

Adventure playgrounds

Topic

Playgrounds, free-time activities

Learning outcomes

All learners will:

- use vocabulary related to adventure playgrounds (equipment and activities)
- say and write sentences saying what they like doing / would like to do
- collaborate with others to design an adventure playground
- give a presentation about an adventure playground.

Some learners will:

- explain what makes a playground great and use the criteria for evaluation.

Age and level

9–12 (A1/A2)

Time

80–90 minutes (or two shorter lessons)

Materials

- Materials for making a poster: chart paper, coloured markers/crayons
- (Optional) A photograph of an adventure playground and photographs of adventure playground equipment

Introduction

In this lesson, learners explore the topic of adventure playgrounds. They review and learn vocabulary related to adventure playgrounds before talking about the activities they like doing or would like to do. Then, they discuss what makes an adventure playground great and create criteria for designing – and potentially evaluating – a playground. Finally, they present their designs.

Procedure

Vocabulary: adventure playground equipment (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write 'adventure playground' on the board. Explain or ask learners to say what it is (you/they can use first language). If possible, show a photograph of an adventure playground (you can find one online). • Ask learners to say what you might find in an adventure playground. If necessary, they can use first language, and you can give the names in English. Alternatively, show pictures of typical adventure playground equipment (or draw it if you feel confident – learners can guess!). • Write the names of the equipment in the middle of the board. Choose words according to the level of your learners. Review familiar words (e.g. <i>swing</i>) and introduce some new words (e.g. <i>zip line</i>). • Check that learners understand the meaning of any new words (e.g. by inviting them to draw the equipment on the board). Tell them to say any new words and check pronunciation. <p>Suggested vocabulary: <i>swing, slide, climbing frame/tower/wall, rope swing/ladder/bridge, monkey bars, zip line, obstacle course, treehouse, sandpit, platform, trampoline, beam/log, tunnel, pole, net, tyre</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell learners to choose their favourite piece of equipment from the words on the board. Read out the words one by one and ask learners to raise their hands when you say their favourite. Which is most popular? <p>Note: An adventure playground is an outdoor play area. It can have fixed equipment (such as slides, rope, ladders, etc); it may have structures based on a theme (e.g. a wooden castle) for imaginative and creative play; or it may have objects for children to create or change their environment (e.g. wood, tyres, etc.).</p>
Vocabulary: playground activities (10 minutes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You should have a list of adventure playground equipment in the middle of the board. • Now ask learners to say what kinds of activities children can do at an adventure playground. If necessary, give some ideas first. • Write the activities around the list of equipment. You can review words and introduce new words according to the level of your learners. You can also focus on prepositions e.g. <i>up, down, through, on</i>. • Again, check that learners understand the words (e.g. by asking them to mime the activities). Tell them to say new words, and check pronunciation.

	<p>Suggested vocabulary: <i>going on the swings, going down the slide, climbing (up a ladder), swinging (from a rope/monkey bar), balancing, bouncing, jumping, crawling (through a tunnel)</i></p> <p>Note: If it's difficult to leave vocabulary on the board, learners can note new words in their notebooks before moving on to the next stage.</p>
<p>Personalisation (15 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask some learners: <i>What do you like doing at an adventure playground?</i> Or if they've never been to an adventure playground, ask: <i>What would you like to do at an adventure playground?</i> • After asking a few learners, ask the class to say what question(s) you asked. Write them on the board. If necessary, get learners to practise saying them. Check pronunciation. • Now ask learners to say how their classmates answered. Write sentences on the board, for example: <i>Rita likes <u>climbing</u> the rope ladders.</i> <i>Ajay would like <u>to go</u> on the zip line.</i> • If necessary, underline the verbs used in the sentences and explain that we use <i>to go / climb</i> etc after <i>would like</i> and we usually use the <i>-ing</i> form of the verb after <i>like</i> (although it is possible to use <i>to go</i> etc. after <i>like</i>.) • Put learners into small groups. In their groups, they take turns to ask each other the questions. • Give them a time limit to write sentences about other group members. Walk around as learners write and help if necessary. Learners can write more or fewer sentences depending on level. • Ask some groups to read out a sentence or two. Correct any problems with the use of the verbs.
<p>Discussion: What makes a great adventure playground? (10–15 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask learners to say what makes a great adventure playground. They can do this as a whole class or in small groups. If they work in groups, give them a few minutes, then invite them to share their ideas with the class. • If you have higher-level learners, you might like to ask them to say/write sentences using <i>must/should</i>. Explain that they should use an infinitive verb after these words, e.g. <i>be, have</i>, etc. <p>Suggestions:</p>

	<p><i>An adventure playground should be for everyone. It should have things for younger and older children (and children with disabilities).</i></p> <p><i>It must be safe. It should be fun.</i></p> <p><i>It should have places for all kinds of weather – rain and hot sunshine.</i></p> <p><i>It should have different kinds of things to do, e.g. towers/quiet areas.</i></p> <p><i>It should have places to rest.</i></p> <p>Note: Depending on the level of your learners, they may need to use their first language for this activity. However, encourage them to use English as much as possible, or you can use simple English to rephrase their ideas.</p> <p>If you are using this plan over two lessons, lesson 1 can end here.</p>
<p>Groupwork: design an adventure playground (25 minutes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain that learners will work together to design an adventure playground. It can be for their school or their community. • Explain that some adventure playgrounds are themed, and the learners' playground could also have a theme. Ask the class to suggest some fun themes, e.g. forest adventure, castle and kingdom, pirate ship, space exploration, treasure island, underwater world, dinosaur land, etc. • Give instructions to the class. They will work in groups to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ decide the theme of their playground (if any) ○ choose the equipment ○ think about what makes a playground great (i.e. Is it safe? Is it for everyone? Etc.) ○ make a quick sketch of the playground and areas. • Put learners into small groups. Give groups ten minutes to think of ideas and make notes/a sketch. • When they're ready, hand out materials for making a poster. Now give them a time limit (e.g. 15 minutes) to draw their adventure playground. They should label the equipment/areas; they should prepare to say what makes their playground great. Some learners could write sentences. Write some examples on the board to support them, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Our playground has (a tower / a sandpit for younger children / a climbing wall because some children like climbing).</i> ○ <i>Children can (bounce on the trampoline).</i> ○ <i>It's (safe/fun/great for everyone) because...</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk around and help groups as they work. Ask them to say what makes their adventure playground great. They can refer to examples on the board. • Explain that groups must be prepared to present their playground. They will have to describe it and say what's great about it. <p>Tip: It may be a good idea for learners to assign roles in their groups, e.g. a leader, a writer, an artist ,etc. Designs can be more/less complex depending on the level of the groups.</p>
Presentations and feedback (15 mins)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the posters are ready, groups present them. If you have a smaller class, each group can present their poster to the whole class. If you have a larger class, put groups together to present their posters to each other. Then choose one or two groups to present to the whole class at the end. • As learners listen, they should think about what makes this a good adventure playground. <i>Is it for everyone? Is it safe? Is it fun? Is it OK for different kinds of weather? Are there different things to do? Are there places to rest and be quiet?</i> If necessary, you could write these questions on the board for learners to think about. • After the presentations, ask learners to say which adventure playground they'd like to go to and why. (They could use first language if necessary.) • You could also use this as an opportunity to give feedback to learners regarding language and presentation skills. Say what learners did well, and see if they can correct some examples of typical language mistakes.
Follow-up / Homework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learners write sentences describing their adventure playground and saying what makes it great. Higher-level learners could create a flyer advertising their playground.

Contributed by

Kim Ashmore