

ESL Icebreaker: Human Spelling

Human Spelling is a fun icebreaker activity that is a great class introduction activity for young learners, teens and even adults. In this activity, students are put into teams and given a clue. First they must work out what word the clue is and then spell the word using only their bodies. This activity is great for new groups or groups who have been together previously.

Activity time: 2 minutes per word

Materials required: Clues and some space

Skills Practiced: Reading, spelling and team building.

Level: All levels young learners 10+

Method

1. Divide your class into small groups.
2. The teacher then gives each group a crossword style clue to a target word. For example for young learners a clue for 'elephant' would be '*Animal with a trunk*'. For higher level learners a more complicated clue could be used. For example, '*A tusked mammal*'.
3. After the groups have figured out the clue they must spell out the word using their bodies to create the letters. This can be done standing or lying down.
4. Every member of the team must be used to create the word.
5. The first team to correctly spell the word using their bodies is the winner and gets a point.
6. See below for a list of clues from different categories.

7. Enjoy and have fun.

Note: The teacher needs to know the numbers of people in order to decide on the words. The number of letters in a word doesn't have to match the number of people in a group.

Possible clues and words

Clue	Word	Difficulty
Another word for exam.	Test	Easy
I _____ swimming.	Love	Easy
A big fruit you eat during the summer?	Watermelon	Easy
The month at the end of the summer.	August	Easy
Not at all difficulty.	Easy	Easy
I go ___ school.	To	Easy
Who teaches the class?	Teacher	Easy
Pencil and _____.	Rubber	Easy
A fruit and a colour.	Orange	Easy
Large African animal.	Elephant	Easy
An extremely tall person.	Giant	Moderate
Enjoyment or amusing.	Fun	Difficult
Not in need of a diet.	Slim	Moderate