksheets 1 and 2** so there are enough for each group of three participants. Cut up **Participant's worksheet 2** into strips. Copy the **Sample task** so there is one copy for each participant.
2. Remind or elicit from participants:
  - TKT: YL focuses on children from 6–12 years
  - Part 1 focuses on children as language learners and how language learning can help young learners to develop learning strategies, cognitive strategies and communication strategies.
  - This session focuses on children as language learners and ways of developing their learning strategies.
3. (5 minutes) In groups of three, participants talk together about the types of classroom activities that young learners between 6 and 12 years enjoy e.g. songs and chants, whole class games.  
Put the heading *Activities in the young learner classroom* on the board and brainstorm ideas from the whole group (see **Key** below). Point out:

- in TKT: YL tasks focus on classroom practice

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- tasks may focus on young children, older children or on a range of ages between 6 and 12 years
  - all classroom practice has to consider that young learners are developing physically, emotionally and cognitively, which makes classes very different to those of older students
- (10 minutes) Give out **Participant's worksheet 1** to groups of three participants. Working together, participants read some teachers' comments about young learner characteristics and activities. They discuss whether they agree with the comments and would consider using the activities in class. Feed back with whole group.
  - (10 minutes) Give out **Participant's worksheet 2**, cut into strips, to each group of three participants. They should match the activities to the comments on **Participant's worksheet 1**.
  - Feed back with whole group to check answers and share opinions (see **Key** below).  
Point out:
    - this exercise is similar to the 1:1 matching tasks used in TKT: YL
    - they have less than 10 minutes to do similar tasks in the test
  - (10 minutes) Review the session so far, which has discussed children as language learners and activities that are suitable for them. Explain that you will now move on to discuss different ways in which children learn English. Write the following ways children learn on the board:

*Memorising Words and Phrases*

*Reviewing Work*

Brainstorm other ideas from participants, writing them on the board (see **Key** below). Point out:

- TKT: YL Part 1 tests candidates' knowledge of ways of developing children's language learning strategies through language learning
  - Test items are objectively tested and put into young learner classroom contexts. There are examples of this on **Participants' worksheet 1 and 2** and also in the **Sample task**.
- (10 minutes) Give out **Sample Task**. Participants work individually to complete the task. Allow no more than 6 minutes for this (candidates have an average of 1 minute per question in the TKT: YL exam.) They then compare answers with a partner.
  - Check answers together (see **Key** below). Point out:
    - In the test there a total of 80 questions to complete in 1 hour 20 minutes
  - (5 minutes) Round up to review and summarise points covered. Ask participants:
    - Which part of TKT: YL have they covered?** (*two areas of knowledge for Part 1: Children's characteristics as language learners (theory-focused) and Developing children's learning strategies through language learning*)
    - Which task type have they practised?** (*1-1 matching*)
    - What have they learned about this area of the syllabus and how confident do they feel about doing test tasks on it?**
    - How can they prepare for this part of TKT: YL?** (*Participants can:*

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- *look at the language demands of their own lessons and decide what type of support is needed so that learners can understand and produce the language in spoken and written English.*
- *note any strengths and problems children have in their own classes in understanding and using key language.)*

## Additional Information

- For information on the other three parts of TKT: YL, see the TKT: YL handbook at <http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/exams-and-qualifications/tkt/how-to-prepare/>
- Participants can do the Teaching Resources activities for *TKT: Task types 1 – 4, and TKT: YL Part 1 Developing children’s cognitive and communication strategies* for more information on the test format and content.

<http://www.cambridgeenglish.org/teaching-english/resources-for-teachers/>



## TKT: YL (Young Learners) Part 1: Children as language learners and Developing children's learning strategies – answer keys

### Key to procedure step 3

Young learner classroom tasks and activities include:

- songs and chants
- telling stories
- whole class games such as 'I spy with my little eye'
- handicrafts e.g. making finger puppets
- making finger puppets
- using flashcards
- memory games with picture/word cards
- drawing and colouring
- picture/word dominoes
- stirrers (arousing activities) or settlers (calming activities)
- listen and do e.g. TPR activities
- class surveys
- mime
- circle games

### Key to Participant's worksheet 2

*"I always plan whole class activities as an integral part of the lesson as children respond positively and learn quickly while they are having fun."* **Playing TPR games**

*"Children learn language in context through their own understanding and experience so I always try to activate this knowledge when starting new themes."* **Brainstorming activities**

