

Fall 2023 Roundtable

1) What's going well? What are students' favorite topics or activities?

- Burlington English online classes - great for improving reading and writing skills
 - Foreigner in New York is a story that has good, realistic, not-too-difficult dialogue
- www.ello.org for having students act-out dialogue (go through the dialogue script & discuss vocab, act it out, then take the comprehension quiz provided). Students like the relevant topics and useful model language
- Dictations as a warm-up - finding quotes and proverbs online (Pinterest), teacher dictates to students and then they discuss the meaning. [Here are other dictation-style activities to try](#)
- The newsletters for English language students - *Easy English News* and *News for You*. Great for expanding vocabulary.
- Student keeps a journal and each page has a question to answer
- <https://randomwordgenerator.com/picture.php> - this website generates random words and photographs. Tutor asks students to describe the photos, use the words in sentences, etc. Good for practicing vocab and using vocab that students already have
 - Random photographs are enjoyed by students from many different backgrounds
- Flashcards with idioms on them (like the game Password)
- PBS series called Roots = good at illustrating really fast English; helps advanced students get better at understanding fast English which is important for daily life
- Students write an essay each week on a topic of their choice. They read it out loud to practice pronunciation. Students write on the left side of the page and the tutor corrects it with them on the right side of the page.
- Encourage students to carry index cards with them so they can note down interactions they have throughout the week where they encountered challenges. Open the class by asking about these situations

2) How do you integrate current events into beginner ESL lessons?

Note - many tutors responded that they don't integrate current events, choosing instead to focus on personally relevant topics and practical conversation skills. For those that do, here are some ideas:

- goodnewsnetwork.org for human interest stories. You can use CHAT GPT to edit it to make it easier for students to read.
- www.breakingnewsenglish.com - generally has human interest stories. Also includes ability to adjust the level AND provides a lot of materials like worksheets, role plays, vocab lists, etc. Plus, it's free!
- Ask students to select topics based on their interests. Have students compare situations in the news to situations in their countries.

3) What else do you want to discuss?

In-Person v.s. Online v.s hybrid classroom formats

- The consensus here was choose ONE format - either online or in-person. With a hybrid situation, the prep is daunting and students who join online often get (unintentionally) left out of the class.

How to teach effectively on zoom/tips for online teaching:

- Padlet is a great tool to see what and how students are doing
- Sharing PDFs/scans and annotating them
- Screensharing the resources that we've already shared today (news articles, random picture generator, etc)
- Try scavenger hunts as a fun icebreaker with beginner students. Say "find something red" or "find something fluffy" or "find something that begins with the same letter as your name" to keep people engaged and active even when tutoring on Zoom
- Watch YouTube videos together (via Zoom screen share or by sharing links)

Resources for managing a multi-level classroom

- [Check out this playlist of webinars](#) from American English Live (plus a 30-minute video from English with Cambridge). Each webinar is about 1 hour long, but they are highly quality and highly focused on PRACTICAL advice and activities you can use immediately. Keep in mind the target audience is English as a Foreign Language teachers around the world - typically with large class sizes and low resources... our context is different, but most ideas will still work.
- We'll revisit this question in a future round table, so start thinking of ideas to share!