

# **How to Be a Benevolent Dictator**

## **Using Dictations in ELL**

**Presented by**

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## **1. Mutual Story Dictation:**

- 1. Students choose a picture.**
- 2. They write a story of no more than five sentences.**
- 3. They dictate the story to their partners.**
- 4. They switch.**

## **2. Opinion Dictation:**

1. You or your students choose a topic
2. Students divide their paper into three columns labeled “Agree,” “Disagree,” “Not Sure”
3. Any student makes a statement regarding the topic.
4. Students write this statement under the proper heading.
5. Continue this as long as interest is high.
6. Students stand and mingle. They tell classmates where they wrote their sentences and the reasons behind their choice of columns.

## **3. Opposite dictations**

1. Dictate any passage to your students (Example below).
2. Students write what they perceive to be the opposite.
3. Stories are read out loud for fun and comparison

### **Example:**

An old man walked into a restaurant. He ordered steak well done.

A young waitress took his order. She was very beautiful.

But she was not a very good waitress. She dropped the steak on the floor, but her customer was not angry. He was happy. He smiled. He loved this waitress. She was his daughter.

## **4. Picture dictation:**

1. Students draw the following as you talk:
2. Draw a small house. Draw a tree next the house. Draw some flowers in front of the house. Draw a cat close to the house. Draw a road leading up to the house. Draw a car moving toward the house. Now look at your picture and give your picture a name.
3. Students take turns one sentence at a time look at their picture and dictate to their partners.

#### **4. Messenger Dictation**

5. Post message in convenient place.
6. Students form pairs.
7. Assign a messenger and a scribe for each pair
8. Messenger runs to read message and retains as much as possible.
9. Messenger dictates as much as he/she can recall to scribe.
10. Scribe writes
11. After a few sentences roles are switched.
12. At almost completion in most groups, bring in message to be checked.

#### **MESSENGER DICTATION—IMMIGRANTS**

EACH YEAR THE UNITED STATES BECOMES MORE ETHNICALLY, LINGUISTICALLY AND CULTURALLY DIVERSE WITH MORE THAN 90 PERCENT OF RECENT IMMIGRANTS COMING FROM NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING COUNTRIES. SINCE 2000, THE NON-ENGLISH SPEAKING POPULATION IN OUR SCHOOLS HAS INCREASED BY 95%., WHILE THE ENGLISH SPEAKING POPULATION HAS INCREASED BY ONLY 18 PERCENT. MANY OF THESE CHILDREN HAVE DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL. ARE YOU POSSIBLY TEACHING THESE CHILDREN'S PARENTS? THERE ARE 180 LANGUAGES SPOKEN IN THE U.S. TODAY. ARE THESE LANGUAGES A TREASURE OR A BURDEN? WE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A COUNTRY OF IMMIGRANTS AND WE HAVE THRIVED. IS THIS TIME DIFFERENT? WILL THIS INFLUX MAKE US RICHER OR POORER?

## **Name Poem Dictation**

1. In pairs, students talk about how and why they were given their names and whether they have always liked their names, and or have wanted to change their names.
2. Read the pattern poems below and explain how the patterns work.
3. Dictate the opening words:

My name is

My name belongs:

My name has:

Explain that this is a poem and that the last line must be a question. (Work a bit on question creation)

Students write their poems (6 minutes).

In pairs, students read their poems to each other.

With the whole class students volunteers read out their poems.

### **The poems**

## **My Name—Poetic Dictation**

**My name is a strange one**

**My name means God's oath**

**My name is Elisheva**

**My name was given to me by my parents—I wonder what was on their minds!**

**My name has a good solid sound**

**My name can be translated to Elizabeth**

**My name becomes normal**

**Is it really my name now?**

**My name is Steven**

**My name means much to me in all its forms**

**My name is Estaban in Spanish**

**My name was given to me in English by my first English teacher**

**My name has given me an identity—or maybe two.**

**My name can be shortened to Steve—I like it that way!**

**My name becomes sweet when my girlfriend Sally uses it. We are Sally and Steve—a sassy unit!**

**Can we call our children Susie and Sam?**

Coze Dictation:

Students take turns dictating sentences to each other until the passage is complete. Direct students to the wonderful book *Holes* by Louis Sachar from which the passage was taken.

**A-**

1. There is no \_\_\_\_\_ at Camp Green Lake.
2. There once was a very \_\_\_\_\_ lake here.
3. It was the largest \_\_\_\_\_ in Texas.
4. That was over a \_\_\_\_\_ years ago.
5. Now it is just a \_\_\_\_\_, flat wasteland.
6. There used to be a \_\_\_\_\_ of Green Lake as well.
7. The \_\_\_\_\_ shriveled and dried up along with the lake, and the people who lived there.

**B-**

1. There is no lake at Camp \_\_\_\_\_ Lake.
2. There once was a \_\_\_\_\_ large lake here.
3. It was the \_\_\_\_\_ lake in Texas.
4. That was over a hundred years \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Now it is just a dry, \_\_\_\_\_ wasteland.
6. There \_\_\_\_\_ to be a town of Green Lake as well.
7. The town \_\_\_\_\_ and dried up along with the lake, and the people who lived there.

A good book for using Dictations is Mario Rinvoluceri's *Dictation: New Methods; New Possibilities*. Published by Cambridge University Press