

Activity Type

Reading, writing, listening and speaking activity, pairwork

Language Focus

Reading comprehension
Grammar and spelling

Aim

To dictate a text to a partner and then to answer questions based on the text.

Preparation

Make a copy of the target text. Also, prepare some questions for the students to answer based on the text.

Level

Any

Time

20 minutes

Introduction

Here is one of the most popular types of ESL dictation.

Procedure

Stick a text on a wall outside the classroom.

Divide the students into pairs.

One student is the 'reader' and the other is the 'writer'.

The readers run to the text, read a sentence or two, remember it, run back and tell their writer.

The writer listens and writes down what the reader says.

Halfway through have the students swap roles.

While the students are doing the dictation, write some questions based on the text on the board.

When a pair has completed the text, check for any spelling or grammar mistakes.

If the text is correct, have the pair sit down and answer the questions about the text.

If the text is wrong, students carry on with the dictation.

Afterwards, review the text and answers to the questions with the class.