

Top 5 Introduction/ Icebreaker Games

Original content from Jackie Bolen: [My Life! Teaching in a Korean University](#)

Be sure to check out: [39 ESL Icebreakers for Teenagers and Adults \(on Amazon\)](#)

1. Toilet Paper Icebreaker

Skills: Speaking/listening

Time: 5-20 minutes

Level: Beginner to Advanced

Materials: Toilet paper

Bring in a roll of toilet paper, and depending on the size of your class, tell the students they can take a certain number of pieces (big classes 1-4, small classes 4-8). Don't give them any other information. Once everyone has their paper, tell them that they have to tell the class one thing about themselves for each square of paper that they have. For each sentence, they "throw-away" one square until they're done. If you have an extremely large class, you can put the students in groups of 5-6 for this activity.

Teaching Tips: I know that in some countries, they don't have the regular toilet paper rolls they we use in Western countries. If not, it's still possible to do this activity by bringing in a bag of wrapped candies (wrapped for sanitary reasons) and use them. In fact, maybe all your classes would like this option better but it depends on your budget!

Students are always so curious about why they have a choice for how many they choose. Be mysterious and don't give away the secret until everyone has chosen.

Procedure:

1. Each student takes a certain number of toilet paper squares.

2. Divide the students into groups of 5-6

3. Tell the students that for each square they took, they must say one interesting thing about themselves. Continue until all squares are used up.

2. My Name is _____ and I like _____

Skills: Speaking/listening

Time: 10-15 minutes

Level: Beginner to Advanced

Materials: Nothing

A way that you can get your students to remember names (and you too!) is to do this simple activity. Go around the class, and have students say, "My name is _____ and I like _____." The next student repeats the previous ones, and adds their own. It goes on until it finally gets to you and you can impress the students with your memorization abilities! It works best for smaller classes of ten or less.

Teaching Tip: adapt this to your level of students. For absolute beginners, it might be enough to simply say their name but for more advanced students you could use something like name and what they did last night, or what they ate for lunch.

Procedure:

1. The first student can say the first sentence. "My name is _____ and I like _____."
2. The second student must repeat the first student's sentence and then add their own.
3. And so on it goes, until the last student (or teacher) goes.

3. Do you like to _____?

Skills: Speaking/listening

Time: 15 minutes

Level: Intermediate-advanced

Materials Required: Strips of paper (or students can make their own)

Give each student 3 or 4 strips of paper. On each piece of paper they write something interesting about themselves. Then, collect them, mix them up and distribute them back to your students. At this point, everyone stands up and goes around the class asking questions to try to find the owner for each paper that they have.

For example,

"Do you go to _____middle school?"

"Do you have a twin brother?"

"Do you love to play soccer?"

4. Find Something in Common

Skills: Speaking/listening

Time: 10-30 minutes

Level: Intermediate to Advanced

Materials: Nothing

If your students are not shy, this is an excellent way for everyone to get to know each other. The students stand up with a piece of paper and pencil in their hand. They have to talk to everyone in the class to try to find something in common (they are both from Seoul, or they both know how to play the piano). Once they find this thing in common, they write it down along with the person's name. Keep going until most of the students have talked to everyone.

Teaching Tips: this is a particularly good activity for a class where many students don't already know

each other. If your students find something in common with another student, they'll have something to talk about after class, or at break time, and won't feel so alone in the class, which will make it more enjoyable and memorable.

Tell your students that it is okay to have short conversations about the thing they have in common, the goal of the activity is to try to talk to most of the people in the class so they need to keep moving and talking to new people.

This is an activity that requires nothing in the way of preparation or materials, so keep it in the back of your mind in case of emergency in one of your higher level classes.

Procedure:

1. Students stand up, with a pencil and paper in their hands.
2. They talk to another student and try to find something in common by asking some questions.
3. Once they find something in common, they write that down, along with the person's name.
4. Then, they find a new partner and continue.

5. Introduce Yourself...in an Interesting Way

Skills: Writing/reading/speaking/listening

Time: 10 minutes

Level: Beginner to advanced

Materials: Nothing

As a way to introduce yourself (the teacher), write up a few things about yourself randomly on the board before the students get into class. But, make them vague. For example, I write "4" "2003" "^" "-40 C" "airplane picture"

The students have to guess what they mean. 4=family members. 2003=when I first came to Korea. ^=my

favorite hobby (hiking). -40= where I'm from (Canada...so cold!). Airplane=my love of traveling.

Then, you can have the students do the same thing, either in small groups or as a whole class.

Like these ESL Icebreakers? There are 34 more of them in book: [ESL Icebreakers for Teenagers and Adults](#) (clicking the link will take you to Amazon).