

# English Club Activities for JHS and SHS

## **1. English Club Bulletin Board**

- Ask your supervisor or head of department if you can start a bulletin board.
- This gives students a place to write down ideas, read about current events and look at their peer's work.
- Put it in a prominent place or on part of every grade's notice board.
- Here you and the club can put reports on school activities, stories, new words, cartoons, guides to your country/town, festival guides etc.
- Post current newspaper or magazine articles about global issues.
- Have a space where students can stick their English *puricura* (print club pictures). English *puricura* is any *puricura* that has English words written on it.
- Include a map of the world that is printed in English. Students can mark on it places they have been. It is also good for general knowledge and for students to learn the names of countries in English.
- Post the names and/or lyrics of cool English songs. Have students translate them into Japanese and post both sets of lyrics on the board.
- Showcase students' work. Getting the students to write *haiku* poems in English is a good way to start.
- Include a group picture of the English club.
- Try to keep it current and relevant.

## **2. English Club Newsletter**

- Publish a newsletter once a month with reports on students' activities and school events.
- Include their creative work and let them read about themselves in English.

## **3. Movies**

- Show movies in English and have oral or written quizzes about the film with a small prize for the winner.
- Another option is to watch a movie and then compare it with excerpts from the book. "Harry Potter" is a good one for this.
- Your school probably has some videos but they may be a little out of date. If that's the case, rent one from a video store.
- Any Hollywood hit will be popular with the students.

## **4. Christmas**

- Host a Christmas party.
- Make Christmas cards.
- Sing Christmas carols.

## **5. Halloween**

- Have a Halloween party.
- Carve jack-o-lanterns
- Make piñatas and scary Halloween masks.

## **6. Valentine's Day**

- Host a Valentine's Day party.
- Make Valentine's Day cards and send them to your friends back home.
- Write romantic poems.
- Write Valentine's Day madlibs. After the students have completed both parts, make sure they understand the meanings of any difficult words or phrases.

## **7. Cooking**

- Swap recipes with your students.
- Make a recipe book. Get the students to translate Japanese recipes into English and include pictures e.g. *okonomiyaki*, *miso soup*, *sushi*, *o-dango*.
- Get your students to teach you how to make Japanese food.
- Teach your students how to cook something from home.
- It is good for students to learn English cooking vocabulary and the names of different food items.
- For dessert, cookies, shortbread, pancakes, apple pie, scones, gingerbread men, corn flake squares, chocolate fondue, chocolate pudding and lamingtons all work well.
- For snacks/meals garlic bread, Indian curry, shephard's pie, tacos, Thai food, quesadillas and guacamole are good options.
- You'll have to ask for permission to use the home economics room.
- If you don't have a large English club budget, get the students to bring some money or some of the ingredients from home so you don't have to pay.
- Afterwards make a poster detailing what you did and put pictures up on it. The poster goes in the hall for others to see.

## **8. Hanukkah**

- Host a Hanukkah party.

## **9. Birthday Parties**

- Make a calendar to keep track of English club members' birthdays.
- Then throw a western style party close to the day.
- Some good games to include are pin the tail on the donkey, musical chairs, charades and pass the parcel.

## **10. Easter**

- Dye or paint Easter eggs.
- Bob for apples.
- Have a chocolate donut-eating contest.
- Plan an Easter egg hunt around the school. Students must follow clues in English to find the hidden chocolate.

## **11. Board Games**

- Scrabble
- Uno
- Boggle
- Pictionary
- Monopoly
- Snakes and Ladders
- Guess Who

## **12. Arts & Craft**

- Get your students to teach you about traditional Japanese crafts and culture such as origami etc.
- Make bracelets.
- Design posters at the start of the school year to entice the first years to join your club.
- Cut snowflakes in winter.

### **13. Scavenger/Treasure Hunt**

- Give pairs or groups of students' questions to answer about things in their school and a list of things to collect.
- If possible, make students ask other teachers questions in English.
- Give prizes to the overall winners and a booby prize to the losers.

### **14. Show and Tell**

- Ask students to bring something from home to tell the English club about.
- You can ask them to answer specific questions like: What did you bring? Why is it important to you? Where or when did you get it?
- It works well if you first tell the students what makes a good presentation.
- Then give them some time to think about what they will bring, as well as start writing what they will say.
- They should present their item in the next English club.
- It also gives you the opportunity to see what they are interested in.

### **15. Story Telling A**

- Sit in a circle.
- Each student in turn says one word in order to tell a story.
- This works best with mid to high-level students.
- It gives the students a chance to be creative.

### **16. Story Telling B**

- Divide the students into pairs.
- Have one partner go into a different room.
- Get your JTE to tell a story to one group, and you tell a story to the other group.
- Pairs then get back together, tell each other the story, and try to write it down.
- Then, each person reads out his or her version of the story.

