

## TEACHER'S CORNER – APRIL 2016

### PREPOSITIONS

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Prepositions can often be confusing for students learning English. Many prepositions cannot be defined in the exact way that other parts of speech or vocabulary in English can, which makes them tricky to teach. Despite this, prepositions are very common in spoken and written English. Therefore, teachers should devote time to practicing these words in the classroom.

This month, we'll take a look at many different classroom activities that provide learners with opportunities to practice using some of the most common prepositions in English. To begin, let's take note of the prepositions used in this month's activities.

#### Prepositions of Time:

These prepositions are used to discuss when events take place, as well as to talk about multiple events happening at the same time.

Preposition	Sentence Structure	Examples
in	in + a specific month in + a specific year in + the morning, afternoon, or evening	My birthday is <i>in</i> July. I was born <i>in</i> 1985. I have to work <i>in</i> the afternoon.
at	at + a specific time at + night	I have to work <i>at</i> 7:30 tomorrow. I have to work <i>at</i> night.
on	on + a specific day of the week on + a specific date	I do not have to work <i>on</i> Sunday. I was born <i>on</i> July 6, 1985.
for	for + a duration of time	I have worked at my job <i>for</i> a year. I have lived here <i>for</i> ten months. I have been working <i>for</i> three hours.
since	since + a specific time something began	I have had my job <i>since</i> June 6 <sup>th</sup> . I have lived here <i>since</i> August 2010. I have been working <i>since</i> 9:00.
while	while + activities taking place at the same	<i>While</i> I was working, I studied.

	time	I cooked dinner <i>while</i> I was watching TV.
during	during + the time something happened (noun)	It rained <i>during</i> the night. She took a phone call <i>during</i> class. He took notes <i>during</i> the presentation.

Prepositions of Place:

These prepositions are used to tell where something is located in relation to something else.

Preposition	Sentence Structure	Examples
above	The (object or place) is (preposition) the (other object or place).	The clock is <i>above</i> the door.
around		The classroom is <i>around</i> the corner.
behind		The chair is <i>behind</i> the desk.
below		The door is <i>below</i> the clock.
beside		The restroom is <i>beside</i> the office.
far (away) from		The school is <i>far away from</i> the farm.
in		The fruit is <i>in</i> the bag.
in the back of		The table is <i>in the back of</i> the room.
in front of		The teacher is <i>in front of</i> the students.
in the middle of		The students are <i>in the middle of</i> the hallway.
inside		The teacher is <i>inside</i> the classroom.
near		The chair is <i>near</i> the door.
next to		The restroom is <i>next to</i> the office.
on		The office is <i>on</i> the second floor.
on top of		The book is <i>on top of</i> the notebook.
outside		The students are <i>outside</i> the classroom.
under	The paper is under the book.	

One special case is the preposition *between*, which is used with two objects.

Preposition	Sentence Structure	Examples
between	The (object or place) is <i>between</i> the (other object or place) and the (other object or place).  The (object or place) is <i>between</i> the (other objects or places).	The book is <i>between</i> the cup and the pencils. The restroom is <i>between</i> the office and the playground.  The office is <i>between</i> the classrooms. The desk is <i>between</i> the chairs.

Prepositions of Movement:

These prepositions are used to discuss movement *to* or *from* a place. They are often used in the imperative to give directions from one place to another.

Preposition	Sentence Structure	Examples
across	(Verb) (preposition) (name of object or place).	Walk <i>across</i> the street.
along		He ran <i>along</i> the trail.
around		She walked <i>around</i> the puddle.
away from		Walk <i>away from</i> the post office.
back to		Please go <i>back to</i> your seat.
down		They were coming <i>down</i> the stairs.
into		Please go <i>into</i> the classroom.
off		She stepped <i>off</i> the train.
onto		The singer walked <i>onto</i> the stage.
out of		He ran <i>out of</i> the house.
over		Cross <i>over</i> Oak Street.
past		He drove <i>past</i> the school.
through		The boys ran <i>through</i> the park.
towards		I am riding my bike <i>towards</i> the store.
under		The girls stopped <i>under</i> the bridge.
up		I am coming <i>up</i> the stairs.

This month's Teacher's Corner will require students to use prepositions of time, place, and movement to complete different tasks. Use these descriptions and examples included here to review the prepositions with your students before starting each activity.

