



How Can English Learners Remember Words and Keep Speaking?

S06E13 | For teachers to adapt to their learners

Purpose

Keep the conversation moving by explaining the idea another way. If the word “enormous” does not come to mind, try “very big”, compare it with something familiar, describe what it can do or use a gesture.

Try this in your next lesson

Ask a learner to describe a familiar object without naming it. The listener asks one question, guesses, and then both reuse the exact word.

Our suggested routine

- ☐ Describe what the thing looks like or does.
- ☐ Use a simpler phrase or an example.
- ☐ Let the listener ask questions or guess.
- ☐ Check the exact word afterwards if it matters.
- ☐ Reuse the word immediately so it joins the conversation.

A classroom example

For our suggested practice, choose an everyday object and ask learners to describe its appearance, purpose or location without its name. A partner guesses and explains which clue helped. Then reveal the word and use it in a fresh sentence. If guessing becomes frustrating, offer a category or a first sound. This is a communication strategy alongside vocabulary learning, not a reason to stop learning new words.

After the attempt

What worked? What needs another model or a smaller step? Note one change for next time.

Read the full explanation and examples:
howtoenglishpod.com - S06E13 article