

Activities and Events for an Exciting Summer

Hello everyone! It's that time of year again. The temperature goes up, the rain comes down and the kids are ready for vacation. However, it is a busy season for LL / Step World Schools and their teachers. Summer is when we prepare some extra-curricular activities in special class for students and fun activities for recruiting students to your school.

The important thing in all these activities, lessons and events is to give the student a chance to use English in order to accomplish something. Whether the student learns the English names for cooking ingredients or learning how to ask questions in English to get more information, they will realize that English is more than just another subject in school.

At the school in Mejiro (Tokyo) each summer, we hold special "Summer Lessons" which students pay an extra fee to attend with their friends. These extra lessons are filled with educational and exciting events, workshops and activities. Current students are also invited to ask their friends to join them for these special classes.

Feel free to incorporate some of these activities into your special lessons, regular lessons or trial lessons. I've made up some categories for the different types of things we have done in the past few years. Below are some tips and ideas to make this summer hot with excitement and fun!

Practical Activities

These are activities that can be done to learn about society and culture of other countries. Also, they are useful for teaching kids vocabulary and good manners.

● *Table Manners & Setting*

- This was a very popular activity especially for girls. We bought paper cups, napkins, plates, bowls, plastic spoons and forks from the local ¥100 shop and arranged them in proper Western style.
- We made a diagram that we got from the Internet and taught students the placement of all the items. Then we showed students how to behave while they are at the table.

- Boys seemed to enjoy the quiz games we made from this activity such as finding the missing tableware and correctly arranging a mixed-up table setting.
- We taught the students how to eat cake and breakfast cereal properly, using good sitting posture and fork/spoon handling techniques.
- Points: Asking questions (Can you please pass me the sugar?), vocabulary (fork, spoon, napkin, cup, etc.), learning good manners.

● *Shopping*

- We set up different shops in the different classrooms and students were given money to buy things and taught how to negotiate prices. This was a lot of fun for students because they had to think about how much and what they were going to buy.
- One shop was a grocery store. Another was a toy shop. There was also a bookstore. Students went to each store and were told to buy as much as they could without going over a total amount.
- Points: Asking questions (How much is this book?), vocabulary (fruit and vegetable words, book titles, etc.), learning how to handle money.

Cooking Lessons

These are some of our most popular classes because students get to eat what they make! It usually turns out that students make enough of whatever they made to take some home to their family. We also provide students with the recipe in English and Japanese.

● *Preparing Meals*

- Ethnic Day! – For Italian food, make spaghetti or pizza and let the kids make their own. Buy some pasta, tomato sauce and other toppings so the students have a choice of what to cook. Another popular class is making Mexican tacos filled with meat or chicken and some veggies. We also prepare nacho chips with cheese dip for the kids.
- American Barbecue – Setup some grills and prepare some hamburgers and hot dogs. We have also cooked grilled chicken with barbecue sauce. The kids really liked how our homemade French fries tasted.
- Preparations are very important as the teachers must bring in all the ingredients and materials used such as plates, ranges, ovens, pans, etc. Students are asked to bring their own aprons and some type of container to take any leftovers home.

- Points: Organizing things, vocabulary (ingredient names, measurements), cleaning up (washing and cleaning), using materials (oven, frying pan, etc.)

- *Making Desserts*

- Tiramisu / Crepe / Pancakes – Kids love these! They are great for teaching foreign cultures because these treats are associated with other countries. Some foods like the tiramisu need some advanced preparation. For other desserts like crepe or pancake, it's better to have a lot of toppings for the activity.
- Baked Goods – Another favorite is baked food like muffins, scones, and sweet breads. Students can add and mix ingredients themselves, then they can watch the mix baked inside the oven. Be sure to have some milk or tea to go along with the delicious result!
- Points: Organizing things, vocabulary (ingredient names, measurements), cleaning up (washing and cleaning), using materials (oven, frying pan, etc.)

Creative Activities

Now it is time for the students to get creative and have some fun with English at the same time. Some activities may require the students to bring their own materials to use during the lesson.

