

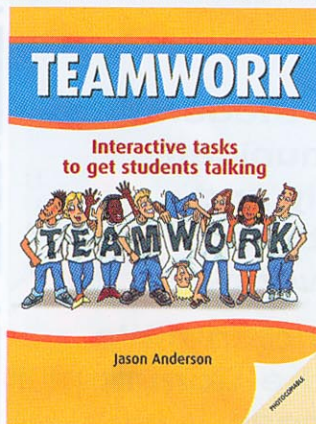
Chicken tonight

Looking for inventive, fun activities for more able, mature students? This could be for you

WAYNE TROTMAN
writes from Turkey

TEAMWORK - INTERACTIVE TASKS TO GET STUDENTS TALKING

(Delta Publishing)
Jason Anderson
ISBN: 1-900783-78-9



which describe the magical moves and provide answer keys. Apart from the detailed contents at the front, the only necessary and genuine help appears, rather strangely, at the back in the form of two quick-access alphabetical indexes

Topics dealt with include dreams, home buying, Aesop's fables, email writing and joke telling

which continues Delta's focus on shortish practical titles – is for intermediate, upper intermediate and advanced-level teenagers and adults.

I straightaway appreciated that in *Teamwork* there are no lengthy forewords, prefaces, or why and how everyone around the world should use this book. There are no dedications, no thanks to all concerned or slaps on the back all round. This book takes the user straight into the first of twenty meaty activities, each generally of one to three pages and accompanied by a page of teacher's notes

to topics and grammar functions dealt with. Interestingly, in the contents is the excellent idea of a potted summary of what teachers will find within each activity.

Topics dealt with include dreams, home buying, Aesop's fables, email writing and joke telling. For each there is generally a bit of scissor work involved to provide students with role cards or varying versions of events or characters. The author suggests a lead-in task for each unit that occasionally verges on the optimistic – such as mentioning teachers might like to draw pictures of

hares and tortoises so as to elicit the moral in one of Aesop's fables. One unit I particularly liked the look of (partly because it gave me an appetite) and will be trying soon is 'Chicken Tonight' on page 36, which requires the class to reorder the scrambled recipes of two vastly different meals, Chicken Teriyaki and Chicken Kiev. Inevitably with activities at such levels there is quite an amount of reading and vocabulary work involved before any oral work can take place. Another splendid unit is 'Raining Cats and Dogs', which involves matching idioms with their correct meaning before getting the group to prepare a similar task for their friends. This could be fun. Imagine reading answers like 'Jill isn't coming to work today because she's wearing her heart on her sleeve.'

As can be expected with such resource books there's a fair bit of organising as well as cutting and explaining involved, but that shouldn't deter teachers from using such welcome material. Ask yourself what you'd rather be doing as a language learner on a rainy Thursday afternoon, FCE sentence-transformation or discussing with a friend how much you could both make by selling the photo in unit 14 'Front Page News' to the paparazzi of a star footballer in a romantic encounter with an air hostess? Anyone choosing the grammar option is probably in the wrong job.

Wayne Trotman, who still lives in Izmir, Turkey, regularly pontificates during teacher training courses on the role of useful resource books.

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BOOK OF THE MONTH

BUSINESS FOCUS (PRE-INTERMEDIATE)
(OUP) David Grant/
Robert McLarty
ISBN 0-19-438548-5

BUSINESS FOCUS comprises ten units, each one integrating words, grammar, expressions, communication and issues. Each finishes with a short quiz. 'Words' covers collocations and set phrases. This target lexis is challenging yet appropriate for pre-intermediate business students: brand, competitor, consumer, head office, etc. The grammar syllabus reaches conditionals and passives. Expressions covers topics and functions, and the communication sections include role plays and email writing activities. 'Issues'

LISTENING EXTRA (CUP)
Miles Craven ISBN 0-521-75461-5

This book has the same format as the others in the series and contains 18 topic areas. Each unit contains a listening activity for each of the three levels – elementary, intermediate and upper-intermediate – making 54 activities in total.

There is a good variety of tasks suitable for young adults. Some are visually stimulating, with charts, pictures and forms. Some activities are fun, informative and motivating. The photocopiable teaching material and two audio CDs provide, as the title claims,

encourages discussion on familiar themes such as time management and work-life balance.

A highlight is the free CD-Rom at the back, containing a video phrasebank, with extracts from the video *Big City* Level 2. This provides a lot of useful extra practice. There are some noteworthy photocopiable activities in the teacher's book by John Hughes, including an excellent project planning grid.

The photographs, diagrams and graphics are varied, and include some attractively presented colour charts. The back of the book is bursting with features – a language reference section, which includes information on common errors, tapescripts and a glossary. A solid coursebook for this level, which should do what it claims: 'close the gap between learning business English and using it at work'.

'extra listening material'.

BUSINESS PRESENTATIONS CD ROM (York Associates/
Konstanz University of
Applied Sciences) Jeremy
Comfort/Patrick Schulz/ Peter
Franklin
ISBN 1-900991-14-4

This CD-Rom contains three presentations on video – on finance, human resources and a sales presentation. The upper intermediate and advanced student is able to watch the video, access the transcript and work on on-screen comprehension exercises.

Each presentation is analysed

into five key steps, and learners are given practice in preparing and delivering a presentation and fielding questions. Of interest is the information on cultural aspects of presentations. The content is excellent, and some of the features of the disc breathtaking in their effectiveness and simplicity. The interface and controls however are somewhat fiddly, and not altogether intuitive. The features include a glossary and a list of key phrases.

This is worth investigating by every teacher involved in teaching effective presentations.

SHORT PLAYS AND LONGER PROJECTS

Tony Butterfield Interact
Educational Services
ISBN 0-9545112-0-4

Would you get your learners to act out a play? Improvise? Your answer is crucial to the way you perceive *Short Plays and Longer Projects* and the scope of the book is broader than EFL – it includes amateur theatre and state-school students. The twelve short plays include the intriguing *Baby sitter*, where a child behaves strangely when the baby sitters arrive, and the somewhat controversial *Out of the cube*, which focuses on a teenage terrorist.

The projects are looser and more flexible. They have elements of drama and could involve high levels of improvisation. The introduction is short and the book has around 130 pages. Intriguing, and may prove interesting to some EFL teachers.