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Title: English-4Kids (www.English-4kids.com)

Author: Futonge N. Kisito © COPYRIGHT 2006

Minimum System Requirements: PC/Mac with Internet Access, Adobe Reader, and Microsoft PowerPoint operating systems.

Language: English

Target Audience: ESL teachers and students

Cost: Free

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Nowadays there are many resources available to ESL teachers to improve English language learning in the classroom. A great many of these resources come in the form of books, computer software, videos, as well as the Internet. It is therefore paramount that teachers are aware of the materials available to them should they wish to stay abreast of the latest teaching methods, strategies, and techniques of second language teaching and learning.

English-4Kids is a web site that can be used in the ESL classroom at all levels of proficiency. Site is designed for teachers to enhance their lessons by providing worksheets, flashcards, and games through the use of digital technology while encouraging student interaction. While some ESL teachers may find it difficult to provide activities that engage students of different levels (as student proficiency levels can range from beginning to advanced), nonetheless, this particular website includes activities for both beginning and intermediate proficiency levels and captures a wide assortment of learning styles exhibited by ESL students today. Not only is the site a great resource for materials for the ESL teacher, but the site also helps students explore and engage in interactive videos, quizzes, and games appropriate for their level and subject area.

Futonge Nzembayie Kisito is the designer and author of the website *English-4Kids*. He has been teaching English in China for the past four years and his style of teaching adapts with the learning styles of his students. This is clearly evident in the variety of activities found on this website allowing ESL teachers to be able to adopt different materials such as worksheets, flashcards, interactive games, and videos into their classrooms to create a meaningful second language learning environment for their students.

The goal of enhancing students' teaching and learning experiences can amply be met through the explicit use of educational interactive games, videos, and activities, thereby offering students the opportunity to learn English in a productive yet creative way. Not surprisingly, the website invites students who exhibit different intelligences to take part in meaningful second language learning experiences. By extension, *English-4Kids* is not meant to be used as a teaching

method, but rather as a tool for teachers to differentiate their instruction by employing the variety of activities found on the website.

The author's view on second language acquisition is quite apparent through the activities that are found on this website. Many of the activities involve students working together to achieve a particular goal such as winning the most points in a trivial game. Students learning a second language are exposed to many new emotions and difficulties. Having student-to-student interaction such as cooperative learning, pair work, and teamwork can lower students' affective filter while learning a second language. When rewarded with praise, a student's self esteem can be heightened, lowering significantly the stress and anxiety that can be felt when learning a second language.

English-4Kids respects all student learning styles and demonstrates use of the four modalities necessary to learning a second language. After reviewing some of the material provided by this website, it appears that it tries to equally balance the practice of the four modalities. For example, there are PowerPoint slide shows that prompt students to practice speaking with one another or answer a question. Use of the interactive videos forces students to carefully listen to the content of what is being shown. The use of a visual picture helps fill in any open gaps of misunderstanding and embedded worksheets provide students ample opportunity to practice purposeful writing.

Similarly, lessons are designed for beginning and intermediate levels grades one through six, and lesson plans are further divided into three courses, each course containing approximately ten lessons ranging from the beginning stages of greetings and salutations to the more intermediate stages of describing people and things. In turn, each lesson contains a link to obtain worksheets, flashcards, and games that can be used for that specific topic. It is worth noting here that teachers do not have to follow the lessons provided on the website, but rather obtain ideas and materials to create their own lessons.

Although this website has a lot of material for teacher use, students will be able to navigate this site with ease using the ESL Kids Lab link. This link permits students to watch videos about a subject area as well as print off flashcards that may be useful to them. In the end, navigating this site is relatively easy once you have visited it a few times. Downloading PDF formats, as well as the blank game templates, is equally very user friendly.

In short, *English-4Kids* is a well organized and informative web site that should prove useful in an ESL teacher's classroom. Along with many resources available for ESL teachers, this website is a valuable tool that I would favorably recommend to ESL teachers to use to enhance lessons as well as promote student-centered learning.

Kelly J. Lisowski is a Spanish teacher at Frontier Middle School in Hamburg, NY. She completed her undergraduate work at the State University of New York at Fredonia and received a degree in Spanish Secondary-Education. She is currently pursuing her Master's degree in TESOL at SUNY Fredonia. She has presented at the Western New York Foreign Language Educator's Council (WNYFLEC) conference in February of 2010 where she spoke about the benefits of implementing a 'Virtual Study Abroad' activity in the classroom to create an authentic and meaningful experience of learning a language and a culture simultaneously.

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