

eslactive

Sentence Builder

Tags: [advanced](#), [beginner](#), [grammar](#), [intermediate](#), [kids](#), [parts of speech](#), [warmer](#)

In the Sentence Builder ESL activity, students build sentences from a large set of random words.

 1+  10-15 mins  Prepared Words

Setup

Students usually do the Sentence Builder activity in small groups. Or with small or private classes, all students can work together.

Prepare a large number of random words (at least one hundred) on small pieces of paper. Make them reusable if possible. It's essential that you make enough different elements of all the relevant parts of speech/grammatical structures to form many different types of sentences. Create multiples of common words and some extra gerund (-ing) endings too. Remember you'll need one copy of the words for each team playing.

In class, the students sit in their groups at different tables.

Activity

1. The teams have to organise as many of the words into sentences as they can in a set time (usually five to ten minutes). Words cannot be reused.
2. When the time is up, the teams take turns reading their sentences or writing them on the board, one at a time.
3. If you want to make the activity into a competitive game, award one point for each word used in a grammatically correct sentence. Optionally, you could also give bonus points for the longest sentences. The team with the most points when all sentences have been read wins.

An additional element you could add (if you don't mind the classroom getting a little crazy) is hiding the papers inside balloons. The students then have to pop the

balloons first in order to get to the words. This is definitely a lot of fun with the right kids class!

Target Language

The Sentence Builder ESL activity is a fun warmer for any level, and it's a great way for students to practise syntax too. Just make sure the set of words is suitable for the level of your class. You can even create a word set suited to a particular grammar, and ask for sentences using only that structure.

You can also use the activity in a lower level class on [parts of speech](#), to review how each type of word is used in a sentence. Organise the words by type before distributing them, or get the students to do it before starting.

A very similar activity is [Sentence Scramble](#), in which the words belong to predefined sentences the students have to order correctly.