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## PREPOSITIONS OF TIME: *IN*, *AT*, AND *ON*

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This week's Teacher's Corner introduces two activities during which students practice the prepositions *in*, *at*, and *on*. In these activities, students must act quickly to identify appropriate times to use the common prepositions *in*, *at*, and *on*. In Activity One, students will compete to physically swat the correct prepositions and use them correctly in sentences with times, days, and months of the year. In Activity Two, students ask and answer questions using prepositions in a moving circle. These activities require that students are already familiar with using these three prepositions to discuss time.

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### LEVEL

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Intermediate and above

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### LANGUAGE FOCUS

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Listening, speaking, and reading

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### GOALS

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During the activities, students will:

- Listen to information and determine which preposition to use: *in*, *at*, or *on*
- Form oral questions and statements using the prepositions *in*, *at*, and *on*

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### MATERIALS

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- Chalkboard or whiteboard with chalk or markers
- Two fly swatters or sturdy pointers
- Index cards
- Container to hold the index cards such as a hat, box, or empty coffee can

## PREPARATION

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- Prepare the index cards with the following (one per card):
  - Days of the week
  - Specific dates, such as June 26th, January 1st, etc.
  - Months of the year
  - Years, such as 1982, 2012, 2001, etc.
  - Times of day or night, such as 12:00pm, 7:30am, 10:45pm, etc.
  - Time phrases: \_\_\_ *the morning*, \_\_\_ *the afternoon*, \_\_\_ *the evening*, \_\_\_ *night*

Note: Each card will be used for one turn in the game, so be sure you make enough cards for your whole class to participate.

- Fold the cards, mix them up, and place them in the container.
- Review when to use each of the prepositions with your students, if needed.

## ACTIVITY ONE: SWAT IT

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1. Tell students they will play a game to review the prepositions *in*, *at*, and *on*. Divide the class into two equal teams.
2. In the middle of the board, write the prepositions *in*, *at*, and *on* in a column. Leave a bit of space vertically between each of the words.
3. Say, "In this container there are cards with days, months, dates, years, or times on them. To play the game, each team will send one member at a time to the board. Each person at the board will get a fly swatter/pointer to use. I will pull out a card and read what it says. The goal is for you to decide which preposition goes along with what I have said, and be the first person to hit the preposition you think is correct with your swatter/pointer. I will decide who hit the preposition first, and that person must then form a sentence correctly using the words on the card and the

preposition. If you choose the correct preposition and use it correctly in a sentence, you will earn a point for your team.”

4. Choose a student to help you model the procedure at the board. Ask another student to choose a card from the container and read it aloud.
5. Explain to students that if they choose the wrong preposition, a player from the other team will have a chance to make a sentence to earn a point for their team. If the player on the other team also does not create a correct sentence, the card will be placed back into the container. After both teams have attempted to answer, the students at the board sit down and a new player from each team comes up.
6. This game can be played until all the cards have been used, or until all students have had a chance to participate.

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### ACTIVITY TWO: INSIDE OUTSIDE CIRCLE

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1. Split the class in half. (If you have a very large class, you may wish to model the procedure beforehand and use four groups for the activity.)
2. Have one half of the class form a circle with everyone facing out. This is the inside circle. Give each one of these students one of the cards containing a date, time, month, etc.
3. Have the second half of the class form another circle around the inside circle, with everyone facing in. This is the outside circle.
4. Tell students, “Those of you in the inside circle have a card with a time, date, day of the week, or something similar on it. You are also facing one person. Your task is to ask the person facing you a question using the time on your card and the appropriate preposition.”
5. Provide some examples, such as:
  - a. Can you come to my house on Wednesday?
  - b. Are you going to travel in June?

- c. Did you eat breakfast at 7:30?
6. Say, "Those of you in the outside circle must answer the question you are asked. You must include the time and the preposition." Give examples, such as:
  - a. Yes, I can come to your house on Wednesday.
  - b. No, I am not going to travel in June. I am going to travel in July.
  - c. I did not eat breakfast at 7:30. I ate breakfast at 6:30.
7. Tell students they will have thirty seconds to complete the task (asking and answering questions) before the inside circle moves. After thirty seconds, the inside circle should shift one person to the right so that everyone has a new partner. The outside circle does not move.
8. When everyone has a new partner, students in the inside circle should ask their new partner a question using what is written on their card and the appropriate preposition. New partners should answer and then the inside circle shifts again.
9. Once everyone in the inside circle has had a chance to speak to all of the students in the outside circle, the roles should change. Collect cards from the inside circle. Distribute new cards to the outside circle and inform those students that they will now ask the questions and the inside circle will provide answers. The procedures for moving should remain the same.
10. During this activity, partners can provide feedback and corrections about how to use the prepositions if necessary. The circle can be repeated multiple times using different cards.

