

ADJECTIVES AND ADVERBS IN ACTION

So far this month, we have presented games to practice subject-verb agreement and verb tenses. While these are very important grammar skills for English language learners to master, adverbs and adjectives are also critical to add detail to students’ spoken and written work. This week, we will focus on two games to help students practice meanings and how to use both of these parts of speech correctly.

STOP AND SIT

Skills: This game practices adverb meanings and syntax. Students also practice listening and speaking as they play.

Materials:

- Chairs (one less than the number of students)
- A list of verbs that students can “do” during the game (see suggestions below or have students brainstorm a list)
- A list of adverbs that can modify the verbs
- A device to play music if desired

Example Action Verbs and Adverbs:

Action Verbs	Adverbs
Walk	Angrily
Run	Quickly
Skip	Slowly
Snore	Sleepily
Crawl	Eagerly
Swim	Furiously
Eat	Happily
Gallop	Lazily
Hop	Politely
Talk	Hastily
Sew	Shyly
Cook	Proudly
Mix	Sadly
Jump	Tiredly
Sleep	Rapidly
Whisper	Frantically

Laugh Write	Calmly Elegantly
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How to Play:

1. Set up the chairs. One option is to arrange chairs in two back-to-back rows so that students can move around them. Another option is to spread them out in a random way around the classroom and have students move throughout the space during the activity.
2. Explain to students that you will give a command that contains a verb and an adverb, such as “Students, please crawl slowly.” Even if the verb does not usually require movement (for instance, snore) tell students that they must walk and perform the action so that they are always moving around the chairs.
3. Once the command is given, students must follow it, moving either around the chairs in a circle or throughout the room. You can play music during the time that students are moving if desired.
4. When you want students to stop say, “Stop and sit!” and turn off the music if you are playing it. Students must then find a chair as quickly as possible.
5. Each round will end with one student who is unable to find a chair fast enough. This student is out of the game and must not participate in future rounds. Remove one chair each time a student is eliminated so that there is always one fewer than the number of students. You can allow the student who is gets eliminated each time to give the command for the next round.
6. Continue until only one chair and two students remain. The last student to claim a seat is the winner!

DESCRIBE IT RELAY

Skills: During this game, students will practice generating adjectives and using them correctly in sentences. Students will also read and write during the activity.

Materials:

- Familiar objects that students can easily describe in terms of color, shape, size, taste, smell, or other attributes (Suggestions for items include classroom objects, fruits/vegetables or other foods, toys, familiar books/movies, household items, articles of clothing, etc. If you do not have access to the actual objects, you can also use pictures of items printed from the internet or cut out of magazines.)
- A large bag/box to put objects and/or pictures in

- Paper and pencils for each team
- A timer

How to Play:

1. Divide the class into two to four teams with an equal number of students in each one. Have students arrange themselves according to a characteristic such as age, height, birthday month, etc. Designate which student will go first and be sure that those who follow know the order of who goes next. If your space permits, have students line up accordingly.
2. Choose a “recording area” where each team’s paper and pencils will be located. Ideally each recording area should be an equal distance from where you ask teams to line up. One suggestion is to place a desk or chair at the front of the room for each team. Be sure to separate the desks/chairs sufficiently so that teams cannot see each other’s papers.
3. This game is a relay during which each team competes to quickly write grammatically correct, descriptive sentences about an object (or picture). Explain to students that you will start a timer and then pull an object from the bag and hold it up. As soon as the object is displayed, the first student from each team must hurry to their team’s paper and write a descriptive sentence about the object. Tell students that they must not repeat any of the adjectives already used by their teammates, and that each sentence must be grammatically and mechanically correct to earn a point.
4. When the sentence is complete, they return to their team, lightly tag the next person in line, and get behind the last person in line. The process is repeated, with each new player coming to write a new sentence, until time runs out.
5. When time is up, the teacher checks each paper for correct sentences. A point is awarded for each sentence that accurately describes the object, is grammatically correct, and uses a new adjective. Points should be recorded for each team after each round of play. Alternatively, students can check each other’s work and calculate points.
6. The game is repeated until all of the objects (or pictures) have been presented for students to describe. The team with the most points is the winner.

Adverbs and adjectives can add detail to students’ spoken and written English. Both of the games presented this week will help students incorporate these parts of speech in memorable ways. Give students additional practice with descriptions in English using [Guess What?](#) and [Picture This!](#) from the Activate Games for Learning American English series.