

Promoting Grammar Learning through a Range of Language Materials and Activities : "Growing up" (Primary 4 – 6)

In this exemplar, instead of helping learners master the grammar items and structures through mechanical copying and meaningless exercises (focus on form only), teachers use more purposeful and contextualized tasks (focus on meaning and language use).

Use a task as a starting point : "Growing up"

- to develop learners' capability to use English to provide or find out, and present information about their personal experiences

Planning Stage

What language support do my learners need to complete the task?

Grammar items & structures

- using the simple past tense (e.g. *When I was one, I crawled very fast. / When I was eight, I caught a big fish.*) to describe past activities
- asking simple questions (e.g. *Did you ...?*) to obtain "Yes/No" responses
- asking "Wh-" questions (e.g. *What did you do when you were three?*) to find out specific information about a person
- ...

Vocabulary e.g. *crawled, broke...*

Language skills

Listening

- identify main ideas of a new topic
- listen for specific information

Reading

- skim a text to obtain the main ideas

Speaking

- maintain an interaction by asking questions and giving responses

Writing

- develop written texts by expressing own ideas and feelings
- ...

Learning and Teaching Stage

What language materials, activities and ways can I use...?

- to **present** the communicative functions, grammar items and structures
- to **raise learners' awareness** of the form and use of the target grammar items
- to provide opportunities for learners to **practise and apply** the knowledge of grammar in interaction and communication
- ...

Assessment for Learning

How well have learners worked towards the learning targets and objectives?

- observation
- evaluation of learners' work
- ...

Learning and Teaching Process

Learners

- brainstorm and discuss, with the help of the teacher, activities they did when they were small; and
- listen to a rhyme about what a person did at different ages.

When Tim was small

When Tim was one,
He could not run.


When he was two,
He learned to put on his shoes.

When he was three,
He swam in the sea.

•
•
•

When he was eight,
He ate off a plate.

When he was nine,
Everything was fine.







Impact on Learning

- *Learners' personal experiences are activated*
- *Learners' awareness of the use of the target grammar items (i.e. using simple past tense to describe past activities in a meaningful context) is raised*
- *Learners' interest is aroused*



Learners match the given pictures with the appropriate descriptions in the rhyme.

Match the sentences with the pictures.

When Tim was one, He could not run.	•	•	
When he was two, He learned to put on his shoes.	•	•	
When he was three, He swam in the sea.	•	•	
When he was four, He liked sitting on the floor.	•	•	


- *Learners' interest is sustained through a matching game*
- *Learners interpret given information about the past activities of a person and show their understanding*





- Learners listen to the rhyme again for specific information and fill in the past forms of the verbs.

Listen to the rhyme again and complete the following sentences.


When Tim was small


When Tim was one,
He could not run. 

When he was two,
He _____ to put on his shoes. 

When he was three,
He _____ in the sea. 

•
•
•

When he was eight,
He _____ off a plate. 

When he was nine,
Everything was fine. 


- Learners relate the rhyme to their personal experiences by asking questions (e.g. *Did you...?*).


Learners


- *develop the skills to locate relevant information and ideas*
- *notice and practise the use of action verbs in their past forms*
- *develop their thinking skills by comparing and connecting ideas to find similarities and differences*


- Learners practise the use of more action verbs in their past forms by completing an exercise.


John is showing his friends some photos. He tells them what he did when he was small. Complete the following sentences.


e.g.  When I was one, I crawled very fast.

1.  When I was, _____
I s _____ every day.

2.  When _____
I r _____ very fast.

3.  When _____
I often r _____ a bicycle.

4.  I b _____ my mother's vase.

5.  I c _____ a big fish.

- Learners relate John's past activities to their own personal experiences.

- *Learners' knowledge of the use of the action verbs in their past forms is reinforced*
- *Learners learn and practise more vocabulary items*
- *Learners develop their thinking skills and generate new ideas and meanings by using an idea or a description as a springboard for new ideas or ways of thinking*

In groups, learners

- make 3 dice (people dice with group members' names, action dice and time dice);
- take turns to throw them;
- make sentences orally based on the cues on the 3 dice;
- write down the sentences they made on their worksheets; and
- ask their group members whether the sentences reflect their real experiences and record their answers.



Learners

- *develop keenness to participate in activities leading to collaborative learning and communication*
- *increase their awareness of the elements of the target grammar items and structures*
- *develop their speaking and writing skills by putting words in a logical order to make meaningful sentences*
- *obtain and provide information about their personal experiences*

When learners have mastered the action verbs in their past forms, they write their own rhyme (e.g. *When I was small...*) by substituting the words in the text with their own words.

Do you remember what you did when you were small?
Write a rhyme and draw some pictures.

When I was small

When I was one, I had fun.	
When I was two, I knew the sky was blue.	
When I was three, I liked to read under the tree.	
When I was four, I learned how to draw.	
When I was five, I liked to dive.	



Learners

- *are actively involved in providing or finding out, organizing and presenting information about their experiences*
- *see the need to learn and use the target language items and structures to write their own rhymes*
- *generate new ideas and meanings by using the context and pictures in the given rhyme as a springboard for new ideas*

Extended tasks

Learners

- make a photo album or sketch book by sticking photos or drawing pictures showing what they/their family members did at different ages and write captions for their photos or pictures
- in groups, find information about how people lived long ago from other resources (e.g. *Long Ago and Today* by Rozanne Lanczak Williams, *In Times Long Ago* by Renee Keeler, *Did You know?* by Sandi Hill and *100 Years Ago* by Donna Marriott)
- in groups, compare how people lived long ago and how they live nowadays, and then present it in class
- evaluate the work of their peers
- revise their own work based on comments they have collected