Let it wash over you and see what sinks in…

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Learn some new expressions and idioms, talk about your objectives for these lessons, learn about how we acquire language. Comprehension activities. Discussion. Review superlatives and comparatives.

Activity One: **Ask and answer** with your teacher.



1. Do you feel relaxed about learning English?
2. Do you have opportunities outside of your lessons to practice your English?
3. How do you use English in your job or life?
4. Which situations do you the most hard in English?
5. What kind of vocabulary are you short of?

Activity Two: Superlatives and comparatives:

We usually add –er and –est to one syllable words to make comparatives and superlatives:

old older oldest

long longer longest

If an adjective ends in –e, we add –r or –st:

nice nicer nicest

large larger largest

If an adjective ends in a vowel and a consonant, we double the consonant:

big bigger biggest

fat fatter fattest

If an adjective ends in a consonant and –y, we change –y to –i and add –er or –est:

happy happier happiest

silly sillier silliest

We use more and most to make comparatives and superlatives for most two syllable adjectives and for all adjectives with three or more syllables:

careful more careful most careful
interesting more interesting most interesting

good better best

bad worse worst
far farther / further farthest / furthest

Fill the gaps in the text below with the correct comparatives and superlatives from the list below:

best, most, **best, easiest, hardest, better, nicest, more, happier, most**

The ..... way to learn a language is to be exposed to it as much as possible. The ..... way to do this is to watch movies in English for example. But the ..... effective way to learn is to practice talking and exchanging information. The ..... way to learn new words is to be open, to trust that your brain will do the ..... part, by recording those new words. The ..... and ..... relaxed you are, the ..... your learning experience will be. So the ..... interesting input, is the ..... lesson for you.

Activity Three: Idiomatic expressions and verbs.

Learning idiomatic expressions and verbs can help you to improve both your comprehension and your oral expression. It's also easy to remember expressions which are curious and easy to picture. Here are some examples with their meanings. You will find these used in the next activities. in this lesson. Read the expressions and their definitions to familiarize yourself with them. Which have you heard before and which are new to you?



- **Let it wash over you** - Don't resist something just let it happen and submerge you.
- **Let go** - Accept that you can't change something and stop thinking about it.
- **See what sinks in** - Wait and see what you absorb.
- **To be short of something** - to not have enough of something or to lack something.
- **All in all** - in conclusion the total effect is..
- **To filter out** - to remove something
- **Use your brain** - an expression to mean - think about something
- **Sit back and relax** - a common expression to mean - let things happen, enjoy.
- **Enjoy the ride** - a common expression used to mean - enjoy an experience
- **To re-phrase something** - to say something again in a different way
- **The icing on the cake** - an attractive addition, or the best part of something
- **By trial and error** - common expression to say that you learn through your mistakes and efforts
- **If at first you don't succeed, try, try and try again** - proverb about learning through mistakes
- **It's all about…** - common expression for summing up information
- **The hokey pokey** - A popular children's song 'you do the hokey pokey and turn around and that's what it's all about).
- **Food for thought** - expression referring to something thought provoking.

Activity Four: Use your brain! Read the text and answer the questions.

Scientists and language specialists* have proved through research that the best way to learn a new language is to practice having conversations, listening and reading in a situation where you understand the main message.

So if you understand the meaning then you are learning. You do not have to understand or translate each word in order to learn. You do not have to understand and study the grammar of each sentence in order to learn. You do not have to really do anything at all in order to learn. You just need to understand the general message, let it wash over you, and see what sinks in! *(* See Krashen's theory of comprehensible input).*

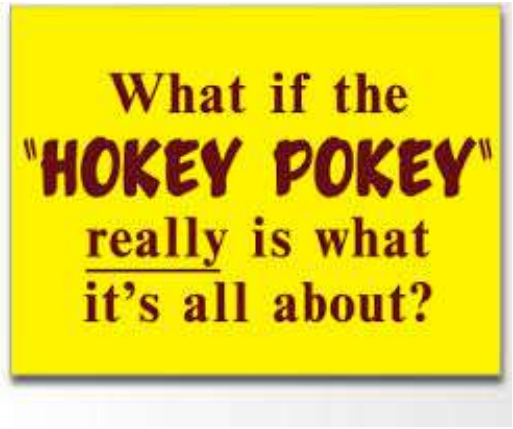
Little by little the new words you hear or read will be acquired. They will sink into your brain!

Furthermore, if you feel relaxed and happy in the situation where you are exposed to language, then you will learn more. If you are anxious or unconfident, you will learn less. If you forget that you are conversing in a foreign language, because you just 'let go' and get interested in the subject, then you will really learn the most! With the 'affective filter theory'* specialists show that anxiety actually blocks or filters out, the new language so that it cannot be acquired by the brain.

So all in all, you need to focus on the message in a relaxed way and enjoy the experience. As Stephen Krashen said “We all acquire language in the same way… when we understand messages.” So sit back, relax and enjoy the ride!

In another hypothesis *researchers found that interaction was the best way to optimise input. They found that face to face communication contributes to language development (S*ee *Michael Long’s interaction hypothesis*) and that the most new language is learned when learners have to ‘negotiate for meaning’. When the learners have to ask someone to repeat or to re-phrase, or when they don’t understand and have to paraphrase or ask for clarification, they learn the most. When their interlocutor repeats things, or says them more slowly, learners have more time to process the information. This is why it’s easier for them to learn new words when ‘negotiating for meaning’. So, if don’t be afraid to ask someone for clarification! It’s a great way to learn.

So, if you enjoy experiences where you are using English, and you don’t hesitate to ask for clarification, you already have a better chance of learning quickly. The icing on the cake is to practice producing English language. To try and make yourself understood. Producing language is part of the process of second language learning. (*See *Merrill Swain’s output hypothesis.*) According to the output hypothesis, the moment a learner notices that they are short of a word or expression is very important. When the learner then tests a word, they will learn by ‘trial and error’. This trying out of words is one of the best ways of internalizing and processing linguistic knowledge. There is a well-known English proverb which says: If at first you don't succeed,try, try, try again.’ So in fact making mistakes is an excellent way of learning.



Improving your English is all about input, output and interaction. It’s the hokey pokey of language learning!

Comprehension Questions:

1. Do you have to study grammar in order to improve your English?
2. Why do you have to be relaxed in order to optimise your learning?
3. What does the word 'furthermore' mean?
4. What does it mean when a learner has to 'negotiate for meaning'?
5. Is it good to ask for clarification?
6. Is it good to make mistakes?

Activity Five: Listen to the song and watch the video. The images on the video will help you to understand the song. Then answer the questions.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_XBT3CXi6e0 YouTube
Jimmy Buffett's "What if the Hokey-Pokey is All It Really Is About?" in pictures.

Comprehension Questions

1. What did Jimmy hear on the news?
2. What does he call the earth?
3. Who does he think is ignorant?
4. What do you use to ‘figure it out’?
5. What could be a cosmic joke?
6. What can get as messy as a day old sticky bun?
7. What is a sticky bun?
8. What kind of tea does Jimmy drink?
9. What pays Jimmy’s bills?
10. What does he want in his soup?

