

Pedagogical sciences



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USING ONLINE TOOLS AND PLATFORMS FOR LEARNING

The teachers are in constant search of new tools and techniques to upgrade their lessons, but sometimes it seems that you've already tried everything, lessons are becoming predictable and the students are not as excited to play online games which used to be their favorite ones. Unfortunately, even such universal and life-changing for many teacher's tools as Kahoot, Quizlet and Quizizz can become less exciting if used constantly. In this article, we'll explore various online tools and useful websites for teachers, which will help you bring more variety to your classroom (either online or offline).

Research by Michael Sailer and team shows that gamification can be a powerful solution to address motivational problems within learning or working contexts, as long as they are well designed and are built upon well-established implementation model¹. G. Surendeleg added that key advantages of gamification is the low cost of development and the possibility of making learning content more delicious or interesting using game elements².

There are more benefits of the usage of online tools in our lessons than just making the learning more fun and increasing students' motivation. Some of them are:

- 1 3 Sailer M, Hense JU, Mayr SK, Mandl H. How gamification motivates: An experimental study of the effects of specific game design elements on psychological need satisfaction. *Comput Human Behav* 2017;69:371–80. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2016.12.033.
- 2 Surendeleg G, Murwa V, Yun H-K, Kim YS. The role of gamification in education—a literature review. *Contemp Eng Sci* 2014;7:1609–16. doi:10.12988/ces.2014.411217.

- More memorable and effective learning. Our lesson can be more effective if we're able to purposefully choose and use online tools and platforms according to the preferences of the students, the aims of the lesson and the desired result. This will help us address the needs of our students better.
- Emotional component. Games and other online tools help add the emotional component to our lessons, which helps students build associations with the topic learnt and make the information more memorable.
- Soft skills development. Not only can online tools help our students achieve better academic results, but also develop other skills like time-management (e.g. timely tasks which require students to complete them within a particular time limit or games where giving answers faster than the opponents); reativity (e.g. tasks when students need to create a funny story using some random prompts given); problem-solving (e.g. online quests or escape games which require students to make decision; investigation games).

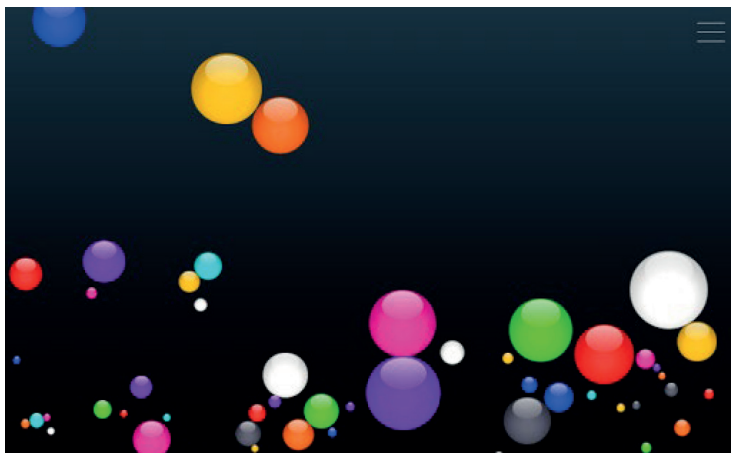
Not only students benefit when we use various and suitable online tools in the lessons. The benefits for teachers are less obvious, so let's have a look at some of them:

- Automatised / instant feedback. A lot of online tools check answers automatically, as well as allow you to collect and save students' results, which can make evaluation faster and easier, keep track of students' progress in some topics or find out which aspects the students are still struggling with. Online games and worksheets are also a great opportunity to instantly see how successful the students are learning a particular topic and give feedback to help students improve their performance in the future.
- It saves your time. If you know and can use various online tools, it will be easier and faster for you to adjust any task for the online format, make your lessons more various and design tasks in the most effective for your students way.
- Classroom management. There are online tools which will help you organise work in your classroom, manage discipline and increase students' motivation, which leads to less stressful and more rewarding lessons.

Let's take a closer look at the classroom management tools.

Bouncy bools

A free classroom noise level meter, monitor and management tool. Perfect if your school kids are too noisy. A free classroom noise level meter, monitor and management tool. Perfect if your school kids are too noisy! Bouncing balls react to sounds from the microphone.



