

# WORLD OF FUN



## Using flashcards in the Primary Classroom

Flashcards are a fantastic resource and can be used to present, practice and revise vocabulary. They are often under used. But now with the new words that have been added to the YL 2018 wordlist the teacher can use flashcards to supplement their existing coursebook to make sure students are familiar with all the new words at each level.

Below are some ideas to make and use them and how to save time preparing them.

### Why use flashcards?

» Flashcards appeal to visual learners and can be used to stimulate kinaesthetic learners too.

They are a great way to introduce learners to new vocabulary. There are endless ways to use them in the classroom to practice and revise vocabulary. Difficult or new vocabulary can be put up around the classroom to help learners to remember the words, decorating the classroom in an attractive and personal way.

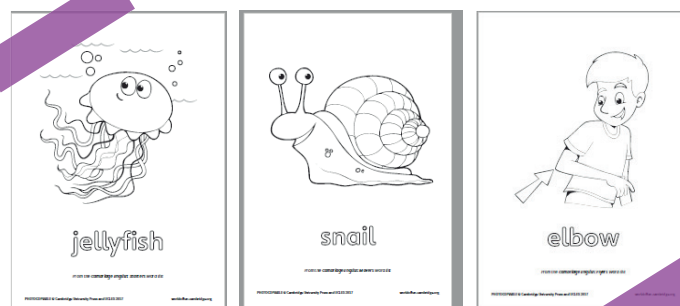
### How to choose flashcards

If you are using a course book you may want to check with the publishers. Some have sets of flashcards already included in the teacher's set, others you may need to purchase separately. Think carefully about how well they match your students' needs. If you are preparing for Cambridge *Starters*, *Movers* or *Flyers* they need to include they key vocabulary for the tests so remember to check the revised wordlists.

The internet has a wealth of images and resources that can be added to a PowerPoint presentation. If you use rights free images you can make ppt presentations that fit your class and your coursebook and include words that students in your market want to use. The slides print off easily onto A4 pages to glue to cards that can then be laminated

or put in plastic pockets. But please do remember to be careful with copyright.

An alternative might be to make your own or get your students to make them. There is a full set of flashcards for the new YL 2018 words which are designed to be coloured in. Each class can have their own set and once they are coloured they can be:



- Laminated or
- Stuck on to coloured card or
- Put on posters and grouped by topic area
- Put up on notice boards as reminders

## Using flashcards

### Presenting new vocabulary

Flashcards are an efficient way of presenting new vocabulary. You can show them quickly or reveal them slowly, there are many ways to introduce the cards to students. Remember to drill the words you are planning to teach before showing them the written form. Drilling which is listening to a model, provided by the teacher, or audio recording or another student, and repeating what is heard, can be done as a group, in pairs or individually. A circle drill where the students show a flashcard to the student on their right or left, say the word and then pass it to them to repeat with another person sitting next to them when they have said the word is a great way to get the whole class participating. Demonstrate what you want students to do carefully.

Another way to present vocabulary is to put all the cards you want to introduce to the students on the board. This works well with about 8 items. Drill the words and when the students are producing them point to the words and ask the class to say the word. Do this several times. Continue to get students saying the words and slowly turn the cards over or remove them, pointing to the position the word was. This helps students to build vocabulary and fix the images in their memory.

### Revising and recycling

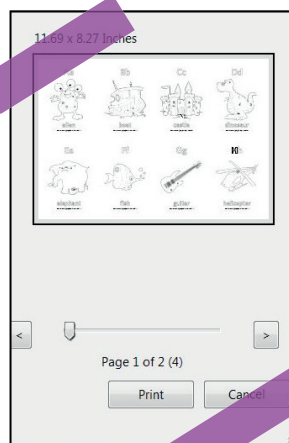
Primary classes enjoy moving about. If you have or can make more than one copy of flashcards there are many ways to get students moving and revising words they need. Spread them on the floor and get the class counting or singing a song, use an instrument or clap your hands to get their attention and say the flashcard you want them to find. Students who stand on the word first get a point. Depending on the space you have you could play the same game but put the flashcards on the wall this time students walk to the card and put their hand on it. As students learn more you can extend your cues to things like 'hop to the lizard' 'swim to the ship' or ask them to sing/count 'happily', 'quickly' or 'slowly'. You can vary this according to the lexis and language you want them to focus on.

Another good way to revise is to stick the flashcards on the board and get the students into two teams in a line facing the board. Stand at the back and whisper the word to the two students at the end of the line and ask them to say the word to the person in front of them. The word moves in a 'Chinese whisper' manner up the line to the person at the front. They then have to grab the card. The team that gets there first has a point and the person at the front moves to the back so everyone has a chance.

You can also use flashcards to build a story. Give students 3-5 cards and let them invent a story where they must use the words. This allows them to be creative.

Odd one out – children select 4 and other sts group have to say which is odd one out and why

## Mini flashcards



Something that is used often with classes are mini sets for students to keep with them. These are not difficult to create.

You simply reduce the cards to an eighth and photocopy them on one page. If they are in a printable form you can print 8 cards per page.

Once you have created a set for each student they can use them for games like memory, snap or test each other. They can be very useful when preparing for the *Starters* test

where they have to move 'Object cards' to different places on a large 'Scene card'.

Keep them in envelopes with students' names on them in the classroom so you always have an extra activity for them to do. ■

## Acknowledgements

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**Key:** P = Photo; F = Flashcard

### Photography

P1: Ariel Skelley/DigitalVision/GettyImages; F3a: screenshot from Cambridge English Young Learners Colouring book, Cambridge English Language Assessment; P2: courtesy of Jane Ritter.

### Illustration

Anthony Rule

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Jane has been teaching young learners for 20 years in Italy and Hong Kong. She is a Cambridge Examiner and Examiner Trainer. She is also a CELTA and DELTA Tutor and has been involved in several teacher development and training programmes for British Council centres around the world. She is the author of the *Home Fun* booklets for Movers levels and other resources for CUP

In her free times she runs around with her two boys and Minnie the dog, enjoys cooking, wine and most things Italian.

