

Classroom Phrases / Expressions for Teachers (randomly selected)

Open your books to page...

Turn to page...

Read the text on page...

Please form pairs/pair off.

Please form groups of three/four.

That's wrong, I'm afraid.

That's right/correct.

Good! Excellent!

Could you pass out the worksheets?

Do this exercise for homework.

Be quiet. Sit down, please.

GROUPING CHILDREN TOGETHER

1. Sit on the carpet in a circle
2. Stand in line
3. Stand in line in two's
4. Make groups of two
5. Make groups of four
6. Make two teams
7. Go back to your places
8. Make room for on the carpet
9. Make a bigger circle
10. Leave enough space in the centre of the carpet
11. Make a smaller circle
12. Come forward one place in the line
13. Go back one place in the line
14. Go backwards
15. Go forwards
16. Go to the left
17. Go to the right
18. Don't all crowd together
19. Proceed in order
20. Turn half-way round
21. Continueing
22. Stoping
23. Stand / sit in a boy-girl order
24. Don't push

- 25. Don't take 's place
- 26. Go back to your own place

Classroom Language: The beginning of the lesson

1. Good morning

- Good morning, everybody.
- Good afternoon, everybody.
- Hello, everyone.
- Hello there, James.

2. How are you?

- How are you today, 미경?
- How are you getting on?
- How's life?
- How are things with you, 은주?
- Are you feeling better today, Bill?

3. Introductions

- My name is Mr/Mrs/Ms Kim. I'm your new English teacher.
- I'll be teaching you English this year.
- I've got five lessons with you each week.

4. Time to begin

- Let's begin our lesson now.
- Is everybody ready to start?
- I hope you are all ready for your English lesson.
- I think we can start now.
- Now we can get down to work.

5. Waiting to start

- I'm waiting for you to be quiet.
- We won't start until everyone is quiet.
- Stop talking and be quiet.
- Settle down now so we can start.

6. Put your things away

- Close your books.
- Put your books away.
- Pack your things away.

7. Register

- Who is absent today?.
- Who isn't here today?
- What's the matter with 은미 today?
- What's wrong with Jim today?
- Why were you absent last Friday, 인혜?

8. Late

- Where have you been?
- We started ten minutes ago. What have you been doing?.
- Did you miss your bus?
- Did you oversleep?
- Don't let it happen again.

This page was updated on February 18, 2009.

Classroom Language: Simple instructions

Here are some common instructions which the class can easily understand:

- Come in.
- Go out.
- Stand up.
- Stand by your desks.
- Put your hands up.
- Put your hands down.

- Sit down.
- Come to the front of the class.
- Hold your books/pens up.
- Show me your pencil.

A number of instructions can be used at the beginning of a session, and as the semester continues:

- Pay attention, everybody.
- You need pencils/rulers.
- We'll learn how to ...
- Are you ready?
- Open your books at page ...
- Turn to page ...
- Look at activity five.
- Listen to this tape.
- Repeat after me.
- Again, please.
- Everybody ...
- you have five minutes to do this.
- Who's next?
- Like this, not like that.

A number of instructions can be used at the end of a session, and as the semester continues:

- It's time to finish.
- Have you finished?
- Let's stop now.
- Stop now.
- Let's check the answers.
- Any questions?
- Collect your work please.
- Pack up your books.
- Are your desks tidy?
- Don't forget to bring your ... tomorrow.

Instructions can also be sequenced:

- First
- Next
- After that
- Then
- Finally

Comprehension language:

- Are you ready?
- Are you with me?
- Are you OK?
- OK so far?
- Do you get it?
- Do you understand?
- Do you follow me?
- What did you say?
- One more time, please.
- Say it again, please.
- I don't understand.
- I don't get it.
- Like this?
- Is this OK?

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1. Time to stop

- It's almost time to stop.
- I'm afraid it's time to finish now.
- We'll have to stop here.
- There's the bell. It's time to stop.
- That's all for today. You can go now.

