

Twenty Six different ways to run a Gapfill / Cloze task - David Petrie

Acknowledgement: The activities given here were first presented during a seminar I gave at the [International House Portugal](#) Training Day on February 5th 2011, and subsequently as a seminar at [International House Coimbra](#) on March 22nd 2011.

1. Round the room Gapfill

Divide the text into paragraphs / sentences and post round the room. Learners write the gap numbers (e.g. 1 - 10) on a piece of paper and walk around the room, doing the task as an open cloze, writing down the words they think should go in the gap - either in English or their own language. Partial feedback – dictate the answers out of order and learners write them down next to their original answers. Learners go back to the round the room text and check their ideas. Full feedback.

2. TPR Gapfill

Give each learner a copy of the gapped text. Give each learner **one** of the target words. Learners then arrange themselves physically in the correct order. Partial Feedback – give number of incorrect answers. Full feedback – refer SS to full text (written record).

3. Banana Dictation

Learners write the gap numbers (e.g. 1 - 10) on a piece of paper. The teacher reads out the gapfill, saying the word "banana" instead of the gapped word. Learners write down a possible alternative. Partial feedback – Give learners the gapped text and allow them to compare their ideas in two groups and put their answers on the board. Full feedback – teacher gives number of correct answers and corrects wrong answers.

4. Shouting Banana Dictation

Divide the target text into two halves, ideally on a sentence by sentence basis to ensure that learners take turns during the rest of the activity. Divide the class into two groups. Group A gets one half and group B gets the other. Ask each group stand / sit on opposite sides of the room, so that each member of group A is facing a partner in group B. Learners take turns to read one sentence from their half of the text, saying Banana where there is a gap, and their partner has to guess what the word should be. Feedback.

5. Running Banana Dictation Gapfill

The teacher posts the gapped text outside the classroom (next to the DoS office is always a favourite). Learners pair up and run, read, relate and write, but – instead of relaying the "banana", they have to say what they think should go in the gap. Feedback – Learners swap their written texts with each other and compare them with an original ungapped version, assigning marks for transcription accuracy and correct gapped words.

6. Mad Libs Style

Take a gapped text and work out which part of speech each gap represents (i.e. article, noun, etc). Dictate the parts of speech in sequence (i.e. Number 1 – noun. Number 2 auxiliary verb) and learners write down an example of that part of speech (i.e. 1 – elephant, 2 – has). You can give more guidance if you want, e.g. number 1 - an animal. Then either give learners the gapped text to transfer their words into, or dictate the gapped text with learners adding in their words as they go. Learners can then compare their texts, enjoy the ensuing hilarity, and then try to "correct" the texts. This can be useful to focus on lexical chunks, and on grammatical structures.

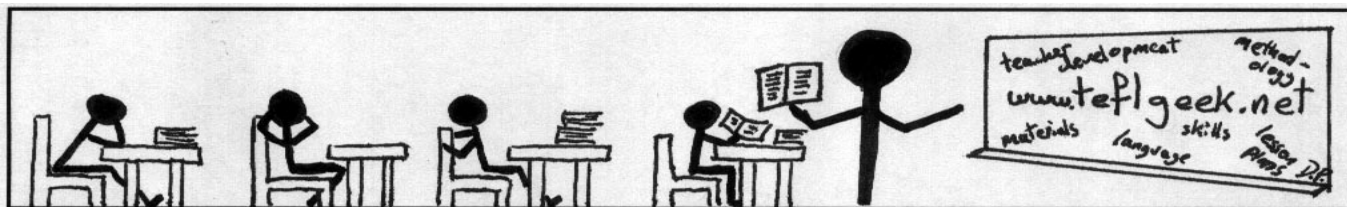
7. Silent Mingle (this one comes courtesy of Jamie Conway)

Give each learner a copy of the text and one (or two depending on class size) of the target words. Learners do a "silent mingle", moving around the room, but NOT telling each other the answers, ONLY showing each other the word(s) they have. Learners then get all the words and put them in the right place. Feedback

8. Who Wants to be a Millionaire?

www.tes.co.uk has a version, as do <http://jc-schools.net/tutorials/ppt-games/> and <http://www.primaryresources.co.uk/index.htm>, which has a blank template and various pre-made versions relating to the UK primary curriculum.

Effectively mimicking the style and format of the highly popular quiz show, learners are given different multiple choice options for each question, correct answers bringing them closer to the one million pound prize!



9. Wrong Words

Instead of giving learners a gapped text, give them a text in which the target words have been substituted for weird and wonderful alternatives. Learners then have to pick out the words they think are wrong, and change them for the words they think are right!

10. Banana Dictation Word Grab.

Put the target words if from an open cloze, or all of the possible words if adapting a multiple choice version, round the room / school / hidden in the DoS office. The teacher then reads out the gapped text as per a banana dictation.

When learners think they know the correct word for the gap, they grab the word as quickly as they can. This can be done in teams or on an individual basis. The teacher continues repeating the dictation until all the words have been grabbed.

11. Grammar Gaps

Not exactly a Cloze task, but getting Clozter all the time! (sorry).

Remove the concrete from the brick wall, just leaving the bricks! – So in other words, re-create the gapped text as one that only contains “content” words, i.e. nouns, main verbs, adjectives, adverbs etc. leave all the “function” words out. Learners then recreate the text as best they can. As a way to provide more support, display a copy of the gapped text on the board. learners can come to you and check if they have a correct word, if they do, they can board it in the correct place. Thus by the end, they will have collaboratively arrived at a completed text.

12. Reverse Gapfill

This one needs a little bit of pre-preparation and would be easier to work with an Interactive Whiteboard / projector and subsequent powerpoint slides.

