

# Foreign Language Five-Minute Fillers



1. Name as many cities as you can where \_\_\_\_\_ (language) is spoken.
2. List as many colors as you can.
3. Write the names of the months and days of the week.
4. List the numbers from one to one hundred.
5. Write the alphabet.
7. Describe what you are wearing.
8. List 15 objects you can see from where you are sitting.
9. Write down the names of all of the holidays you know.
10. Suppose a friend who doesn't speak \_\_\_\_\_ (language) was going on vacation to \_\_\_\_\_ (country where language is spoken), what would be the 10 most useful words you think they should learn before leaving.

# Foreign Language Short Activities



## **Beginner's Crossword Puzzle**

Make a crossword puzzle in the foreign language you are studying. The clues may be in English.

## **Advanced Crossword Puzzle**

Make a crossword puzzle in the language you are studying. The clues must be in the same language.

## **Floor Plan**

Draw the floor plan of a house. Label the rooms, doors, windows, and furniture in the foreign language.

## **"Buzz"**

Play a game of "buzz," speaking only in the foreign language. The first person calls out the word for "one" the second, "two"; the third "three"; and so on around the room. Every time a number that contains seven or is a multiple of seven (e.g., 7, 14, 17, 21) comes up call out "buzz" instead of the number. Remember, "buzz" is the only English word allowed!

## **Telephone**

Play a game of telephone, using only the language you are studying. The first person chooses a phrase or sentence in the foreign language and whispers it to the person next to him. That person, without asking him to repeat it, whispers the same phrase, as he understands it, to the next person, and so on. The last person in the row says the phrase out loud and translates it into English.

## **Calendar**

Make a calendar for this month, using only the foreign language you are studying. No abbreviations are permitted.

## **20 Questions**

Play twenty questions. One student chooses an object and tells the class whether it is animal, plant, or mineral. The rest of the class takes turns asking questions that can be answered only "yes" or "no" until they guess the object, or until they have asked twenty questions and still can't guess. Both the object and the questions must be stated in the foreign language the class is studying.

**Stump the Experts**

Three students volunteer or are chosen as experts. Members of the class take turns giving them words in the foreign language for one of the experts to translate into English. If he can do it, he remains as expert. If he can't, the one who stumped him becomes the expert. Later, class members give words in English and the experts translate them into the language being studied.

**Writing Directions**

In the language you are studying, write directions explaining step-by-step how to do a simple task, such as putting on a hat and coat, cooking an egg, or sawing a board. Select a volunteer and without telling him what the task is or using any English, read your directions to him and have him carry out the instructions.

**Writing a Limerick**

Write a limerick in the language you are studying. Remember, the first, second, and fifth lines rhyme and the third and fourth lines rhyme.

**Spelling Bee**

Select one student as moderator and hold a spelling bee entirely in the language you are studying. Use words from the foreign language text used by the class.

**Vocabulary Bee**

Select one student as moderator and hold a vocabulary bee. The moderator, using the foreign language text, gives words in English. Students must translate the words.

**About the Country**

In English, write a description of a major country where the language you are studying is spoken. Include any small details you may know.

**Displa**

Arrange a display of several items from around the room on a desk while a volunteer is out of the room. Have him come in and study the display for one minute, then, without looking at it again, list everything on the desk from memory. The student must use the language being studied.

**Concentration**

Play "concentration." Divide into teams of two. Cut paper into 3-by-5-inch pieces and make a set of concentration cards, using antonyms in the language you are studying. For instance, if Spanish is your language, one card might read "si", its match would be "no," one card might read "noche," its match "dia," one card might read "caliente," its match "frio," and so on. Make ten to twenty pairs.

To play, spread out all the cards, face down. The first player turns over any two cards and shows them to the other player. If they should be a matching pair of antonyms, he then puts them face up at his side of the table. The first player may then have another try at finding a matched pair. If the first player does not find a match, the second player tries to remember where and what has been turned up and attempts to find a matched pair. Both players must see the cards turned up each time to help them locate matches. The game continues until the last card has been picked up. One point is given for each matched pair. The high score wins.

### **Traveling Game**

Play a traveling game; each student must think of some item to go in a suitcase, using only the language being studied. The first person in the first row must pack something beginning with the letter "a," the second with "b," the third must start with "c," and so on. Begin by saying, "I am going to visit relatives, so I will get out my big suitcase and pack it with my..."

#### **Examples in Spanish**

*First student—"Abrigos" Second student—"Botas" If a student makes a correct addition—it doesn't need to be a sensible one—he earns one point. If he cannot think of one, he loses two points.*

### **Super Sentence**

Play super sentence. Let one student choose ten or twelve words from the dictionary in the language being studied and write them on the board. In ten minutes, the rest of the class tries to write a sentence using all the words or as many as they can. Read the sentence aloud.

### **Slapstick**

Arrange student desks in a circle. Each student is assigned a word in the language they are studying (recent vocabulary lists work great). One student is selected to stand in the center of the circle with a rolledup newspaper. The teacher calls out one of the assigned words and the student to whom the word has been assigned must quickly call out another word before the student in the center can "slap" their desk with the newspaper. Play continues until someone doesn't say a word before having their desk slapped, or mispronounces a word. In either event, the student assumes the role of the person in the center, who returns to their desk. Play resumes until class is over or students lose interest.

In large classes it may be beneficial to create two circles, thus allowing for more student involvement and interaction. Changing the assigned words halfway through the class will help to keep things interesting and challenging.