



How Can Teachers Teach English Action Verbs with Clues?

S06E22 | For teachers to adapt to their learners

Purpose

Describe an action and ask learners to retrieve the verb. In S06E22, Em gives clues for verbs such as “shrug”, “swallow”, “stub”, “wink”, “blink”, “clap”, “nod”, “sniff” and “chew”.

Try this in your next lesson

Describe nod, wink and shrug without naming them. Learners guess, explain the clue and write one new sentence.

Our suggested routine

- ☐ Give a clear clue: “You move your head up and down to show agreement.”
- ☐ Let learners guess the verb: “nod”.
- ☐ Ask for another example or a short sentence using the word.
- ☐ Compare close alternatives, such as “wink” and “blink”.

A classroom example

For our adaptation, pairs write clues for three familiar verbs. A partner guesses and uses each in a sentence. Acting is optional; descriptions work too. Keep movements comfortable and do not touch another learner. End by revisiting the word that needed most help without its original clue.

Answers and teacher guidance

Nod: move the head up and down; wink: close one eye briefly; shrug: raise the shoulders, often to show uncertainty or indifference. Interpret gestures in context.

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:
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