Make all kinds of bouncy balls react to sounds from your microphone. A great sound/noise monitor for kids and a fun way to visualize music³.

If your students tend to be noisy, making it challenging for you to maintain an effective learning environment, you will find Bouncy Balls handy. This free tool offers a classroom noise level meter and management tool – just go to the website and click ‘Begin Bouncing’, the balls will go up from the bottom to the top of your screen to indicate that students are being noisy. When the noise level is too high, it will give a signal. You can regulate the sensitivity, the noise alert signal and the design of the balls.

ClassroomZen

The COVID-19 pandemic can be blamed for plenty of things the past четыре years, but it has also sparked creativity in ways not thought of before. Empower teachers with better classroom management tools. A great free to use tool to help you improve classroom management, reduce the stress level in the classroom and find interesting ideas for warmers, to encourage a calm and peaceful classroom environment for you and your students. A zen classroom boosts students’ development, work habits, and academic performance by reinforcing core social-emotional competencies such as decision-making, empathy, and self-management⁴. There are several sections on the website:

- Noise management – it encourages students to be quiet and let their virtual pal relax. When it gets noisy, it asks to be quiet. There is also a stopwatch which is automatically activated when there is no noise, so your students will be able to set new records being quiet for a longer time. You can regulate the sensitivity of the microphone.

3 <https://bouncyballs.org/>

4 <https://classroomzen.com/>

- Breathing Exercises – here you'll find some breathing techniques and guidance to complete very simple breathing exercises with your students to reduce stress level, set the mood for the day and calm down.
- Brain Breaks – there are two choice games (True / False; Would you rather ...?) to raise your students' interest and engage in discussions. Students will need to choose one answer option and vote for it by applauding.
- Typing Zen – allows students to practice typing skills by typing positive and motivating affirmations.

Online games

Genially

On this [website](https://genial.ly/es/), you can create interactive tasks and games to practise any topic you're learning with your students. Some game options available are: Tic Tac Toe, Board games, Quizzes, Hangman, Escape games. All these formats and many other ones can be used for free. You can create your own games, or find and edit some ready-made games, which you will find in the section Inspiration on the website. You can choose and edit the design and content of your games to make them suitable and interesting for your students.

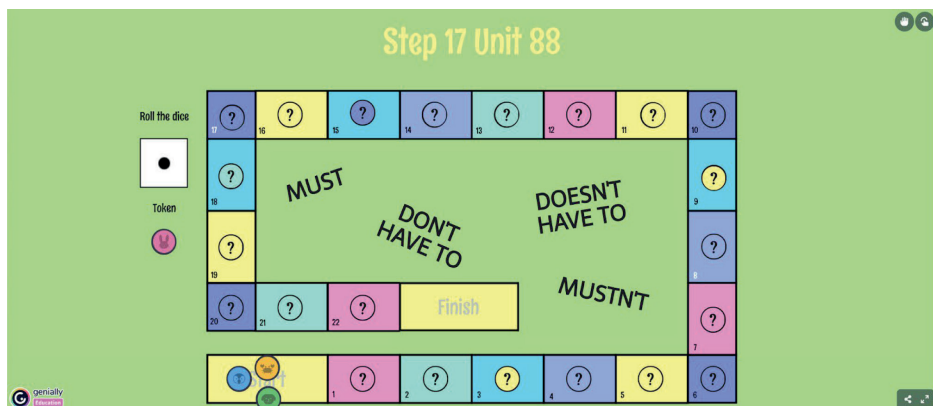


Some examples of great escape games created with Genially⁵:

- Time machine – Past Simple
- Quest – Past Modals
- Horror escape game – Past Simple

You can organize all your learning on one slide that looks neat and is extremely attractive. You only need to insert your content in the form of a pop-up window using the Visual Thinking Checklist template.

5 <https://genial.ly/es/>



Games of this format can be used to practise any language systems (grammar, vocabulary, functional language) or even skills like reading and listening.

