

PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE

This week's Teacher's Corner features two activities to help students practice prepositions of place. These activities allow you to use everyday objects to teach and reinforce the meaning of prepositions of place for your students. During the Introduction, students create a vocabulary document with sketches to show what each preposition means. In Activity One, teams compete to arrange objects correctly according to instructions with prepositions. In Activity Two, students race against the clock to write sentences using new prepositions.

LEVEL

High beginner and above

LANGUAGE FOCUS

Speaking, reading, and writing

GOALS

During these activities, students will:

- Learn common prepositions of location using real life objects
- Read prepositions of location
- Form oral and written sentences using prepositions to describe the location of objects

MATERIALS

- Chalkboard or whiteboard with chalk or markers
- Table

- A group of ten everyday objects, familiar to students, that can be easily displayed and arranged on a table (for example: books, pencils, notebooks, markers, pieces of fruit, a mobile phone, a hat, gloves, a scarf, a coffee mug, etc.)
- Index cards
- Markers
- Two grab bags or containers to hold folded up index cards
- Paper and pencils for students
- List of prepositions: *above, around, behind, below, beside, between, far (away) from, in, in back of, in front of, in the middle of, inside, near, next to, on, on top of, outside, under*
- Timer or clock

PREPARATION

- Collect the objects you plan to use for the activity. Place them in a group on a table or desk where all students can easily see them.
- Label one of the containers *objects* and the other *prepositions*.
- Write the name of each object on an index card and fold it in half. Put the folded cards in the container labeled *objects*.
- Write each preposition of location on an index card. Fold the cards in half and put them in the container labeled *prepositions*.

INTRODUCTION

1. Explain to students that the upcoming activities will focus on prepositions of location. Tell students that these words tell where something is located in relation to another object.
2. Tell the class that you will teach the prepositions using the objects on the table to show what each one means. Students can write down the new prepositions and sentences and sketch the objects to help them remember the definitions.

3. Start with the word *beside*. Write the word on the board and have students repeat it. Choose two objects and put them next to each other on the table. Then, form a sentence about the objects using *beside*, such as “The apple is beside the notebook.”
4. Choose different objects to display on the table. Ask students to form sentences about them using the new preposition.
5. Continue teaching the prepositions in this manner until you have presented each one and given students a chance to practice using the words.

ACTIVITY ONE: ARRANGE THE OBJECTS

1. Once students are comfortable with the prepositions, inform them that they will play a game to test their understanding. Divide the students into two or three teams and give each team a name.
2. Show students the two containers you have prepared and say, “This container has all of the names of the objects that are on the table. This container has all of the prepositions you have just learned. Two members of your team will come up to the front of the class together. One person will choose a preposition card and the other will choose two object cards. Then you will work together to arrange the objects to illustrate the preposition and use it in a sentence about the objects. Your team will earn one point for correct arrangement of the objects and one point for your sentence.”
3. Choose two students to come up to the front of the class and model the process of choosing the cards, arranging the objects, and forming a sentence. Provide guidance as needed and give students time to ask questions about the game.
4. Once students are ready, play the game and keep score. The activity can either be timed, or played until all students have had a chance to participate. The team with the most points at the end of the activity wins!

ACTIVITY TWO: DESCRIBE THE SCENE

1. Have the class form pairs or small groups of 3-4 students.
2. Rearrange the objects on the table if you have just played the game in Activity 1. On the board, list the prepositions you want students to use.
3. Explain that you will set a timer for five minutes. During the five minutes, groups of students should try to write as many sentences as they can about the objects on the table using each of the prepositions on the list. They must use all of the prepositions once before repeating any.
4. After the timer has stopped, groups will exchange papers and check each other's sentences. Students will check for correct use of prepositions and verify that the sentences correctly describe the location of the objects on the table. Groups earn one point for each correct sentence.
5. Once the sentences have been checked and points have been added up, the group with the most points wins. You can ask groups to share some of their sentences to provide further review. To repeat this activity, rearrange the objects on the table and have students work in different groups.