Basically, you start with a complete text, but then slowly remove words from the text (it can be random, but it works more effectively if you start removing words from the beginning, thus corresponding with the stage of copying that the learners are at). By the end of the first stage, you should have a blank, or nearly blank board. At which point, you can put the learners into two groups, divide the board in two and get each group to put the whole thing back again.

Full feedback – compare with the original.

13. Gaps? What gaps?

Take a gapped text and retype with without the gaps, but with still with words missing. Learners therefore first have to find the gaps, before deciding what to put in them.

14. DIY Gapfill – thanks to Simon Thomas (www.efl-resource.com) for this one:

This one, originally comes from Mario Rinvolucri’s “Humanising your coursebook”, though I borrowed it from Simon Thomas’ site – essentially, you give the SS a variety of texts and they create their own gapfills, either blacking out the target words with felt tip (make sure it can’t be read on the reverse) or on the computers... This is a good way of raising awareness of what is typically gapped in exam tasks, but can also be used to focus on target vocabulary or language points (i.e. gap all the verbs).

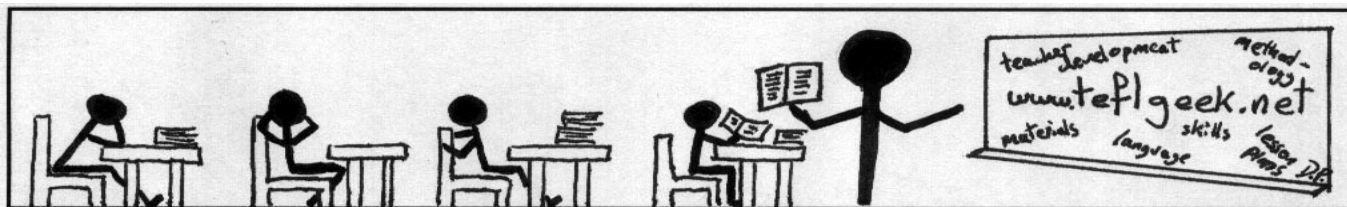
15. Multiple Choice Wordle

Take the multiple choice options from your gapfill and wordle (www.wordle.net) them. Learners then have to work out which words form the four multiple choice options for each possible gap. Partial feedback – give learners the gapped text and a blank table to complete. Or give them the multiple choice options.

The above were my original fifteen ways – since giving the seminar I have more to add – thanks to all the participants (Jo, Jenny, Dave T, Kate, Jessica, Vera, Alexis, Dave C, Anna, Neil, Stella, Judy, Patricia, Marta, Michael, Daniel) for their contributions, which are listed here below, but I’m not sure who said what!

16. Memory Cloze

Do the text initially as a reading task, possibly with a gist task and then with a detailed reading task and then give it as a gapped text. This can be a nice noticing task, where learners’ attention is drawn to lexical chunks / collocations and the like.



17. Red Herrings

This can be run either as an activity in itself, or can be used as a partial feedback technique. Learners are given the answers with an additional set of “distractors”, and must choose the correct answers from the expanded set.

18. Flashcard / Picture Cloze

As learners are attempting to complete the gapped text, the teacher can display visual clues, either direct representations (i.e. a picture of an elephant if the gapped word is “elephant”) or a picture from which learners can infer the answer (i.e. a picture of people arguing if the gapped word is debate). These could be posted round the room, or just displayed one at a time as partial feedback.

19. Info-Gap

Here learners have two different versions of the text, where the gapped words in text A are different to the gapped words in text B. Learners are then paired and exchange the information to complete the gaps. This type of task can be adapted for use with many of the other ideas presented here.

20. Anagram cloze

Here the answers are given as a set of anagrams, which learners must unjumble before placing correctly. This could be used simply with the answer set, or with the answer set and distractors, or with a complete set of options from a multiple-choice cloze task.

21. Coded Cloze

Here, either the text or the answer set or both, are presented in a “code” form, with a decryption key for learners to work with. A simple way of creating these is to use one of the “Wingdings” font sets in Microsoft Word or Open Office documents.

22. De-lettered cloze

Remove either the vowels or, more challengingly, the consonants from the answer sets. Or possibly the original text, or both?

23. Miming Cloze

This would possibly work best with an info-gap type cloze task, where learners “mime” the answers to their partner’s gapped text.

24. One Letter at a time

Learners are put into teams and the teacher begins to read the answer(s) one letter at a time. The first team to correctly guess the gapped word gets a point. An alternative is to do this as a board race, so each team has to write their answer on the board with three points for a correct answer. Points could then be taken away for an incorrect guess / incorrect spelling.

25. Sticky Board Cloze

Similar to a word grab – the learners are in three teams and each team has a set of answer words stuck to the board (post it notes?). So for three teams, with a ten word cloze, there would be thirty words stuck to the board. Learners from each team take turns to come up, take a word from the board, return to their team and put the word in the correct place. At this stage, learners could need to present a correct answer before proceeding to the next word, or learners could try to complete the whole text with points then awarded for speed and accuracy!

26 “STOP!”

Create a “wrong words” version of the gapped text where you replace the target words with incorrect alternatives. Learners can be given the text for support, or not with more advanced classes. The teacher then reads out the text with learners shouting “STOP!” every time they identify an incorrect word. They can be given points for this and additional points for identifying the correct replacement. If not all incorrect words are identified, the teacher re-reads the text until either, all the answers are boarded, or there is silence and no-one can guess any remaining answers.

If any of the procedures for these need further clarification or - more importantly - if anyone has a task to add to this list, please let me know!