IDEAS FOR REVIEWING VOCABULARY

- working with a collection of recently taught vocabulary written on little cards – a mix of nouns, verbs and adjectives - students working in small groups can be given a set of the words in an envelope.

We looked at different sets of words in class but it's usually better if all groups have the same words.

1) 'Taboo' – of sorts

(All the words in the envelope)

Each student selects one word from the envelope in turn. They mustn't show it to the group and they mustn't say the word. They have to describe, explain, mime, give a gapfill of the word for the others to guess.

Then pass the envelope to the next person.

Variations on the above:

Guess the word

The old ones are the best. One student takes a pile of words. They have one minute to describe as many words as they can to the team, who guess what the words are. They take turns describing the words, and tally up who got the most points at the end of a few rounds.

Back to the board

The same as the envelope activity above but on a whole class level.

2) Do you remember…?

(All words face up on the desk.)

To start off, ask the students to separate the words into two lists – words they remember and words they don't. The task sounds simple, but it gets a lot of discussion going if they are working in groups, as they will share definitions and remind each other of the meanings.

3) Which topic?

(All words face up on the desk.)

(i) Next, ask students to organise the words by topic. Don't restrict them by giving particular topics, let them decide how they want to categorise the words. Afterwards, get students to rotate to another table, have a look at another team's words and see if they have organised them in different ways.

4) Which word type?

(All words face up on the desk.)

Similar to (3) above first part - Repeat the above, but get students to categorise the words by form (noun, verb, adjective, etc). Again, let them decide the categories. Don't worry if you've just got a load of nouns to revise – you can encourage creativity – 'words including a consonant cluster', 'words from the first half of the alphabet', etc. Make this competitive by adding points for the most interesting categories and they're bound to come up with something!

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5) Which stress pattern?

Ask students to group words by their word stress patterns – e.g. a two syllable word with stress on the first syllable **'breakfast** Oo or on the second syllable **re'duce** oO, or a three syllable word with stress on the second syllable **im'portant** oOo giving them a few prompts on the board if necessary. They could mark the stress pattern of their categories using Cuisenaire rods.

You could make this stage a little more specific, put one different stress pattern on each desk (using the rods), and asked students to find any of their words which match that stress pattern. (One long rod, one shorter one – for two syllable words with the stress on the first syllable)

*Similar to above (combining 3, 4 and 5)

Students could be asked to categorise words into three groups and they have to decide what the three groups should be.

The groups could be related to

meaning (words related to each different area of maths / science – eras in history)

parts of speech (nouns, verbs, adjectives)

pronunciation (words with silent letters - one syllable, two syllables, three syllables etc)

words with the stress on the first/second/third syllable etc

spelling (words which start with vowels, have double consonants/vowels etc).

Students could then rotate and see if they can guess what each other group's categories are. *One expert can stay with their words and be on hand to tell the rotating visitors if their guess was correct or not.

6) Odd one out

(All cards face down on the table)

Each student in turn takes three cards at random. They look at their cards and decide which one is the odd one out for them. They don't tell the group which word they have chosen or why.

Words could be odd because of meaning / spelling / part of speech / pronunciation

They show their three words to their group – and the others have to try to identify which is the odd one out

e.g. angle geometry square

Conversation could go -

A: which is the odd one out?

B: geometry

A: why? **(doesn't say – no you're wrong)**

B: because geometry is a subject in maths and the others are parts of geometry

A: Good answer – but not my answer

Student A should encourage the others to say which one they think is odd and give a reason before they say if they were right or wrong. They could keep the chosen word a secret for a while – and after a while say ok – my chosen word was *square* – and give them more time to try to guess why. This will get lots of language from the other students.

7) Make a sentence

(All words face up on the desk.)

In turn students should take 3 or 4 words and they have to put the words into one sentence. The other students decide if the sentence is correct – correctly phrased and the words used correctly (meaning).

This could be a competition and each student should keep the words from their sentence if the other students agree that the sentence is correct in a pile with them – and once all the words on the table have been used the students can count the words they have and a winner declared. (you would need to have a lot of words for this to last a while)

** **A variation on the above**

Including words in a sentence

Students take a word at random and try to include this in a sentence.

A dice could be used to make this simple activity more interesting. List numbers 1-6 on the board and give each number a form or structure you have taught (1 = question tags, 2 = passive voice, etc). Students select a word and roll the dice – their sentence must include both elements i.e. the word used correctly according to meaning in a sentence using the required tense / grammar form.

8) Lose your words

- (Words in a pile face down in the middle)

Have all the words in pile in the middle of the desk. Students take 6 each. The object of the game is to get rid of all your words. You do this by including the word in a conversation. Anyone on the table can talk, there is no set order, but you can't get rid of more than 2 words in a row. You must try to include the word in a relevant way, not just shout it out. Your group can overrule you if your sentence is completely disconnected.

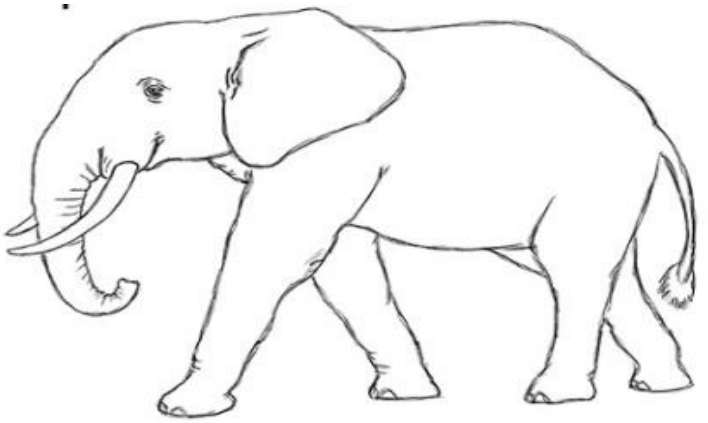
- ****A variation - Lose your words in a domino type activity –**

Each student will be given dealt 5 or 6 words. One word will be taken at random and placed face up on the table. The remaining cards are left in a pile – face down – on the table. The first student tries to connect one of the cards in their hand with the card on the table – and makes a sentence to show how the two words are connected

e.g. word on the table SQUARE - first student connects ANGLE following SQUARE and says "a square have four right angles" Next student can now connect before SQUARE or after ANGLE. Each student in turn tries to place a card next to one of the open cards – and if they can't

make a connection or if the other students don't accept a sentence they have to take a card from the face down pile.

9) The Elephant



(All words face up on the table)

Students are given an outline of an elephant (or any animal) and they are asked to write 5 of the words in a place on the elephant that they think is appropriate - they should do this individually

e.g. Rooms in the house vocab - Kitchen, stairs, hall, bedroom, bathroom

They might write kitchen by the elephant's mouth, stairs on its legs, hall on its trunk, bedroom on its back and bathroom – well you know where!!

The idea is that they can write them wherever they like because it makes sense to them – then after a while they could explain why they have written words where they did to their group.

The rationale is that this is a way to aid memory through associations – and the stranger/funnier the better. They might say they put stairs on the legs because the elephant uses its legs to go upstairs, hall on the trunk because the hall is long and narrow etc

Teachers could use a different animal for each topic and students would remember the 'monkey' words or the 'giraffe' words. This technique probably appeals to some people more than others. Some people may think it's a bonkers idea!!