

Experimenting with English: Ways of using English outside the classroom

Reading:

What?	When?	Comments
Read a text <i>without</i> using a dictionary <i>at all</i>. (Try to find a text that is easy enough for you to do this comfortably...) • It is good to read texts, which you find easy enough to read without using a dictionary – this helps you to consolidate what you know. • Another way to make it easier is to read something that you have already read in Italian.		
Read different types of texts: • Newspaper • Magazine • Poem • Short story • Novel • Non-fiction e.g. autobiography Make a note of the similarities and differences you find in the structure, content and language.		
Make a dish using a recipe written in English. (Try this site: http://www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/)		

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Make a mind-map of what you read: Link new vocabulary with characters/people, situations etc.		
Tell your classmates about what you are reading: You can do this on the blog as well as during the in-class discussions.		
Share some of the new vocabulary you learn through reading on the blog.		
Follow an English newspaper/broadcasting company page on Facebook. (E.g. https://www.facebook.com/BBCMAGazine?fref=ts or https://www.facebook.com/TheIndependentOnline?fref=ts Try and click on a link to an article and have a read every day – or as near every day as you can manage!		
Read a short text, or short extract from a longer text, for meaning and then read it again, focusing on a single part of language e.g. prepositions. Make notes about what you notice regarding how they are used.		
(Your ideas)		

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Listening:

What?	When?	Comments
Listen to a radio station at least three times a week for one month. (E.g. http://www.listenlive.eu/uk.html)		
Use www.lyricstraining.com to see how well you know your favourite songs!		
Listen to a podcast regularly (e.g. http://learningenglish.voanews.com/podcast/0.html or http://www.bbc.co.uk/podcasts/worldservice .) To learn more about podcasts and for help in using them: http://independentenglish.wordpress.com/2012/02/14/podcasts/		
Listen to an audiobook. (Try http://www.booksshouldbefree.com/) Listen and read the printed text at the same time. Pay attention to pronunciation (different sounds, word stress, rhythm, intonation/musicality).		
Find a Christmas carol you know well in Italian and the English version. Listen to them. Look at the lyrics. Compare the versions. What similarities and differences can you find? Post the links to the blog, to see if your classmates agree with your differences and if they can find any more of their own.		

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Use the “speller” mode on www.quizlet.com to see if you can aurally recognize the words you are learning.		
Find a short clip in English, that interests you, on www.youtube.com and make some questions to go with it. Post the link and questions on the blog for your classmates to watch/listen and answer.		
(Your ideas)		

Writing:

What?	When?	Thoughts?
Find an interesting magazine/newspaper article, read it, post a link to it on the blog and discuss it with your classmates.		
Write a recipe for your favourite dish and share it on the blog. Try and cook your friends' recipes! Tell them what you think of their recipes; find out what they think about yours...		
Start a blog in English (Try www.wordpress.com) Read and		

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comment on your classmates' blogs.		
Make an English Twitter account. Try out some of the ideas on http://independentenglish.wordpress.com/2013/05/20/twitter-for-english-language-learners/ - this link also tells you *how* to set up your account. Example idea: Use #twinglish: #twinglish is a hashtag especially for English-language learners, where learners from around the world share what they are doing and practise their English at the same time. Others are #engpls and #eigo.		
Use http://www.mylanguageexchange.com/ and find a native speaker who wants to learn Italian, to be your penpal. You would write to each other in a mixture of English and Italian, so that you both benefit.		
Read an English newspaper article online and share your opinion regarding the content by adding a comment to the comments thread at the end.		
(Your ideas)		

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Speaking:

Record yourself speaking! It is easy using this site: http://vocaroo.com/ Play it back. What good language can you hear? What mistakes? Share your recording and your analysis on Edmodo – do your classmates agree? Listen to your classmates' recordings and see if you agree with their analysis.		
As well as writing about different topics on your blog or the class blog, you could use voice recordings. • Try doing this regularly (at least three times a week) for one month. • Visit your classmates' blogs and listen to their recordings. What interesting language did they use?		
Go to PSP Speaking. THEN tell us what you talked about and what you found interesting, by writing/recording a post on the class blog or on your blog.		

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Use http://www.mylanguageexchange.com/ and find a native speaker who wants to learn Italian, for a language exchange. You will speak some of the time in Italian and some in English, so you both benefit.		
Start a conversation on the blog, about <i>anything</i> you like. Try and use some of the vocabulary and structures that you have been looking at in class. See how clearly you can express yourself.		
(Your ideas)		
Do you have any more ideas for Reading/Listening/Speaking/Writing?		