## MORE PREPOSITIONS OF TIME: *FOR*, *WHILE*, *DURING* AND *SINCE*

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This week's Teacher's Corner presents two activities using the prepositions *for*, *while*, *during*, and *since*. In these activities, students practice correctly using the prepositions *for*, *while*, *during*, and *since* to talk about time. In Activity One, students complete sentence frames to write about events using the prepositions. In Activity Two, students listen to sentences that are missing prepositions and move around the room to indicate the correct preposition to complete the sentence. Students should have some knowledge of how these prepositions are used before participating in these activities.

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### LEVEL

Intermediate and above

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### LANGUAGE FOCUS

Speaking, listening, reading, and writing

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### GOALS

During these activities, students will:

- Ask questions to collect information about a partner
- Use the information collected to complete sentences containing prepositions *for*, *while*, *during*, and *since*
- Present information about a partner to the class
- Listen to sentences and determine which preposition to use: *for*, *while*, *during*, or *since*

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### MATERIALS

- Chalkboard or whiteboard with chalk or markers
- Paper and pencils for students



- Four large pieces of paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Scissors

### PREPARATION

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- Keep the following sentence frames ready to write on the board:
  - (Name) has \_\_\_\_\_ since \_\_\_\_\_. (specific day/date/time)
  - (Name) has been \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_. (amount of time)
  - (Name) likes to \_\_\_\_\_ while he/she \_\_\_\_\_. (two things at the same time)
  - (Name) would never \_\_\_\_\_ during \_\_\_\_\_. (noun that is an event or time)
- Write one preposition (for, while, during, since) on each of the large pieces of paper and post them in four different areas of the room

### ACTIVITY ONE: INTERVIEW

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1. Explain to students that they will write sentences about a partner using the prepositions *for*, *since*, *while*, and *during*.
2. Write the first sentence frame on the board and provide an example sentence, such as *Mr. Ali has been teaching since 1996* or *Alex has been a goalie since June 27th*.
3. Ask students what questions they could ask their partner to elicit the information to complete the sentence. Examples include *What is something you have been doing for a long time?* *When did you start?* Elicit other questions from students. Write their ideas on the board under the sentence frame.

4. Repeat this process with the remaining sentence frames until students have a good idea about what questions they will ask their partner in order to elicit the information they need.
5. Ask students to find a partner to interview, or assign pairs to work together. Tell students to write the sentences on separate lines with some space between each one.
6. Give the class time to complete their interviews and complete the sentences before having each set of partners present the information to the class.

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### ACTIVITY TWO: FOUR CORNERS

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1. Have students cross out the prepositions in the sentences they wrote about their partner in Activity One. They do not have to be completely crossed out, but just enough to remind someone reading the sentence to skip saying the preposition.
2. Once the words *since*, *while*, *for*, and *during* have been crossed out, have students cut their paper into strips so that there is one sentence on each strip. Tell them to fold up each of the strips. Collect all of the sentences and put them into a box or container.
3. Tell students you will play four corners with the prepositions *since*, *while*, *for*, and *during*. Point out the words you have posted around the classroom. Explain that you will read aloud a sentence with the preposition missing and students must move to a corner to indicate the correct word to complete the sentence.
4. Divide the class into two equal teams and give each a name. Write the team names on the board. Emphasize that students must remember their team in order for the game to work. If necessary, help students remember by giving everyone on one team the same color dot on their hand with a marker. Explain that each team will earn points based on the number of people that are in the correct corner after the sentence is read.
5. Choose one of the folded sentences from the container to read aloud. Do not read the preposition in the sentence, which will be crossed out as a reminder. Students must move to one

corner of the room to indicate the correct preposition to fill in the blank in the sentence. Give students about ten seconds to make a choice and say “Stop!” to indicate that time is up. Anyone that is not in a corner must sit down in the middle of the room, but can join in again for the next round.

