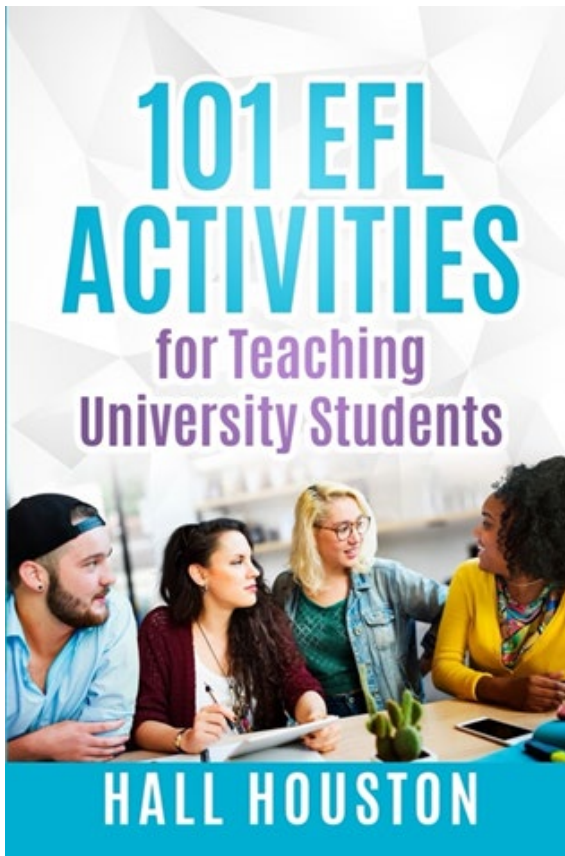




## Book Review

**101 EFL Activities for Teaching University Students**, by Hall Houston, Independently published., 2022, 152pp., US\$14.95 (Paperback), ISBN: 979-8419082793.



The book is a ready-to-use resource, offering 101 interesting and interactive activities for teaching English as a foreign language at colleges or universities. The majority of activities, however, are easy to be adapted to different subjects of teaching and useful for teachers at all levels. The information about each activity includes the time needed for the activity, the skills the activity is intended to improve, the preparation needed before the activity, and the procedure to carry out the activity. The author supplements the basic information with abundant resources of relevant links, references, and worksheets. With active learning as the theoretical rationale, the activities are intrinsically interesting and will actively engage students in English learning. Based on the author's teaching experiences in Taiwan and Hongkong, the book may be more suitable for teaching students in Asia or in other countries with similar language contexts.

The book has three chapters: *Getting off to a Good Start*, *Maintaining Motivation and Interest*, and *Ending the Semester Gracefully*. The three chapters are organized in an order to present the different stages of teaching, namely, the beginning, the interim and the end of a semester.

Chapter 1 aims to help teachers and students know each other in a new course, which is specially designed

for the beginning of a semester. The activities centre on themes of learning names, learning about classmates, learning about other students, learning about the teacher, learning about the course, and learning about the university. Under each theme, a variety of activities are clustered, which engage teachers and students in fun and interactive activities and get them quickly adapted to the unfamiliar community and context. The activities will effectively establish a relaxing and friendly learning environment for the class.

Chapter 2 features activities for maintaining motivation and interest, when students tend to be distracted or feel bored in the interim stage of a semester. The activities include themes of listening and reading activities, music and song activities, video activities, activities with a surprise, talking about life as a student, reviewing activities,



and getting feedback. The activities aim to break the teaching routine that students are used to and add interest, challenge and surprise to the class. For example, create novel forms of activities, shift the roles of teachers and students, and invite a guest to the class. Students will be refreshed and refueled to pursue their studies.

Chapter 3 offers activities for ending the semester gracefully, including themes of review activities for the entire semester, reflections about the semester, looking towards the future, and ending the semester in a positive way. While review and reflection are common at the end of a semester, the author has made them very enjoyable and interesting by encouraging students in interactive activities. These activities will help students maintain active learning throughout the semester.

More importantly, each chapter has a section on Teacher Development Tips. This section gives teachers extra suggestions on how to make good use of the activities and some useful and practical tips on teachers' professional development. It can be seen that all the suggestions and tips have been proven to be important or work well in the author's teaching experiences.

Overall speaking, all the activities feature active learning by students, with a focus on interaction and communication among teachers and students. There are some limitations, however. First, these activities give priority to students' communicative skills but pay less attention to other skills in English learning, such as writing, reading and translation. Second, as most of the activities can be used independently, this book has little relationship with the contents of English teaching. It does not explore how these activities can be incorporated into teaching plans or content teaching. Readers may find more information from *The ESL/ELL Teacher's Survival Guide: Read to Use Strategies, Tools, and Activities for Teaching All Levels*. Third, active learning theory seems to be the sole rationale for all activities. The author fails to expand the depth and width of activities that are important for key issues in English teaching, such as input, output, assessment, and so on.

## References

Ferlazzo, L. & Sypniewski, K. (2012). *The ESL/ELL teacher's survival guide: Read to use strategies, tools, and activities for teaching all levels*. California: Jossey-Bass.

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