JeopardyLabs

Tenses	Future Tense	Past Tense	Present Tense	All the Tenses
100	100	100	100	100
200	200	200	200	200
300	300	300	300	300
400	400	400	400	400
500	500	500	500	500

Team 1
0
+ -

Team 2
0
+ -

Team 3
0
+ -

Create jeopardy games with any content for free on this website, or find and use games created by other teachers. Each game contains several categories with tasks of different difficulty levels. Students can play either individually, or in teams. They take turns to choose the category and the level of difficulty. If they complete the task correctly, they win points. The score is kept and calculated online⁶.

Interactive online worksheets and tasks.

Kami

Kami is an interactive learning platform empowering students and enhancing the way teachers teach, feedback, and assess. Kami is your go-to PDF annota-

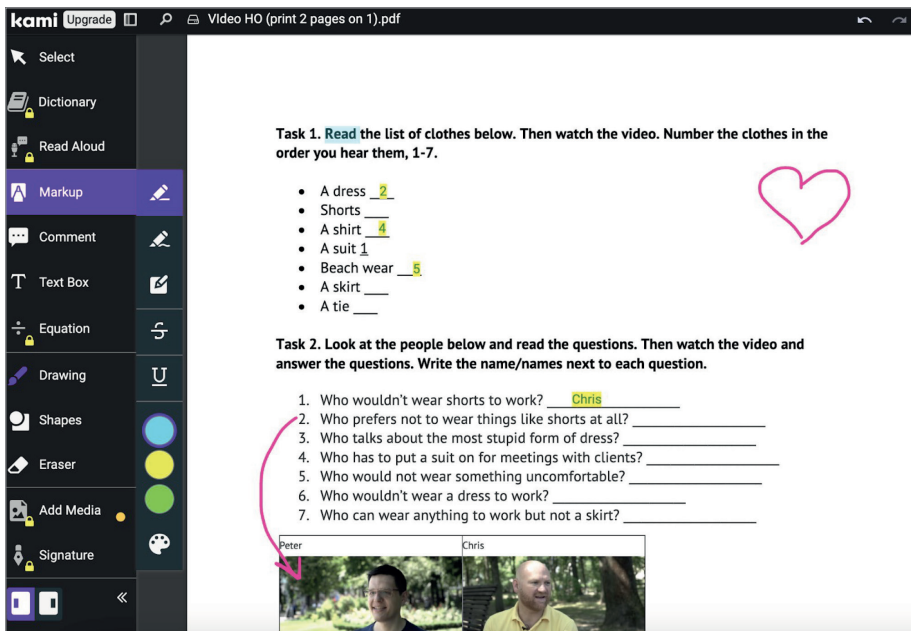
⁶ <https://jeopardylabs.com/>

tor and so much more. Accessible tools keep students engaged, and streamlined instruction and assessment save teachers time. What's more, Kami's seamless integration with OneDrive and Microsoft Teams helps simplify workflows and ensure instant access for all.

Kami is one of the fastest and easiest ways to convert any PDF file into an interactive online worksheet. It's highly useful for teachers who work online and don't want to spend a lot of time creating interactive tasks for the lessons. What you need to do it basically to upload a PDF worksheet you want to use. It's possible to edit and complete tasks in such worksheets by typing, drawing, highlighting, adding comments and shapes.

As part of the Services Kami make available resources, such as templates, activities and other content, for use by teachers ("Templates"). If you are a teacher you may access and download Templates from website and use Templates for educational purposes (including sharing them on social media).

Checking student works sent by students to GoogleClassroom becomes especially active during the distance learning period. This question is very important for mathematics teachers. There are not enough opportunities for Gul class to correct students' mistakes. So we recommend using the Kami app.



This tool can be used for free, but in this case you won't be able to see your students' answers for individual tasks, but you can ask them to send a screenshot to you for checking.

TalkEn.Cloud

This platform allows teachers to create their own interactive online worksheets for free. On the website you can find a detailed video instructions guide as well as useful tips to optimise your work with the platform. There are various task formats available – multiple choice, matching, filling in the gaps, unscrambling, etc. The answers are checked automatically. One worksheet can contain several sections with different format tasks. It's also possible to embed links to other websites and interactive tasks, which can be integrated to your worksheet.

This platform is also a training center for teachers.

- Conducting webinars and advanced training courses for English language teachers;
- Conducting trainings at the individual request of clients;
- Certificates on advanced training of participants in educational events;
- Providing methodical consultations;
- Other events for educators.