2. Not time to stop.

- The bell hasn't gone yet.
- There are still two minutes to go.
- We still have a couple of minutes left.
- The lesson doesn't finish till five past.
- Your watch must be fast.
- We seem to have finished early.
- We have an extra five minutes.
- Sit quietly until the bell goes.

3. Wait a minute

- Hang on a moment.
- Just hold on a moment.
- Stay where you are for a moment.
- Just a moment, please.
- One more thing before you go.
- Back to your places.

4. Next time

- We'll do the rest of this chapter next time.
- We'll finish this exercise next lesson.
- We've run out of time, so we'll continue next lesson.
- We'll continue this chapter next Monday.

5. Homework

- This is your homework for tonight.
- Do exercise 10 on page 23 for your homework.
- Prepare the next chapter for Monday.
- There is no homework tonight.
- Remember your homework.
- Take a worksheet as you leave.

6. Goodbye

- Goodbye, everyone.
- See you again next Wednesday.
- See you tomorrow afternoon.
- See you in room 7 after the break.
- Have a good holiday.
- Enjoy your vacation..

7. Leaving the room

- Get into a queue.
- Form a queue and wait for the bell.
- Everybody outside!
- All of you, get outside now!
- Hurry up and get out!
- try not to make any noise as you leave.
- Be quiet as you leave. Other classes are still working.

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- One more time, please.
- Say it again, please.
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- Like this?
- Is this OK?

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Classroom Language:

The language of spontaneous situations

If we use English in spontaneous situations:

- we relate the target language to the learner's immediate environment;
- we take advantage of spontaneous situations to use the target language;
- we exploit contexts which are not directly linked to the syllabus (language in use).

Here are some common situations in which spontaneous English can be used:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Happy birthday!. • Many returns (of the day). • has his/her 12th birthday today. • ... is eleven today. Let's sing "Happy Birthday". | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I hope you all have a good Christmas. • Happy New Year! • All the best for the New Year. • Happy Easter. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best of luck. • Good luck. • I hope you pass. • Congratulations! • Well done! | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard lines! • Never mind. • Better luck next time.. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who's not here today? • Who isn't here? • What's wrong with ... today? | <p>Do you feel better today?
Are you better now?
Have you been ill?
What was the matter?</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm sorry (about that). • Sorry, that was my fault. • I'm terribly sorry. | <p>Excuse me for a moment.
I'll be back in a moment.
Carry on with the exercise while I'm away.
I've got to go next door for a moment.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excuse me. • Could I get past please? • You're blocking the way. • I can't get past you. • Get out of the way, please. | <p>I'm afraid I can't speak any louder.
I seem to be losing my voice.
I have a sore throat.
I have a headache.
I'm feeling under the weather.
Do you mind if I sit down?</p> |

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Classroom Language: Classroom management

Here are some common situations in which classroom management is needed:

- Make groups of four.
 - Move your desks into groups of four people.
 - Turn your desks around.
 - Make a horseshoe shape with your desks.
 - Make a circle with your desks.
 - Make a line of desks facing each other.
 - Make groups of four desks facing each other.
 - Sit back to back.
-
- Work together with your friend
 - Find a partner
 - Work in pairs/threes/fours/fives.
 - Work in groups of two/three/four.
 - I want you to form groups.
 - Form groups of three
 - Here are some tasks for you to work on in groups of four.
-
- Everybody work individually
 - Work by yourselves.
 - Work independently.
 - Ask your neighbor for help.
 - Work on the task together.
-
- Have you finished?
 - Do the next activity.
 - Move on to the next activity.
 -
-
- There are too many in this group.
 - Can you join the other group?
 - Only three people in each group.
 - I asked for four people to a group.
-
- Ask other people in the group
 - Ask others in the class.
 - Interview someone else.
 - Ask everyone in the class.
 - Stand up and find another partner.

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Classroom Language: Classroom management

Here are some phrases that can be used for classroom management:

Organization

Giving instructions

- Open your books at page 52
- Come out and write it on the board
- Listen to the tape, please
- Get into groups of four
- Finish off this song at home
- Let's sing a song.
- Everybody, please.
- All together now.

quencing

- First of all, today, ...
- Right. Now we will go on to the next exercise.
- Have you finished?
- For the last thing today, let's ...
- Whose turn is it to read?
- Which question are you on?
- Next one, please.

