

Distance Teaching

How to engage students with tasks connected to real life



ENGAGE

Warm-up, retrieval practice, prior knowledge activation

- getting students interested in the lesson content by connecting learning to real life
- doing retrieval practice
- creating a more personalised learning experience for students

To get engaged with the lesson from the very first minute, students need to know how they can use the language they are studying in real life. If you teach a virtual class, you can arrange a safe online communication experience for your students where they will be able to use the language for real-life meaningful communication with peers from different countries to discuss important issues.

Using PenPal Schools for collaborative projects

- PenPal Schools is an online platform that allows classrooms and students around the world to work together on collaborative projects that connect to every school subject.
 - Go to the PenPal Schools homepage and create an account.
 - Browse the library of projects and choose the project that resonates with the theme of the textbook unit.
 - Press “Enrol” and create and name your class within the project.
 - Add students by pressing the corresponding button.
- The programme automatically creates a classroom code for your class. Your students need to create student accounts and join the class using the classroom code.

Setting collaborative projects

- Students can work on the project simultaneously with covering the textbook. The programme automatically matches them with peers from other countries who are studying the same topic and allows them to discuss it in a safe chat window of the platform or even create a project together.
- You can invite students’ parents to see their children’s progress.
- You can grade student work using built-in assessment tools.
- If you choose a PenPal Schools project connected with the theme of the textbook unit you are teaching in class, your students will have to recall the language they learned during the lesson and use it in the new content.

Alternatively...

- You can get your students interested in the exchange of traditional postcards or letters with peer learners from different countries.
- Connect with fellow educators via professional social networks.
- Choose a class to match your students age and language skills.
- Together with the fellow teacher decide on the topic questions you want your students to discuss in their writing.
- Agree on the writing etiquette, communication rules and deadlines.
- Provide regular feedback. Ask your students what was the most interesting idea they learned from their peers’ answers, what new vocabulary they learned, what new cultural facts they discovered, and what was easy and difficult during this experience.