Task 2

Complete the sentences with the words.

tall brave strong smart fast

1. My dog is very **strong**. It can run from one part of my flat to another one in 5 seconds!

2. My friend really **brave** and knows a lot of interesting facts.

3. My sister is **tall**. I ask her to help, when I can't take a book from the highest shelf.

4. I am **fast**. I am not afraid of anything!

5. Max is **smart** because he does sport every day.

Check Show answers Reset

Other useful websites for teachers and students

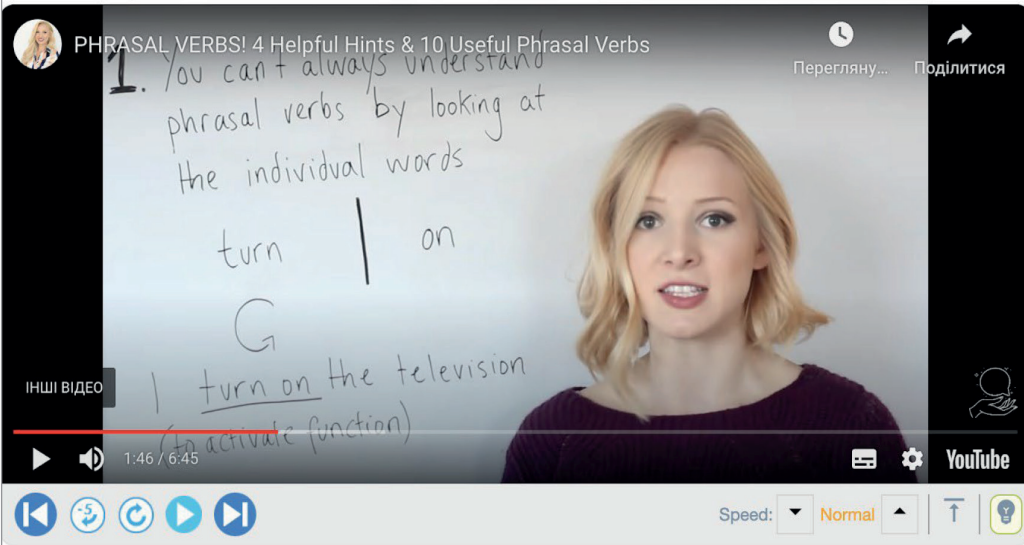
YouGlish

It's a great website to practise pronunciation by listening to native speakers. You can search for any word or phrase you want your students to hear in a context and you will be offered a wide range of videos, which contain this word / phrase. The subtitles are also given, so your students will be able to see the sentence as well. You can choose what pronunciation you want to listen to – United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, Ireland, Scotland, New Zealand. The website is free to use, no registration is required.

Use YouTube to improve your English pronunciation. With more than 100M tracks, YouGlish gives you fast, unbiased answers about how English is spoken by real people and in context.

Designed for learners of all levels, YouGlish gives you fast, unbiased answers about how languages are spoken by real people and in context. Simply type in the word or phrase you want to hear pronounced, and Youglish will instantly display a list of YouTube tracks featuring that word or phrase being used in context by native speakers. You can then listen to the pronunciation and practice repeating it until you get it right⁷.

How to pronounce **mustn't** in British English (5 out of 482):

