Say my name

Introduction

In this activity, students share the origins of their names and what their name means to them. This is a nice activity to get students sharing in a personal way and to help break the ice between them.

Webinar time reference: 11:30 – 15:46

Level: A2+ any age

Time: 15 – 20 minutes, depending on the size of the class.

Aim: To break the ice and encourage students to say each other’s names and what the meaning behind the name is.

Preparation:

- Think about your own name, what it means, your attitude to it and where/who it comes from.

Procedure

- Tell the students that they are going to find out about each other’s names and the origin of their names.

This activity draws on materials and ideas presented by Paloma Varela in her presentation ‘Virtual exchange: Internationalising the ELT classroom.’
Start by telling the students your own name. Tell them what your name means and where it comes from, then tell the students how you feel about your name. Lastly, model the pronunciation of your name and see if the students can say your name.

Next, get the students into groups and ask them to share the same information about their own names.

Change the groupings of the students so that they get to interact with as many different people as possible.

When you have finished, you could invite students to introduce people they met to the rest of the class and tell them about their name.

Additional resources

The First Class

This article from Jo Budden introduced a range of activities and techniques for helping break the ice in the first lesson with new students.

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/inside-lives

All about me

With very young learners, much of what they do in the classroom revolves around them. Before school, they are often the centre of ‘their’ universe, so starting school can sometimes be a bit of a shock. This article looks at ways to deal with this problem.

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/all-about-me

What’s your name?

This lesson is for teenagers or young adults with a language level of A2-B2 and focuses on developing listening skills based around the topic of ‘names’.

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/whats-your-name

Mingling: true or false?

This is a simple mingling activity that can be used with low level groups to provide practice in asking and answering questions.

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/mingling-true-or-false
Put yourself in the picture

This is a speaking task that encourages students to empathise with other people and try to understand them better. The activity uses a number of visuals of migrants, and the students have to imagine they are the person in the picture.

https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/put-yourself-picture