- *Using a Computer*

- Using Microsoft Paint – This great program is available for free on most Windows PC's. Teach students how to use it to make cool pictures, nice graphics and colorful images.
- Learn How to Write Email – Many kids may already know how to use email but can they do it in English? Teach them to type in English a simple message to their friends or family.
- Using the Internet – Have students access family-friendly and kid-friendly English websites full of games and interesting information.
- Points: Computer vocabulary (mouse, monitor, keyboard), Net etiquette (proper email writing).

- *Making Handicrafts*

- Baskets and Boxes – Students can construct small storage boxes or baskets for their desktops or rooms. They can decorate them with fun things such as stickers, colors, photos, etc.

- Photo Frames – Using cardboard and some plastic, students can bring their own photographs and construct easy-to-make picture frames for their homes. They can also decorate these to their own tastes.
- Points: Using materials (scissors, glue, construction paper, etc.), organization (cleaning up and designing), vocabulary (top, bottom, back, front, etc.)

Active Events

One of the fun things about summer is to be active and moving around. Running, jumping and turning are all part of warm days. Let's do some activities that celebrate summer time.

● *Olympic Events*

- Dash Races – Students compete individually or in teams racing around the room. You can add some English-learning activities for each student here too.
- Standing Long Jump – Have students jump as far as they can then measure the distance. Students must say the length in English.
- Shot Put – Take a heavy pillow and have students toss it. Say the distances in English.
- Volleyball / Soccer / Golf – Make a mini-field or course for students to play in. There are many ways to integrate English into these activities.
- Points: Team activities, sports vocabulary (goal, ball, field, etc.), measurements (centimeters, seconds, etc.)

● *Carnival Day*

- Ball Toss – Have students toss balls into buckets or boxes. Students can count the number of balls they have made.
- Fishing – Using magnets and paperclips on paper fish, see how many fish a student can catch during this timed game.
- Knock 'Em Down – Build a pyramid of blocks or something else that students try to knock down by throwing a ball or pillow.
- Points: Counting, organizing games, predicting (I can hit 3 blocks. I caught 4 fish.)

Discovery Activities

The best thing about these summer lessons is to discover and learn new things besides just the English aspect of things. We can learn about the world around us and different

peoples and cultures.

- *International Day*

- Flags and National Symbols – Teach the flags of the world to students and tell them some famous things from those countries such as foods or animals.
- Snacks and Sweets from the World – Go to an international supermarket and buy an assortment of foods from around the world. Teach the students the names and ingredients of each. Play guessing games and do taste testing.
- Locating on a Map – Have a world map or draw one. Students can add to it by drawing animals or other world symbols like pyramids, pandas, towers, etc.
- Points: Country names and places, drawing, eating and giving your opinion on foods.

- *Going on a Trip*

- Jungle / Desert – Students go on a tour of the jungle and desert. Teach them about animals, the weather, plants and nature they can find in those locations.
- Forest / Mountain – This is a great setting for camping! Have the students setup tents, sleeping bags, etc. With the teacher, you can even setup a gas stove and make some toasted marshmallows!
- Sea / Air – Take a dive and teach kids about different types of fish and sea life. Also discuss the world's oceans and famous bodies of water around Japan. For the air, ask the students about their favorite birds or cartoon characters that fly. You can also show photographs of different natural phenomena that take place in the sky such as clouds, lightning and thunder.
- Space – Fill your classroom with glow-in-the-dark stars and have students draw constellations and planets to fill up the room. You can teach them about space and the universe in this fun activity. You can even try building your own rocket out of cardboard boxes!
- Points: Nature vocabulary (lakes, mountains, etc.), exploring new worlds.

So there are a few of the fun ideas and activities you can do and organize for your classes this summer. I also recommend checking the Internet and using the keywords: “kids classroom activities” on www.google.com. If you have more ideas, feel free to share them with other teachers and schools in the LL / Step World group. We would also like to hear how your summer lessons, regular lessons, and trials lessons turned out. So please have fun this summer and enjoy the fun and exciting days!