### **17. Country Research**

- Make the students collect information from travel agents, magazines, the library and the Internet etc.
- Then have them make an oral and visual presentation about a country they want to go to.
- Have them cover:
  - o People
  - o Food
  - o Flag
  - o Places to visit
  - o Important facts
  - o Reasons why they want to visit that country

### **18. Creative Writing**

- Collect a selection of interesting pictures.
- Have the students pick one to write a short story about.
- For example, have them explain who the person is, what they are doing, and why they look happy/sad etc.

### **19. Pen Pals**

- Arrange pen pals for the students from a foreign country.
- I think AJET has a current database of foreign schools that are looking to start up a pen pal program.
- Spend time in English club helping students to write letters or understand letters they have received.
- Students will be excited to make international friends.
- However, sometimes pen pals from overseas are difficult to maintain.
- If you believe this will be an issue, think about pen pal writing with another school's English club.

### **20. Out and About**

- Take your students to *karaoke*, print club, the movies, the bowling alley, the supermarket, the bank, the local café etc.
- Outside of the classroom they will be more willing to try and speak English.

### **21. Music**

- Most students love music, so bring in some of your music and encourage them to bring in a CD of their favorite band/singer.
- Listen and tell each other about the band/singer. For example: Where are they from? How old are they?
- You can play music while doing other activities or base a lesson around it.
- I feel that it makes the shy students feel more relaxed.

### **22. Special Guests**

- Try and get another ALT who runs an English club to be a guest in your club.
- In return, you can visit their school.
- It gives the students a chance to meet another foreigner.
- Invite them to a party or play a fun game that lets the students interact with him or her.

### **23. Book Club**

- Every week have the students read a small excerpt from a book.
- You can then discuss it and check their understanding.

### **24. Fan Club**

- Join a foreign fan club and have your students write letters to them in English.
- Many fan clubs will send a picture or something in reply, but don't get your student's hopes up in case they don't respond.

### **25. Play Card Games**

- Card games are great because they don't take too much preparation.
- Go fish, memory and old maid are good ones.

**26. Watch an English TV Show**

- If you only have a short amount of time, try watching a TV show like “Friends”.
- Afterwards, have them draw a picture and write about their favourite scene.
- Another variation on this is to stop the movie at its climax. The students then have to finish the story with a comic strip. Make sure that they write something in English in each frame.

**27. Video/Audio Tape Exchange**

- Make a video/audio tape about the school for your family back home, your successor or another school’s English club.
- The students could also make a tape about what they’ve been doing for your predecessor.

**28. Learn English Expressions and Idioms**

- Teach your students some greetings and expressions used by young people that they won’t learn in class.
- Get them to teach you some Japanese expressions too.

**29. Popular Culture Comparisons**

- Use magazines from your home country and Japanese magazines to prepare a magazine search-quiz and poster making activity.
- Make some questions and have a time limit.
- Students must find an object or person and cut it out, then make a poster and label it.
- You can also compare advertisements [**refer attached handout E**]. This gives students the opportunity to hear the speed at which English is naturally spoken.

**30. Diaries**

- Get the students to write a diary for a week, month or semester.

**31. Email**

- Give students their own email addresses and have them send and exchange emails with your visit school, other ALTs, or English teachers.

**32. Star Signs**

- Learn about star signs in English.
- Work out the students’ signs and profiles.

**33. Manga**

- Draw comic strips using English.

**34. Plays**

- Produce a short play in English.
- You can make up your own original play, or do a famous movie scene.
- For high-level students, have them translate a Japanese folk story to English.
- If it’s good enough you could even do it at the school festival.

**35. World Music**

- Firstly, go over the expressions on the handout.
- Ask students to complete the map
- Then play the songs for the students.
- They must guess which country each song comes from and write whether or not they liked the song, and how it made them feel.
- You can give hints about each piece of music.

**36. Gesture Karuta**

- In groups students put their desks together to make a table surface for karuta.
- They get a set of cards with written explanations of various gestures.
- They should spread those out face up on the table.
- The ALT acts out the various gestures and the students must guess which explanation matches the gesture.

**37. Interview Posters**

- The students interview other non-English club students and teachers.
- They take photos or draw pictures, then make posters and display them.

**38. Afternoon Tea**

- Meet for afternoon tea at the start of each semester.
- This is a good time to brainstorm and plan with the students what you want to do.

**39. Internet Challenge**

- Prepare a quiz where students have to visit websites you have chosen and answer questions about the web pages.

**40. Puppet Shows**

- Get the students to do puppet shows based on Japanese folk stories.
- The students make their own puppets.
- This is a good type of presentation to do as it does not require eye contact and the focus is on the puppet, not the presenter.
- Depending on the level of the students, you can ask them to write their own script, or you can provide the story in Japanese and have them translate it into English.
- For low-level students give them the script in English so that the focus is on presentation only.