- The whole class, please.
- I want you all to join in
- Could you try the next one?
- I would like you to write this down.
- Would you mind switching the lights on?
- It might be an idea to leave this till next time.
- Who would like to read?
- Which topic will your group report on?
- Do you want to answer question 3?

- Who hasn't answered yet?
- Let me explain what I want you to do next.
- The idea of this exercise is for you to ...
- You have ten minutes to do this.
- Your time is up.
- Finish this by twenty to eleven.
- Can you all see the board?
- Have you found the place?
- Are you all ready?

Supervision

- Look this way.
- Stop talking.
- Listen to what ... is saying.
- Leave that alone now.
- Be careful.

Interrogation

Asking questions

- Where's Min-su?
- Is Min-su in the kitchen?
- Tell me where Min-su is.
- What was the house like?
- What do you think?
- How can you tell?

Responding to questions

Yes, that's right

- Fine.
- Almost. Try again.
- What about this word?

Explanation

Metalanguage

- What's the Korean for "doll"?
- Explain it in your own words.
- It's spelt with a capital "J".
- Can anybody correct this sentence?
- Fill in the missing words.
- Mark the right alternative.

Reference

- After they left the USA, the Beatles ...
- The church was started in the last century.
- This is a picture of a typically English castle.
- In the background you can see ...
- While we're on the subject, ...
- As I said earlier, ...
- Let me sum up.

Interaction

Affective attitudes

- That's interesting!
- That really is very kind of you.
- Don't worry about it.
- I was a bit disappointed with your efforts.

Social ritual

- Good morning.
- Cheerio now.
- God bless!
- Have a nice weekend.
- Thanks for your help
- Happy birthday!
- Merry Christmas!

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Classroom Language: Error correction

Here are some phrases that can be used when giving feedback to students:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very good • That's very good • Well done • Very fine • That's nice • I like that • Marvellous | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You did a great job. • Magnificent • Terrific • Wow! • Jolly good • Great stuff • Fantastic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Right • Yes • Fine • Quite right • That's right. • That's it. • That's correct • That's quite right. • Yes, you've got it. • You've got the idea. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It depends • It might be, I suppose • In a way, perhaps • Sort of , yes. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not really • Unfortunately not • I'm afraid that's not quite right • You can't say that, I'm afraid • you can't use that word here • Good try, but not quite right • Have another try • Not quite right. Try again. • Not exactly | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You were almost right. • That's almost it • You're halfway there • You've almost got it • You're on the right lines • There's no need to rush • There's no hurry • We have plenty of time • Go on. Have a try • Have a go • Have a guess |

- There's nothing wrong with your answer.
- What you said was perfectly all right.
- You didn't make a single mistake.
- That's exactly the point.
- That's just what I was looking for.

- You have good pronunciation.
- Your pronunciation is very good.
- You are communicating well.
- You speak very fluently.
- You have made a lot of progress.

- Don't worry about your pronunciation.
- Don't worry about your spelling.
- Don't worry, it'll improve
Maybe this will help you
- Do you want a clue (hint)?

- You still have some trouble with pronunciation.
- You need more practice with these words.
- You'll have to spend some time practising this.
- You're getting better at it all the time.
- You've improved no end.

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Classroom Expressions

Every effort should be made to conduct the language class using the target language extensively. The following list is by no means exhaustive but permits students to communicate effectively and carry out classroom routines.

In preparing this list of classroom expressions, we have opted to place into groups a number of expressions, we have opted to place into groups a number of expressions. Certainly, they do not necessary fall always in that category. They are so categorized for easier access. The list is by no means exhaustive. It is, nevertheless, a good start. Teachers may wish to illustrate some of these expressions and place the illustrations and the text on the bulletin board as a constant reminder and as an aid to learning.

Greetings

- Good morning.
- Good afternoon.
- Good-bye.
- Hello.
- Until tomorrow.

