

What's the order?

Read what a teacher says about this activity

'What's the order?' is a good activity for practising vocabulary and for developing learners' critical thinking skills. Because it's so flexible, I have used it with a range of different vocabulary topics.

Stage 1: Prepare	Use picture flashcards, or create a set of cards with one item of vocabulary on each. For example, if doing for animals, you will need a set of 8-10 cards with words such as mosquito, frog, dog, shark, lion, vulture, crocodile, hippo, elephant and cheetah.
Stage 2: Introduce	If you are using picture flashcards, hold them up one at a time and say: 'What is this?' Elicit the name of the animal in English. If you are using word cards, just check the learners know each of the animals.
Stage 3: Start	Say: 'Stand up.' You should then give each learner / pair one card each.
Stage 4: Play	Say: 'Stand in order. From the biggest animal to the smallest. Help each other.' If there are learners who don't have a card, get them to help by making suggestions.
Stage 5: Continue to play	Once the learners have formed a line in order of size, check and discuss the choices. Then say: 'Now stand in order from the fastest to the slowest.' They repeat the process of forming a line. You can then use other categories. For example, get the learners to stand in order of: danger, beauty, how tasty they are to eat etc.

You can use this activity for a variety of vocabulary sets and using different criteria. Here are some ideas: 1. Types of vehicles (speed / cost / size / how common they are in your country); 2. School subjects (how many classes you have a week / how hard they are / how popular they are); 3. Countries (size / how close they are to your country / how many letters in their name).

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