

ESOL Online

The First Thousand Words Worksheets and Tests

Introduction by Breda Matthews

There are many issues around teaching de-contextualised vocabulary and disadvantages in teaching groups of vocabulary in alphabetical order. However I have successfully used these worksheets to supplement my students' vocabulary learning, reassuring myself that none of the first thousand words were "slipping through the net" in my classroom. These worksheets do not constitute a course.

That said I found a number of advantages in using these worksheets. Many students had good rote learning skills that this work utilised. A large number of students were anxious to make what they believed was measurable progress, they enjoyed graphing their results and the process helped ease some of their anxieties about not being in a mainstream classroom. Using communicative activities with this work gave me a focus for both speaking and listening and I was able to concentrate on initial sounds and blends as we proceeded through the words alphabetically. The activities are readily adaptable to a range of abilities and to scaffold student understanding within the 1000 word level.

As a teacher it was non-stressful homework and class work - once the worksheets were written of course! I simply set the worksheet and learning for homework and gave the tests - the students self-marked both the homework and tests. The activities were great starters, fillers and finishers for lessons. I frequently used 'find your partner activities' as students walked through the door in order to pair students for other class work.

In making these available I would appreciate any feedback and extension activities to add to the activities here (I'm sure someone will find time to make some barrier activities) and hope that people will acknowledge the provenance of this work when using it themselves. Teacher contributions can be made through the [Teacher Resource Exchange](#).

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