

eslactive

Odd One Out

Tags: [advanced](#), [intermediate](#), [vocabulary](#), [warmer](#)

Students have to decide and explain why one of four vocabulary items is the odd one out.

 1+  10-20 mins  Internet **or** Prepared Words; Projector **or** Board

Setup

If you have an Internet connection and projector, use our [Random Word Generator](#) to generate and present the vocabulary items – no preparation required! Simply choose an appropriate vocabulary category and set the number of words to four.

If not, you will need to prepare some groups of vocabulary items (between five and ten is usually enough). Each group should contain four items of the same type (animals, jobs etc.). One possible example with animals is “dog, parrot, pig, elephant”.

You could use one type of vocabulary throughout your groups, or change it each time. You can repeat items in different groups if necessary.

In class, divide the class into small teams of two, three or four students. It is also possible to do this activity with just one or two students, as more of a discussion.

Activity

1. Write or project a vocabulary group on the board.
2. The students have two minutes to decide which item they think is the odd one out, and why. With higher level students you may want to outlaw physical characteristics to avoid obvious/easy choices.
3. At the end of the time, ask each team for their opinions and justifications. If you like, you could also give a point for the best reasoning.
4. Repeat with another group of vocabulary items.

Alternatively (if you want some uninterrupted time to do something else!) you could just generate/present all the groups at once and review all the choices at the end.

Target Language

The Odd One Out ESL activity is ideal as a warmer for higher intermediate and advanced students. Not only should you get some interesting ideas, but being able to justify a choice and explain reasoning is an important skill at these levels.

You could also use it to review specific vocabulary. [Animals](#), [sports and hobbies](#), [jobs](#), [countries](#), [places in the city](#) and [objects in the home](#) are some categories that work particularly well.

For other no-prep warmers suitable for higher-level students, try [Five In Five](#) and [Countdown](#).