Formulas of Courtesy

- Please.
- Thank you.
- You're welcome.
- Excuse me.
- I beg your Pardon.

Warm-up Period

- What's your name?
- My name is
- Where is (name of student) today?
- Present. / Absent.
- He/She is ill.
- Come in!
- Close the door.
- Open the door/window.
- Turn on/off the lights.
- Erase the backboard.

Inquiry questions

- What's this?
- How do we say (word) in (target language) ?
- How do you spell (word) ?
- Use the five "W"s: Why? What? Where? Who?

When?

Classroom Management

- Are you ready?
- Quiet/ Silence!
- Distribute these sheets.
- Collect the test.
- That's enough!
- Pay attention.
- No talking.
- Listen.
- One at a time, please.
- Stop talking to (name of student), (name of student).
- Faster/ More quickly.
- Stand up.
- Sit down.
- Read quietly.
- Read aloud.
- Louder.
- Come up in front of the class.
- Go back to your seat.
- Line up here.

Praise

- Excellent!
- Very good!
- Bravo!
- Good!
- Well done!
- Correct!
- Perfect!
- Great!
- Terrific!
- Congratulations!

Presentation

- Repeat after me.
- All the boys.
- I don't have a pencil.
- I forgot...
- I don't remember...
- I don't know.
- I left the book in my ...?

- All the girls.
- All together.
- Everybody.
- For example...
- Close your notebooks.
- Close your books.
- Is this clear.
- Do you understand?
- Look at the blackboard.
- Look at the screen.
- Answer the question.
- Look at the bottom of page...
- Look at the top of page...
- Look at the middle of page...
- Once more...

Application

- copy down the examples in your notebooks.
- Open your notebooks.
- Open your books.
- Open your books at page...
- Turn to page...
- Open your workbooks at page...
- Write.
- Continue...
- Repeat once more.
- It's (name of student) turn.
- Go to the blackboard.
- Write the answer on the blackboard.
- Go back to your seat.
- Choose a partner.
- Play the role of....
- Look it up in the dictionary.
- For homework, do exercise...

Students' favourites...

- May I sharpen my pencil?
- May I get a drink of water?
- May I go to the bathroom?

a world that offers them instant access to almost unlimited information, teachers still remain the primary source of knowledge. This knowledge cannot be effectively transmitted if teachers and students are unable to understand each other. It is important that what students hear is what teachers are in fact really trying to convey. This is not always true. Teachers, unaware that they are communicating poorly, often become frustrated when students fail to follow directions or complete assigned tasks. Often these situations occur because of communication misunderstandings or breakdowns.

Related Results

- ESL instruction gets boost from discs. (English as a second language;...
- Concern Over School Violence

In order to get to the root of this communication problem some very basic question must be asked and answered. First of all, do students hear and really understand what teachers are saying? Secondly, do teachers in fact say one thing and students hear another? After spending many hours in classrooms observing, speaking, and listening to teachers and students, the answers to these questions proved quite revealing.

There currently exists in most classrooms today a subtle form of double-speak. Teachers constantly utilize phrases with double meanings. Although teachers know exactly what they wish their students to do, their inability to articulate these wishes is a primary source of ongoing frustration. Many of these double-speak phrases are easy to identify, and carry with them built in opportunities for misunderstanding. Those most commonly used include the following.

Okay

This is a simple, and yet very often misunderstood term. When teachers utilize this word they are in essence asking the students a very simple question. That question is, do you understand what we have been speaking about here? Students on the other hand hear a completely different question. They hear, do you agree? These are two very different interpretations of the word. As a result, students' actions are usually quite different from what teachers are anticipating.

When this word for example is used in connection with course work, teachers, believing that their students understand, then move on to more complex ideas. The result is that students fall behind in their course work. This is due to the fact that they lack a basic understanding of the knowledge the teachers presented.

Substituting a phrase that better assesses what students do in fact understand, and what materials need to be reviewed, can greatly enhance instruction. Teachers simply need to ask the following questions instead. Do you understand this work? Can you explain it to me in your own words? These two questions will more accurately determine if teachers may indeed move on to the next topic, or must instead more thoroughly review what they have just taught.