*"Children are at different stages of emotional and social development and so I plan lessons so they feel relaxed and safe as soon as they come into the classroom."* **Developing classroom routines**

*"It's interesting how children are able to use whole language chunks such as 'Have a good weekend!' without knowing any grammar rules."* **Using classroom language posters**

*"I always plan further activities to challenge children who finish quickly and may be more advanced than others in their development."* **Planning follow-up activities**

*"As each child has their own characteristics such as learning style or previous learning experience, I always review language in different ways throughout the course to support these differences."* **Reviewing language**

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#### Key to procedure step 7

- ③ self-correcting during speaking activities, pair games or chants
- ③ practising English outside the classroom
- ③ setting goals
- ③ self-assessment tasks e.g. checklists with 'Can Do' statements
- ③ organising learning
- ③ choosing what to do
- ③ using reference resources such as dictionaries and the internet
- ③ comparing/contrasting
- ③ planning learning
- ③ reviewing learning
- ③ remembering language or information about language
- ③ developing hypothesis about language rules

#### Key to Sample Task

1. F                      2. E                      3. D                      4. A                      5. C                      6. G

## TKT: YL (Young Learners) Part 1: Children as language learners and Developing children's learning strategies – Participant's worksheet 1

### Children's characteristics as language learners

Look at these comments by teachers about young learners. Discuss the activities and characteristics, in particular:

- Do you agree with the comments?
  - Would consider using these activities in your classes?
1. *"I always plan whole class activities as an integral part of the lesson as children respond positively and learn quickly while they are having fun."*
  2. *"Children learn language in context through their own understanding and experience so I always try to activate this knowledge when starting new themes."*
  3. *"Children are at different stages of emotional and social development and so I plan lessons so they feel relaxed and safe as soon as they come into the classroom."*
  4. *"It's interesting how children are able to use whole language chunks such as 'Have a good weekend!' without knowing any grammar rules."*
  5. *"I always plan further activities to challenge children who finish quickly and may be more advanced than others in their development."*
  6. *"As each child has their own characteristics such as learning style or previous learning experience, I always review language in different ways throughout the course to support these differences."*

### TKT: YL (Young Learners) Part 1: Children as language learners and Developing children's learning strategies – Participant's worksheet 2

**Playing TPR games:** The class sit on chairs in a circle and the teacher gives commands such as 'Change places if... you have got a brother/ are wearing a watch etc'. One chair is removed after each change and the child who loses their chair gives the commands.

**Brainstorming activities:** On introducing the topic 'Pollution' the teacher asks the class for vocabulary which is linked to it and writes key words/sentences on the board.

**Developing classroom routines:** The teacher welcomes the class, organizes the room, and takes the register. Ten minutes before finishing, the children finish their work, put away materials and the teacher reviews learning.

**Using classroom language posters:** At the start of term children prepare posters for the notice boards which review short phrases and sentences used in everyday classroom language. Children use them throughout the course.

**Planning follow-up activities:** Children know what to do when they finish a task. This might include doing a worksheet, playing a memory game to review language or helping a friend to finish.

**Reviewing language:** Children can practise language over several weeks through songs, chants, games and reading stories.

#### **TKT: YL (Young Learners) Part 1: Children as language learners and Developing children's learning strategies – Sample Task**

For questions **1 – 6**, match the teacher's comments on her approach to learning with the young learner needs and characteristics listed **A – G**.

Mark the correct letter (**A – G**) on your answer sheet.

There is one extra option which you do not need to use.

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#### **Young learner needs and characteristics**

Young learners like to have:

- A routines in the classroom
- B personalised feedback on their language
- C opportunities to respond to and use language creatively
- D chance to have fun as a whole class
- E help with underlying language patterns
- F physical movement/ activity
- G enough time to complete their work



#### Teacher's comments

- 1 They're often sleepy in the afternoons so we generally do some group project work where they're measuring or doing something like a science experiment.
- 2 They worry about their spelling so, each week, we choose a vowel sound and brainstorm all the words we can think of. Then we look at how they're spelt and categorise them.
- 3 One of the things my pupils like most is to learn a chant and then try to say it faster and faster but still keep in time. That part's really hard!
- 4 At the start of the lesson, two pupils give out the books and another writes the date on the board.
- 5 We often do visualisations. They close their eyes and I ask them questions about a story. Who's in it? Where are they? What happens? Then they draw a picture and write a few sentences about it.
- 6 I've got a bank of worksheets at the back of the room for fast finishers so that they don't get bored waiting for everyone else.