

eslactive

Timeline

Tags: [advanced](#), [beginner](#), [intermediate](#), [kids](#), [past perfect simple](#), [past simple](#), [warmer](#)

The Timeline ESL game is based on the card game of the same name, in which players try and put famous historical events in chronological order.

 2+  10-20 mins  Internet and Projector **or** Prepared Historical Events

Setup

If you have the Internet and a projector, the easiest way to play is as a class, using our [interactive Timeline game](#).

Otherwise, you will need to prepare forty to fifty famous historical events on paper, one for every four students. Each event is written on a separate piece of paper in the present simple. One side shows only the event, but the reverse shows the event and the date.

If playing the online game, divide the class into two to four teams.

If playing with papers, divide the students into groups of four. Each student in the group is an individual team. Give each group a set of events.

Game

1. Each team is dealt a random event.
2. The teams then take turns taking one new random event (event-only side up if playing on paper) and trying to place their events in chronological order. They must use the spoken target language to describe their move before they make it.
3. If the events are in the correct chronological order, the played event remains where it is. If not, the event is discarded. The team that makes a correct timeline of six events first is the winner.

Target Language

In the Timeline ESL game, the students must use the target language correctly, or their move is not valid. You can use this game to practise the [past simple](#) (beginner and low intermediate) or [past perfect simple](#) (intermediate and advanced), as a review warmer or part of the main class.

If practising the past simple, students must say their event in the past simple before playing it, along with that of another event for reference. For example, *I think the USA became independent after Columbus arrived in the Americas.*

If practising the past perfect, students say their event in the past perfect simple, plus one/two others in past simple/perfect for reference. For example, *I think the USA had become independent before the French Revolution happened, but Columbus had definitely arrived in the Americas earlier.*

The Timeline ESL game could also work well as a cross-curricular activity with school-age kids. The students would prepare their own sets of events from their history class before playing.