This Is Important

This often used phrase can best be translated as, this is important to me, the teacher. Students may not understand that these words mean that they will most likely be tested on the materials covered.

While the meaning of the phrase is quite clear to the teacher, students rarely see the importance. If students consider the term at all, they might silently ask themselves, why? This usually unasked question goes to the heart of the problem. Why do teachers consistently fail to explain to students why certain materials are important, or at least why they are more important than other course work. If teachers were to take the time to explain the rationale as to why certain materials were more important than others, it would then follow that students would come to a better understanding of where to focus their energies when studying.

You Need To ...

Teachers must come to the understanding that students rarely see the need to do anything that they do not want to do in the first place. When teachers use the expression, ... you need to study, or you need to do your homework, what they are in actuality saying is that this is important. The teacher is in reality emphasizing a point. They are saying that they will take a close look at how the students perform in this area. This is an emphasis that is not always shared because, students do not see or feel the need to do it, only the teacher sees the need.

Are There Any Questions?

No sooner are these words out of teachers' mouths then students begin to shift their focus and attention. In the everyday world of the classroom, when teachers utter this phrase they are actually signaling that they are ready to move on to something else. Students have been trained to pick up on this signal. Instead of being an invitation to students to develop insightful questions, these words are often a final curtain call on a current activity.

Here teachers lose a valuable opportunity to allow students to reflect on what they have learned, and more importantly, on what they have not learned. This critical reflection can translate into meaningful review and learning.

Teachers who casually and repeatedly use this expression are not accurately determining what students actually understand. If teachers really want to assess what their students understand, then they must learn to develop more effective questioning techniques. They must learn how to query and probe and entice students to think on higher critical thinking levels. Good questioning techniques can achieve results. Simply asking if there are any questions most assuredly will not achieve this objective.

Words Matter

Use of vague and half understood phrases are not limited to simple conversations with students. Often teachers establish an environment for learning, or in some cases obstacles to that learning, by the language they choose to use each day in their classrooms. A prime example of this is the use of the term disability.

With more and more exceptional students entering everyday classes through programs such as inclusion or mainstreaming, it is essential that teachers develop a positive mind set when preparing to educate these children. Educators must come to realize that the word disability should be viewed as a legal definition of a physical or emotional condition. It is a statement of a child's condition, not a definitive set of criteria by which teachers should judge who the child is as a person.

Related Results

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By simply altering the language that they use, teachers can make great strides in changing their own belief systems. When educators for example, speak of students with challenges, as opposed to individuals with disabilities, they are well on their way to making the mental transition of seeing these children as people. This shift in teachers' attitudes in turn allows the teachers to define their special needs students by their potential, not by their limitations.

A second example of how language can work to help or hinder the learning process centers around the need for teachers to actively emphasize the use of gender-neutral language within their classrooms. Too often teachers unconsciously utilize terms that are gender bias. "You guys" may seem like a harmless term, however it reinforces societal stereotypes.

Teachers must consciously make an ongoing effort to eliminate such terms from their vernacular and must be proactive in using gender neutral vocabulary that advocates climates of equality. These include the use of such basic terms as Firefighter or Police Officer in speech and the use of plural nouns in writing assignments to avoid the use of the "his" and "her" trap.

A Final Thought

Changing even the simplest use of words is a difficult task for many teachers. It is more hard work in a job that already requires a great deal of hard work. In truth it is easier to continue to utter the same old hackneyed expressions that teachers have muttered for centuries. It is easier to just pretend that students do actually understand what is said, even when teachers know they do not understand. It is also easier to turn a blind eye to the fact that at times teachers and students often do speak different languages.

While it is understood that changing one small aspect of classroom interaction between teachers and students will not bring miraculous results overnight, it should also be understood that this change has the potential for producing wondrous results over time, if teachers are willing to work hard toward that goal.

Good teachers, those teachers who love to teach and who truly want their students to learn, are willing to do yet a little more hard work. They are willing to fine tune their skills yet again and again. They are the professionals who understand that minor changes often lead to grand achievements.

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