6. Read the same sentence again, omitting the preposition. Ask a student from each corner to justify the preposition they chose before you reveal the correct one to complete the sentence. Review why the preposition is correct if needed.
7. Before moving on to a new sentence, record points by counting how many of each team’s members are in the correct corner. You can make this easier by asking members of each team to raise their hands. Write the number under each team’s name on the board.
8. Follow the same procedure for the next sentence. Continue adding to the points until all of the sentences are used. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins!

## PREPOSITIONS OF MOVEMENT

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This week's Teacher's Corner introduces two activities during which students use prepositions of movement. In these activities, students must use prepositions of movement to write a set of directions for others to follow. Activity One leads students from the classroom to a new location in the school. Activity Two has students create a map of a city and write directions for classmates to follow in order to discover buried treasure.

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### LEVEL

Intermediate and above

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### LANGUAGE FOCUS

Speaking, listening, reading, and writing

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### GOALS

During these activities, students will:

- Discuss ways to give directions with group members
- Write imperative sentences containing prepositions of movement
- Read and comprehend directions containing prepositions of movement

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### MATERIALS

- List of prepositions of movement: *across, along, around, away from, back to, down, into, off, onto, out of, over, past, round, through, to, towards, under, up*
- List of locations in the school (gym, cafeteria, library, courtyard, office, other classrooms, etc.)
- Pencils and paper/notebooks for students
- Poster paper/large paper

- Markers
- A small reward that can be shared by about 15 students, such as candy, stickers, or individual homework passes

### ACTIVITY ONE: SCHOOL CLUES

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**Note:** This activity requires students to move around the school in small groups. If this is not possible, the activity can focus on directions between locations within the classroom or a confined area such as a playground or courtyard. Alternatively, students can write directions from memory and then groups can try to follow them at a time when movement around the school is permitted.

1. List the prepositions of movement on the board and have students copy them into their notebooks.
2. Tell students they will work in groups of three. Using the prepositions, students will write a set of directions from the classroom to a different location in the school. After all groups have finished writing their directions, they will trade papers and try to follow each other's directions to determine the end location.
3. Model by choosing a place in the school, such as the office. Using the prepositions, give an example of the first steps one would include in a set of directions to the office, such as, "Walk out of the classroom. Go across the courtyard." Ask students to continue by giving two more steps for the directions.
4. Divide students into groups. Have each group select one student to be the recorder. Tell the recorder to write the names of everyone in their group at the top left side of the paper. The recorder will also write down the group's directions.
5. Assign each group a location in the school. This must be kept secret from the other groups. Each group moves around the school and works together to use as many prepositions as possible to

write directions from the classroom to the new location. To keep the activity organized, assign students a time to return to the classroom with their completed set of directions.

6. When students return to the classroom with their directions, have groups exchange papers. Tell the recorder to write the names of everyone in the group that will follow the directions at the top right side of the paper.
7. Tell students that they must now follow the set of directions they have in order to arrive at a new location in the school. Once they figure out where the directions lead, they should write the location down on the paper and return to class.
8. Once all of the students have come back to the classroom, have each group return the set of directions they followed to the group that wrote them to verify that everyone ended up at the correct destination. If there are any discrepancies, review the set of directions with the class to determine any mistakes.
9. This activity can be repeated with different groups or new destinations. As an extension, have students write directions back to the classroom once they have arrived at the initial destination.

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### ACTIVITY TWO: FIND IT ON THE MAP

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1. Divide the class into groups of four or five students.
2. Tell students that they will work in their groups to draw a map of part of a fictional town/city. They should include street names and major landmarks.
3. Ask students for ideas about what they can draw on their maps. Ideas include: parks, schools, libraries, stores, markets, police stations, post offices, bodies of water, etc.
4. After completing the map, each group should choose six locations where they would hide treasure in the city and write them down on a separate sheet of paper. These should be kept secret.

5. Next, the group needs to write a set of six “clues” that use prepositions to give directions to each of the locations where the treasure is located. A person unfamiliar with their map should be able to follow the directions to determine each of the locations. The clues should be written on a clean sheet of paper. Here is an example:
  - a. Start at the primary school. Walk north along Orange Street to Green Road.
  - b. Turn right on green road and go around the park.
  - c. Walk under the bridge. Where are you?
6. Tell students that once they are finished, they should fold their map in half with the sheet of clues inside. They will trade maps and “clues” with another group. Groups must not open the maps until you tell them to do so.
7. Explain that groups will compete to be the first to correctly determine all six places where treasure is buried on the map. Tell students that as they solve each “clue” they should write down the location so that the group who created the map can verify the answers.
8. When you say, “Go!” groups should open the map and begin. As students solve the clues, take note of the order in which the groups finish so that you can determine the fastest two or three groups. The students in winning groups can earn a small reward (see Materials for suggestions) if their answers are also correct.
9. To repeat this activity, students can exchange maps and clues with another new group.

## PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE

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This week's Teacher's Corner features two activities to help students practice prepositions of place. These activities allow you to use everyday objects to teach and reinforce the meaning of prepositions of place for your students. During the Introduction, students create a vocabulary document with sketches to show what each preposition means. In Activity One, teams compete to arrange objects correctly according to instructions with prepositions. In Activity Two, students race against the clock to write sentences using new prepositions.

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### LEVEL

High beginner and above

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### LANGUAGE FOCUS

Speaking, reading, and writing

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### GOALS

During these activities, students will:

- Learn common prepositions of location using real life objects
- Read prepositions of location
- Form oral and written sentences using prepositions to describe the location of objects

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### MATERIALS

- Chalkboard or whiteboard with chalk or markers
- Table



- A group of ten everyday objects, familiar to students, that can be easily displayed and arranged on a table (for example: books, pencils, notebooks, markers, pieces of fruit, a mobile phone, a hat, gloves, a scarf, a coffee mug, etc.)
- Index cards
- Markers
- Two grab bags or containers to hold folded up index cards
- Paper and pencils for students
- List of prepositions: *above, around, behind, below, beside, between, far (away) from, in, in back of, in front of, in the middle of, inside, near, next to, on, on top of, outside, under*
- Timer or clock

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### PREPARATION

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- Collect the objects you plan to use for the activity. Place them in a group on a table or desk where all students can easily see them.
- Label one of the containers *objects* and the other *prepositions*.
- Write the name of each object on an index card and fold it in half. Put the folded cards in the container labeled *objects*.
- Write each preposition of location on an index card. Fold the cards in half and put them in the container labeled *prepositions*.

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### INTRODUCTION

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1. Explain to students that the upcoming activities will focus on prepositions of location. Tell students that these words tell where something is located in relation to another object.
2. Tell the class that you will teach the prepositions using the objects on the table to show what each one means. Students can write down the new prepositions and sentences and sketch the objects to help them remember the definitions.

3. Start with the word *beside*. Write the word on the board and have students repeat it. Choose two objects and put them next to each other on the table. Then, form a sentence about the objects using *beside*, such as “The apple is beside the notebook.”
4. Choose different objects to display on the table. Ask students to form sentences about them using the new preposition.
5. Continue teaching the prepositions in this manner until you have presented each one and given students a chance to practice using the words.

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### ACTIVITY ONE: ARRANGE THE OBJECTS

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1. Once students are comfortable with the prepositions, inform them that they will play a game to test their understanding. Divide the students into two or three teams and give each team a name.
2. Show students the two containers you have prepared and say, “This container has all of the names of the objects that are on the table. This container has all of the prepositions you have just learned. Two members of your team will come up to the front of the class together. One person will choose a preposition card and the other will choose two object cards. Then you will work together to arrange the objects to illustrate the preposition and use it in a sentence about the objects. Your team will earn one point for correct arrangement of the objects and one point for your sentence.”
3. Choose two students to come up to the front of the class and model the process of choosing the cards, arranging the objects, and forming a sentence. Provide guidance as needed and give students time to ask questions about the game.
4. Once students are ready, play the game and keep score. The activity can either be timed, or played until all students have had a chance to participate. The team with the most points at the end of the activity wins!

## ACTIVITY TWO: DESCRIBE THE SCENE

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1. Have the class form pairs or small groups of 3-4 students.
2. Rearrange the objects on the table if you have just played the game in Activity 1. On the board, list the prepositions you want students to use.
3. Explain that you will set a timer for five minutes. During the five minutes, groups of students should try to write as many sentences as they can about the objects on the table using each of the prepositions on the list. They must use all of the prepositions once before repeating any.
4. After the timer has stopped, groups will exchange papers and check each other's sentences. Students will check for correct use of prepositions and verify that the sentences correctly describe the location of the objects on the table. Groups earn one point for each correct sentence.
5. Once the sentences have been checked and points have been added up, the group with the most points wins. You can ask groups to share some of their sentences to provide further review. To repeat this activity, rearrange the objects on the table and have students work in different groups.