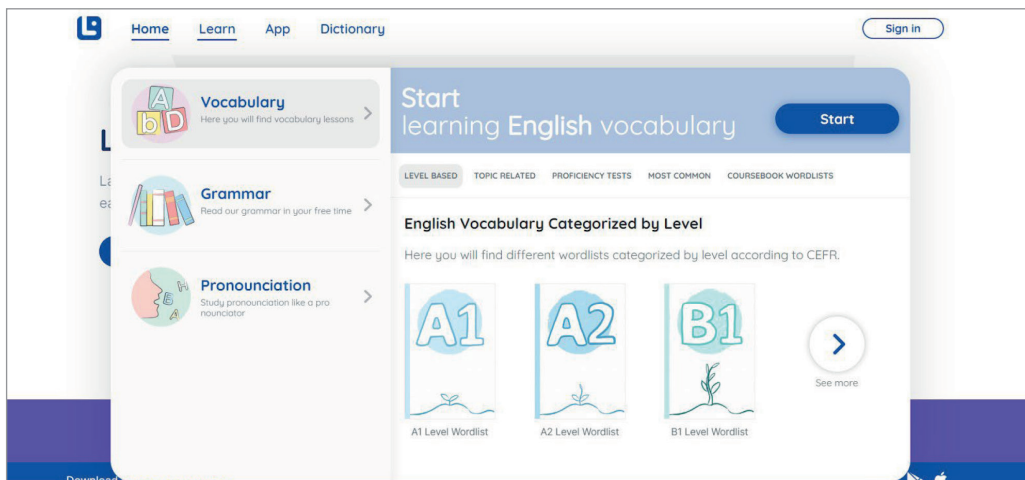


You **mustn't** listen word by word

LanGeek

This platform helps enhance grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation skills. You can find rules with examples for various grammar topics, detailed information on important pronunciation aspects and wordlists on different vocabulary topics for students of any level. You can also use ready-made flashcards for the words you want to introduce to your students.

⁷ https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.app.youglish&hl=en_IN&gl=US&pli=1

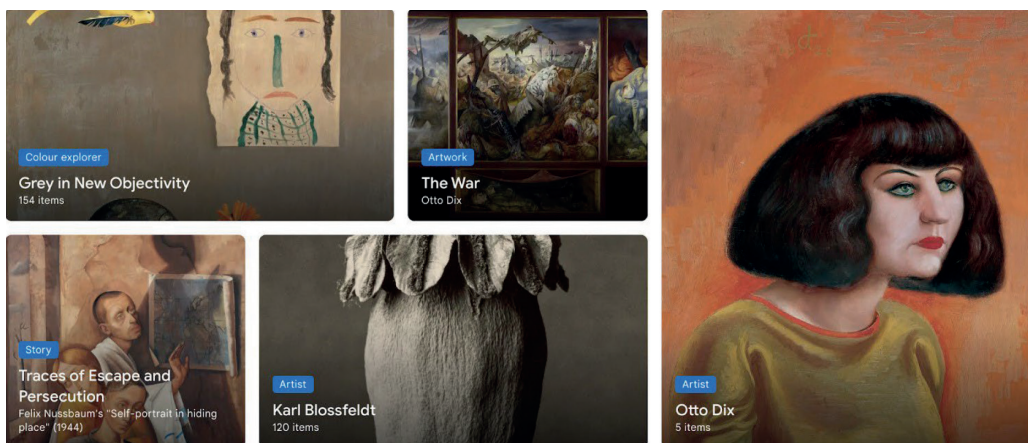


Google arts and culture

Are you curious about what Van Gogh's *Starry Night* looks like up close? Have you ever toured the ancient Maya temples or met the inspirational figures of Black history? Do you want to learn about Japan's unique food culture or incredible Indian railways?

With the help of this platform, your students can explore art and culture of different countries and time periods, view high-resolution images of artworks and read more about them. It offers virtual tours around world renowned museums and exhibitions. There are also engaging and interesting quizzes to raise your students' interest to art. You can also find high resolution street views and 360° videos.

English conversation practice is the most powerful method you can use to understand the language. It helps you get the speaking practice you need



as well as improve your listening skills. Surround yourself with like-minded people who want to practice speaking English together through activities like playing games, having a meal, or just chatting. Use Google and social media to find speaking clubs in your city or groups that focus on your areas of interest (such as business English)⁸.

Need help finding someone to regularly speak English to? No problem! You can always find a native speaker to chat with on a language exchange app. The development of technologies allows you to have a conversation with someone even if they're hundreds of miles away. Just install an app, choose the preferred speaking partner, and start chatting using audio messages.

Over the past few years, virtual learning tools have transformed the way educators teach. Not only do these tools simplify lesson plan creation, they also facilitate communication and social interaction between your students.

Distance learning technology continues to grow at a rapid rate and helps teachers like you teach online effectively. Some tools make it easy for you and your students to stay connected, create interactive lessons and build secure campuses.

No matter what you're teaching, there are multiple tools to suit your individual needs.

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8 <https://artsandculture.google.com/>