**41. Culture Presentations**

- Students can work in groups or pairs depending on English club size.
- Give them a list of topics on Japanese culture.
- They should choose a topic and make a presentation based on it.
- Make them use props, pictures, and try to get the audience involved.
- Stress creativity as a way to keep people interested.

**42. School Festival**

- Participate in the school festival with your English Club
- Have games like darts, pin the tail on the donkey, English Uno etc.
- Sell food from your home country like smores, brownies or cookies.
- Play English music.
- Show an English movie.
- Teach an international craft.
- Hold a raffle with the proceeds going to the English club or another worthy cause.

**43. English Website**

- Make a website in English about your school or town in Japan.

## English Club Games

**44. Word Tennis**

- Divide the students into two teams.
- Have them sit facing each other.
- You are in the middle as the umpire.
- Team captains then *jan ken poi* for service.
- Give a topic and one team serves.
- They must say a word in 5 seconds.
- The other team then says a word and so on until a team can't think of anything within the 5 seconds.
- Score just like tennis, giving a new topic for each point.
- Topic ideas are sports, fruit, foreign food, foreign names, countries, colours, transport, hobbies, and drink names etc.

**45. Question Game**

- Have students sit in a circle.
- In turn, students ask a question to the student on their left.
- After a while, change seats.
- If the students are really low level, then you can ask a question and each student should take turns answering.

**46. Hang Man**

- Draw a hangman's noose on the blackboard.
- Students guess letters in the mystery word, gaining a part of the body for each incorrect guess.
- When the entire body is drawn they are dead.

**47. Shiritori**

- Each word must start with the last letter of the previous word.
- For example, cat > tiger > ring > ghost > table > egg etc.
- Play on the blackboard in teams, or make it harder by keeping it verbal.

**48. Charades**

- Students have a time limit to act out certain words and have their team guess.

**49. Karuta**

- Cards are face up on a table.
- They may be pictures or words.
- The ALT explains about one card and the students must be the first to grab the card.
- The student with the most cards at the end is the winner.

**50. Fruit Basket**

- The first student says the name of a food.
- The second student must then say the name of the food of the first student and then his/her food, and so on.
- There is a bonus for the last student if he or she can get all the names of the foods and for any other student who can do the same quickly.
- If a student gets stuck, you can flash a picture of a food to help him or her.

**51. Who am I?**

- Students work together in teams.
- Teachers give clues about a famous person or character, and students must try and guess who the person is.

**52. Criss Cross**

- Select a row of students horizontally and have them stand.
- Ask a question and the first student to raise his or her hand and answer correctly sits.
- Ask questions until there is only one student left standing.
- The last student remains standing and the students seated in the vertical direction then stand.
- A new round of questions begins.
- This is a great activity for reviewing vocabulary.

**53. Categories**

- Divide the members into teams
- Call out a category for example, sports, animals, food, countries, fruit, flowers, colours, drinks, instruments, things that burn, things that fly, things you love etc.
- Students then need to write as many related words as they can in two minutes racing against the other teams.
- When teachers check the spelling, they should give one point for each unique, correctly spelled word.
- If two teams have the same word, it does not count for a point.
- The team with the most words wins.
- For low-level students you can provide a list of words for the students to choose from, or let them use texts and dictionaries.

**54. People Consequences**

- This is a drawing game.
- One person draws the hair but doesn't show anyone then folds the paper leaving just two lines marking where the next person starts to draw the head.
- When they finish they fold the paper and so on; neck, chest, legs and feet.

**55. Animal Consequences**

- Each person writes a sentence describing an animal.
- You can give them categories like size, colour, ears, eyes, legs and tail.
- Then each student reads out his or her description.
- They must then draw the animal and name it.

**56. Taboo**

- Make a list of various vocabulary words.
- You can choose random words, or words based on a topic you've been studying.
- Ask students to work in pairs.
- Give each student a word.
- They must describe that word to their partner without actually saying the word.
- The partner has to guess what the word is.
- You can increase the difficulty by listing other words the person cannot use in their description or by imposing a time limit.

**57. The Hammer Game**

- Students get a list of words.
- Split the English club into two teams.
- On the board the teacher writes two words.
- For example:
  - o love/rub
  - o sing/thing
  - o very/berry
  - o ship/sheep
  - o shell/sell
  - o very/ferry
  - o cap/cup
  - o burn/barn
  - o bus/bath
  - o pool/pull
- Ask students to repeat the words to practice pronunciation, and explain the meaning of each word.
- Someone from team one and team two comes to the board.
- Using toy hammers they must listen to the ALT say either "love" or "rub" and they must hit the correct word on the board.
- The first person to identify the word gets a point for their team.
- The other students should be circling the words they hear.